

# the Bulletin

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*Serving Bloomfield, Friendship, Garfield,  
East Liberty, and Lawrenceville since 1975*

## Dollar Bank program helps take uncertainty out of homeownership

By Elizabeth Sensky

*East Liberty Development, Inc.*

*Pittsburgh* - For many low- to moderate-income households, homeownership feels like a far-off dream - something for more affluent people, or a goal that is feasible only in the distant future.

A program from Dollar Bank helps transform these dreams into realities by bringing the whole enterprise of homeownership within reach of working-class households.

Potential homeowners receive expert counseling and assistance with meeting the requirements of a down payment and closing costs.

As the only financial institution in western PA that offers comprehensive, in-house credit counseling and homebuyer education, Dollar's position in the lending mar-

See **Homeownership** | page 2



**ABOVE:** Pittsburgh Mayor Bill Peduto (left) joins Connor Claussen for the Mar. 20 grand opening of Claussen Cafehaus (4615 Liberty Ave.) in Bloomfield. Look to page 8 for an update on the neighborhood's small business community, and how it keeps adapting to new challenges. Photo courtesy of Claussen Cafehaus.

## Community development: news briefs

By Joe Reuben *Bulletin contributor*

*East End* - Now that spring has sprung and the local construction schedule is back in full swing, *The Bulletin* invites readers to learn about four developments on the horizon.

### *Construction underway at Penn & S. Atlantic Avenues*

The construction of Pedantic LLC's three-story, office/residential complex is well underway at 5226-30 Penn Ave. in Friendship. The firm purchased two side-by-side buildings in August of 2019, one of which still displayed the signage from a business ["Atlantic Cleaners"] that has been closed for 30 years.

Henry Simonds, a principal in Pedantic, had intended to preserve as much of the original buildings as possible when he first began planning the project with Moss Architects in 2019. Late last year, Simonds advised neighbors that the properties had suffered further structural decay, and that preserving them would be impossible. He then proceeded to take the buildings down to the ground over the winter.

See **Community Development** | page 4



**ABOVE:** A pollinator garden certified by the Audubon Society of Western PA brightens a backyard in Garfield. Thanks to a new partnership, Garfield residents will receive free supplies and valuable advice to help them create pollinator gardens at home. Read more on page 7. Photo courtesy of Porchea Andrews.

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*CANOPY SOLUTIONS: HOW TREES  
OFFSET CITY'S 'HEAT ISLANDS'*

*BGC WINS GOLDEN SHOVEL  
FOR 'SNOW ANGEL' SUCCESS*

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# Homeownership continued from page 1

ketplace is relatively unique. As a mutual bank, it is not beholden to outside shareholders, and can therefore offer more comprehensive programs.

Ray Garofalo, vice president, Community Development, attributes the program's success to Dollar's community focus.

The goal of the program is to get people "mortgage ready." The only requirements for entering the program: the participant has not been listed on a deed or mortgage in the last three years; and the participant earns no less than \$26,000 a year.

Household income can include salary and wages, social security, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), court-mandated child support payments, and pensions; tenants who participate in the city housing authority's Housing Choice Voucher Program may enroll in Dollar's program once they have been qualified under the authority's homeownership program.

"You have to have some income to be able to manage," Garofalo said, "but we want to keep the window open as wide as possible to counsel people."

The program starts with a confidential

one-on-one session with a Dollar Bank credit consultant.

Together, they review the participant's employment history, credit profile, and available funds to determine which areas could be strengthened.

Garofalo explained that, in many cases, people are living paycheck-to-paycheck, and are completely new to budgeting. The program teaches them how to track every penny spent for a period of time, from a snack at the vending machine to monthly rent payments.

"We always get the same comments from people like 'Hey, I never realized I earned that much money!' They didn't get a big raise. They're just spending their money more carefully, managing their money better," he said.

Once a participant's credit and savings are in better shape, they move on to the next level of the program: homeownership training. Participants go through a course that teaches everything they need to know about the home-buying process.

Garofalo believes the program is successful because it takes fear out of the equation.

"When you've never done it before, it's scary, right? That's why the training explains everything - from how to shop for a home, and dealing with real estate agents, to what happens during the closing, and all the documents you're bound to see - as well as what to expect in your life as a homeowner," he explained.

While the program prides itself on making people smart, savvy buyers, its financial counselors always emphasize how getting a house is only the first step to keeping a house.

The idea is for participants to learn everything they need to know, up front, so that they can build on this knowledge for the rest of their lives as homeowners. After the training, Dollar checks to see what kind of down payment and closing cost assis-

tance a participant might be eligible for; the bank's "3-2-1" program matches up to \$1,000 from a participant's savings with \$3,000 of bank funds, for a total of up to \$4,000. The grant can be used in addition to other grants and gifts from other sources.

In his two decades at the bank, Garofalo has seen hundreds of people go through the program to become first time homebuyers. Still, he noted that the program only works for those who are willing to put in the work.

Visit [dollar.bank/Company/About/Community-Development](http://dollar.bank/Company/About/Community-Development) or call 412-261-8109 to learn more. Dollar Bank also offers "Mortgages for Mothers" workshops to help single mothers become homeowners; the next session is scheduled for Jun. 12. ♦

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Do you have questions?  
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# 'Water Equity Roadmap' charts new course for PWSA, city residents

By Mora McLaughlin *Pittsburgh Water & Sewer Authority*

Pittsburgh - US Water Alliance recently celebrated the release of its report, *An Equitable Water Future: Pittsburgh*, with leaders from the Pittsburgh Water & Sewer Authority, community-based organizations, and members of academia.

The new report, which outlines potential strategies to advance five water equity priorities in Pittsburgh, was made possible by the hard work of the Pittsburgh Water Equity Taskforce.

For the last two years, the group has investigated challenges and potential solutions to systemic disparities in the city's water equity landscape. According to PWSA, the task force works to ensure that all city residents benefit from "a sustainable, inclusive, and just water future."

"This roadmap and set of recommendations are incredibly important for a more equitable water future in Pittsburgh," Will Pickering, Chief Executive Officer of PWSA, noted. "PWSA understands the opportunity we have to be a community partner that helps everyone in Pittsburgh thrive, and we want to be a forward-looking utility that helps make Pittsburgh a more equitable place to live."

The Authority's "roadmap" discusses recommendations in five priority areas: water quality and environmental health, sustainable stormwater management, affordability, workforce development, and water democracy. The Pittsburgh Water Equity Taskforce built these recommendations in close collaboration with diverse stakeholders from across the city, and is now working to bring them to life.

Collaborators on this project include: Common Unity PGH; Neighborhood Allies; Our Water Campaign, convened by Pittsburgh United; Pittsburgh Water & Sewer Authority; PolicyLink; University of Pittsburgh's Center for Health Equity; The UrbanKind Institute; and local residents advocating for access to clean, affordable water.

While its everyday impacts are often taken for granted, water shapes local economic growth, as well as the environmental and social fabric of communities throughout Pittsburgh. Every single author of the city's "Water Equity Roadmap" shares a stated vision of a community where all residents have access to safe, reliable, and affordable drinking and wastewater services - and where all homes are resilient to floods and other water-related climate risks.

"I'm grateful that PWSA has had a chance to collaborate with such thoughtful and invested partners from across Pittsburgh and the country," Pickering said.

With the release of *An Equitable Water Future*, Pittsburgh joins the US Water Alliance's "Water Equity Network."

Water agencies and "City Learning Teams" [from Pittsburgh and other places] collaborate to advance equitable water management practices at the local, state, and national levels. Learning Teams receive coaching and support from the US Water Alliance, helping team members identify challenges while also developing policies and programs to advance water equity.

To find the full report, visit [pgh2o.com/news-events](http://pgh2o.com/news-events). For more info about the US Water Alliance, visit [uswateralliance.org](http://uswateralliance.org). ♦

## the Bulletin

Serving Pittsburgh's  
East End neighborhoods  
since 1975

with the mission of reporting on issues affecting underserved communities and facilitating local residents' exchange of ideas.

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**Board Meetings** are held by the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation at 6:30 p.m. on the second Monday of each month, and are open to the public. Meetings are currently being conducted online via Zoom; email [Nina@Bloomfield-Garfield.org](mailto:Nina@Bloomfield-Garfield.org) for more details.

*The opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the publisher.*

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[Bloomfield-Garfield.org](http://Bloomfield-Garfield.org)

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Thanks also to Allegheny Health Network, West Penn Hospital, the City of Pittsburgh, *The Bulletin's* advertisers, and all BGC members for their ongoing support and assistance. Kudos!

## Meet the BGC: Board Vice President Dr. Staci Ford



**ABOVE:** Meet Dr. Staci Ford, Vice President of the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation's Board of Directors. A resident of Garfield for the last 15 years, Dr. Ford has worked in the neighborhood for more than a decade. Her passion is connecting local community members with support services. Photo courtesy of Nina Gibbs.

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# Community Development continued from page 1

The first-floor storefront in the new complex will be leased as office or studio space, the second floor as a co-working space, and the third floor as a large residential suite that would be available to artists visiting the community. An outdoor deck will be built off of the apartment.

### *Collaboration to restore N. Fairmount St. duplex, build new homes on Columbo*

Two local nonprofits, the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation (BGC) and City of Bridges Community Land Trust (CBCLT), are working together to renovate a vacant duplex at 438 N. Fairmount Street in Garfield as an affordable homeownership project.

The BGC purchased the property from the city of Pittsburgh last year, and recently cleaned out the structure, replaced its roof, and repaired sections of the brick facade. After it purchases the duplex from the BGC this summer, CBCLT [headquartered in Lawrenceville] will oversee the balance of the renovation work using its land trust model. When the property is sold next year, it will be priced as affordable to a first-time homebuyer earning less than \$60,000/year.

The two nonprofits are also collaborating to develop a re-use for the property at 5203 Columbo St., in Garfield, that is currently home to a vacant house. With renovation in mind, the BGC purchased the house last year from the city, but has since found that the damage to the structure is so extensive that repair costs would likely exceed \$200,000. CBCLT aims to purchase this property from the BGC this spring, and determine if 2 to 3 new homes could be built on the site as an alternative, assuming they could be made affordable to households earning less than \$60,000/year.

### *Private developer continues planning for new homes on Rosetta St.*

Module Housing LLC remains firm in its determination to build upwards of ten, new single-family homes in the 5100 block of Rosetta Street in Garfield. The East Liberty-based developer continues its negotiations with the city's Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) to acquire nine lots between N. Evaline St. and N. Pacific Ave., together with the purchase of one privately-owned parcel.

To counter what has been a lukewarm response to the project from the community, Module agreed to reduce the number of homes from twelve to ten, increase the number of homes [priced to be affordable to lower-income households] to as many as four, install a green buffer between the development and the rest of Rosetta Street, and preserve as much of the existing tree canopy as possible.

A sub-committee comprised of Garfield residents and BGC staff members is now working with Module to resolve other issues with the project, including the homes' exterior design, the amount of off-street parking to be provided, and the management of storm-water runoff generated by the development.

The question of how many homes can be built and sold at below-market prices will depend on the amount of subsidy that Module can attract to the project. To help in that effort, Module has brought a nonprofit agency, the Pittsburgh Housing Development Corp. (PHDC), into the fold as a partner. Although it is affiliated with the URA, the PHDC has its own board of directors.

**BELOW:** Duplex house at 438 N. Fairmount St. that could be undergoing further renovation this year. Photo by Joe Reuben.



While Module had hopes of getting shovels in the ground in 2021, it does not appear the URA will be in a position to transfer ownership of the nine properties much before the fall of 2022. The agency must take the lots through a lengthy title-clearing process before they can be sold.

### *Master plan in the wings for Fort Pitt Ballfield*

A year-long planning process surrounding the future of Garfield's Fort Pitt Ballfield (5100 block of Hillcrest St.) is drawing to an end. With the aid of a city-paid consultant, several options for making long-term improvements to the facility were posted to the city's website for comment by neighborhood residents and other stakeholders. The comment period was due to close at the beginning of April.

Once the comment period has ended, a city-community task force that has been refining the various plans will move ahead with securing the necessary funding to implement the consensus option. It is possible that a multi-million dollar investment could be forthcoming in the next 3 to 5 years - an investment that would not only enhance the ballfield, but also address the parking issues that bedevil nearby residents for the duration of any major athletic events held at the field. ♦

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# 'Environmental justice' means greater access to great outdoors

By Porchea Andrews Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation

*Perspective/Garfield* - I have been working in the Garfield community for 6 months now as the Green Zone & Safety Coordinator.

These last few months have been very important in establishing a 'why' for many of the projects that have been and will be planned over the next few years in Garfield.

I have developed an affinity for Garfield. As I drive and, at times, walk around the neighborhood, it very much reminds me of the Gary, Indiana neighborhood that I grew up in - where, because of gentrification, nothing that I remember as a kid still exists.

Garfield has about 3800 residents, 70% of whom are African American, and with a median household income of \$37,000. The average resident who is working earns around \$25,000 annually.

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection defines an environmental justice area as "any census tract where 20% or more individuals live at or below the federal poverty line, and/or 30% or more of the population identifies as non-white minority, based on data

from the U.S. Census Bureau and the federal guidelines for poverty."

These designated areas are often characterized by illegal dumping of trash and hazardous waste, disproportionate policing of its residents, unequal access to affordable quality foods, clean air and safe outdoor recreational areas for residents to be active. All are factors in accounting for the health disparities that have greater impact on BIPOC populations.

This article will serve as the first of many - designed to educate and advocate for environmental justice while also addressing many of the environmental inequities that occur in the Garfield community.

I want to prayerfully form a representative collection of Garfield residents who are motivated to correct many of the effects of disinvestment evident throughout the neighborhood. Each article will hopefully trigger deeper thought about what we can do as individuals, and as a community, to level the playing field and create tangible equity for BIPOC residents in Garfield.

The following are only a few of the principles that have been adopted by grassroots groups across the country.

These can help to define the "why" for the work we hope to accomplish as the various Garfield Green Zone projects evolve.

- Environmental justice demands that public policy be based on mutual respect and justice for all peoples, free from any form of discrimination and bias.

- Environmental justice affirms the need for urban and rural ecological policies to clean up and rebuild our cities and rural areas in balance with nature, honoring the cultural integrity of all our communities, and providing fair access for all to the full range of resources.

- Environmental justice mandates the right to ethical, balanced and responsible uses of land and renewable resources in the interest of a sustainable planet for humans and other living things.

- Environmental justice demands the right to participate as equal partners at every level of decision making, including needs assessment, planning, implementation, enforcement and evaluation.

Email [porchea@bloomfield-garfield.org](mailto:porchea@bloomfield-garfield.org) to learn more about environmental justice in Garfield. ♦

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# More trees, environmental education coming to Lawrenceville

By Maggie Aupperlee *Tree Pittsburgh*

*Perspective/Lawrenceville* – While the impact of climate change has been felt around the world, cities are especially susceptible.

Urban infrastructure tends to increase temperatures, creating “heat islands” where buildings far outnumber any green spaces. Severe weather events, like the microburst that hit Lawrenceville in 2019, are growing problems for many Pittsburgh neighborhoods.

The Pittsburgh Foundation is now supporting a partnership between Tree Pittsburgh, Lawrenceville Corporation (LC), and Lawrenceville United (LU) to increase public awareness and engagement around trees and green spaces in Lawrenceville.

Why trees? While they are not the only solution to reversing climate change, they are a very effective one.

Trees positively impact human health by cooling the urban environment in summer and simultaneously cleaning the air of particulates and pollutants.

In addition to the physical health benefits, mental health outcomes are greatly benefited by an increased presence of trees.

With the negative impacts of climate change on the rise, the need for trees and a more robust, resilient urban tree canopy is as important as ever.

Through an urban tree canopy analysis, Tree Pittsburgh determined that the greatest opportunity to grow the City’s tree canopy is on private property.

This is why the organization hosts “tree adoption” events to distribute trees in the neighborhood, along with information about how to plant and care for the trees. When trees are healthy and successful, they will grow to maturity and continue to provide benefits for many generations to come.

Tree Pittsburgh will also educate Lawrenceville students through a series of lessons about maintaining trees and green spaces. The programming will encourage students and their families to learn

more about the outdoors – starting with their own backyards and city parks in the neighborhood. This programming also includes learning opportunities for adults and teens; arboreal experts will cover topics like proper tree care, and also climate change.

Erin Gaughan, Volunteer & Special Events Coordinator at Tree Pittsburgh, understands the value of these learning opportunities.

“The work and educational components with adults and youth community members are crucial to our greater, in-depth engagement,” Gaughan said. “These opportunities empower residents and improve local environmental conditions in the long-run.”

Tree Pittsburgh will also work with LC, LU, Lawrenceville Tree Tenders, and other interested stakeholders to update the “Re-Leaf Lawrenceville” plan.

Created in 2014, ReLeaf Lawrenceville is a neighborhood-level, urban forest master plan. By updating the plan, Lawrenceville will be poised to continue growing and protecting its own urban forest and ensure a healthier neighborhood for everyone.

The work to stop climate change starts with each of us. Keep checking [treepittsburgh.org](http://treepittsburgh.org) for more information on how to get involved.

If you are interested in learning more about volunteer tree events in Lawrenceville, please contact [lvreetenders@gmail.com](mailto:lvreetenders@gmail.com). ♦



**ABOVE:** Tree Pittsburgh hosts “adoption” events to help distribute more trees to local residents. Photo courtesy of Tree Pittsburgh.

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## 'Spring Into Fun' with Penn Ave. Arts & Commercial District

A Message from Pittsburgh Glass Center

*Penn Ave.* - Celebrate Arbor Day weekend in the Penn Ave. Arts & Commercial District with a variety of activities for all ages on Saturday, May 1. The "Spring into Fun" festivities will run from Noon to 4 p.m. at the Pittsburgh Glass Center's (PGC, 5472 Penn Ave.) parking lot.

The Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation (BGC) will give some shine to the Garfield Green Zone by handing out tote bags full of maps and other goodies; kids are encouraged to take their tote bags on an adventure, and use them to store giveaways from other participating groups.

PGC's "Hot Wheels" - an outreach vehicle that helps glassblowing demonstrations travel far beyond the walls of PGC's headquarters - will provide furnace-fired fun for everyone.

Kids will also receive a PGC "Mosaic Stepping Stone" kit. This take-home kit helps kids create their own mosaic stepping stone to display in a garden, accent a flowerbed, or add to a path. They can simply arrange colorful pieces of mosaic glass on a concrete mix to produce a custom piece of their own design - a perfect gift for Mother's Day.

Assemble, a community space for arts + technology, will host an activity kit giveaway; children will get to take home some arts & craft supplies in a "to go" bag. Located in Garfield, Assemble aims to help build kids' confidence through making - by uniting communities of artists, technologists, makers, and learners at its 4824 Penn Ave. space and beyond.

On May 1, the City Park Rangers will be on hand to give away park goodies, show off the skins and skulls of animals in our local parks, and share activities to get folks of all ages excited about going outside. They will also provide information about how parents and educators can use the online and in-person educational resources offered by the ranger program.

All giveaways will be socially distanced; visitors must also wear masks in order to participate in the activities. Spring into Fun giveaways will proceed while supplies last, so get to the PGC parking lot early on Saturday, May 1. ♦

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## Free pollinator gardens for Garfield residents

By Porchea Andrews Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation

*Insight/Garfield* - The Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation (BGC) recently partnered with the Audubon Society of Western Pennsylvania (ASWP) to help local residents certify their backyard habitats as "pollinator gardens."

Thanks to this new collaboration, 25 Certified Backyard Habitats (CBH) will be recognized in Garfield.

Participating households will receive pollinator bundles of native plants and seeds (over \$100 value), and also be enrolled in the Society's CBH program.

The CBH program helps people transform their yards and patios into an oasis for pollinators and birds. By creating pollinator gardens, residents not only get to enjoy more natural beauty, but also sup-

port local wildlife. These gardens bring other bonuses, like reducing stormwater runoff and improving air & water quality.

After you enroll, an ASWP staff member will visit your yard to deliver a pollinator bundle; they will then create a custom report to help you maximize the "habitat value" of your space.

In addition to customized resources, each CBH is recognized with official Audubon signage. Gardeners will also receive Audubon's "What's In My Backyard" pocket naturalist guide to help identify butterflies and other garden visitors.

The 2021 program is limited to 25 participants. Enroll soon to secure your spot. Please email [Porchea@Bloomfield-Garfield.org](mailto:Porchea@Bloomfield-Garfield.org) by Apr. 30 to enroll. ♦



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# Neighborhood FOCUS

## Bloomfield looks outdoors for small biz' springtime boost

By Christina Howell Bloomfield Development Corporation

**Bloomfield** – Small businesses have been hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic shutdowns, but Bloomfield's businesses are largely proving resilient in the face of continued adversity. More and more parking spot seating is opening up thanks to the Department of Mobility and Infrastructure's new permitting process, which makes applying for outdoor seating permits free, with less paperwork needed.

Bitter Ends Luncheonette and Claussen Cafehaus (4613 and 4615 Liberty Ave., respectively), have added additional seating outside, as a means of further enhancing a vibrant block of the commercial district.

Claussen Cafehaus, which opened to the public on Mar. 20, serves traditional coffee drinks, Millie's Homemade ice cream, select sandwiches, and its signature, handmade pretzels - baked fresh, on site. The Cafehaus is owned and operated by a father-and-son duo; the son, Connor Claussen, manages the front of house while his father Axel makes pretzels in the back [Look to next month's Bulletin for a story on how the Claussen family bred a business on German bread].

Trace Brewery, which opened its doors for the first time doing take-out sales in December, implemented very limited seating in February. In late March, the brewery opened its spacious outdoor beer garden for reservations. With walls on three

**BELOW:** Coffee and a basket of German baked goods greet customers at Claussen Cafehaus in Bloomfield. Photo by Connor Claussen.



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Everyone welcome! Open daily 8 am to 8 pm.

sides and a gate on the fourth, facing Main Street, the Trace beer garden looks to keep guests safe and comfortable; indoor and outdoor tables are set up more than six feet apart.

Across Main Street, Cobra re-opened with limited seating on Mar. 12. Offering Korean-style, tabletop barbeque with a nightclub feel, Cobra originally opened not long before the first pandemic shutdown in 2020, but has been closed since last spring. Reviews from *Pittsburgh Magazine* and other outlets rave about a menu that many have not been able to try, which features exclusively American and Japanese Wagyu beef. Cobra's menu items are also available for takeout or delivery through a variety of popular delivery apps.

Veering away from food and drink for a moment, Radio Skateshop opened at 4116 Main St., next to Tina's, in late 2020. The shop offers boards, shoes, clothes, and other skate accessories; it is co-owned by the founder & owner of Scumco & Sons, a skateboard manufacturing company.

Both Lot 17 and Froggy's have been keeping their buildings' front facades wide open as often as possible, constantly circulating fresh air. Nearly every restaurant is now offering outdoor seating - Pad Thai Noodle, Angelo's, Station - or has expanded existing outdoor seating. For those uncomfortable with sitting in an enclosed space, there now are numerous places in Bloomfield to sit outside and enjoy a meal or drink. ♦



**Befriend the Bulletin on Facebook**

(facebook.com/BgcBulletin) We promise not to overshare!



*'With walls on three sides and a gate on the fourth, facing Main Street, the Trace beer garden looks to keep guests safe and comfortable; indoor and outdoor tables are set up more than six feet apart.'*



**ABOVE:** General manager Katie Rado inspects the seating arrangement at Trace Brewery's outdoor beer garden. Photo by Christina Howell.

## Are you depressed? Are you 30-50 years old?

If so, you may be eligible for a research study involving:

- A screening interview
- 2 MRI brain scans
- 2 week phone diary



**You will be compensated up to \$640 and receive a picture of your brain upon completion of the study.**

Other qualifications:

- Work at least 20 hours per week
- Not have a history of head trauma, seizures, or ECT
- If female, not be pregnant or planning to be pregnant in the near future

Call **412-383-7805**, email **nstem@pitt.edu**, or follow this QR Code to send us an email using your smartphone camera.



### Public Safety Survey



Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Birthday: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you feel safe in your community? (on a scale of 1 being very safe and 5 being not safe at all)

What do you feel makes the community unsafe?

What do you think are the biggest issues our community faces (Please only select the top 4)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employment/ Education Opportunities | <input type="checkbox"/> Violent Crime            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Housing resources/ rental           | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-violent crime        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Housing resources/home owners       | <input type="checkbox"/> Help with small business |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potholes/sidewalks/vacant property  | <input type="checkbox"/> Clean Air                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trash/dumping                       |   |

If given an opportunity to meet with Officials whose work involves our public safety, who would you most like to be able to ask questions and hear from? (Please only choose 4)

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Zone 5 Police        | <input type="checkbox"/> Magistrate                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Probation            | <input type="checkbox"/> Permits, Licensing and inspection       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vice                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Housing Authority of Pittsburgh         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Narcotics            | <input type="checkbox"/> URA                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trauma Unit          | <input type="checkbox"/> Allegheny County Health Department      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> DA's Office          | <input type="checkbox"/> Department of Mobility & Infrastructure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> US Attorney General  | <input type="checkbox"/> PWSA – Lead                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> City Council members | <input type="checkbox"/> Lead Safe Allegheny                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> State Representative | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mayor's Office       |  |

I am interested in being part of a block watch:

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

I am interested in helping pass out fliers and volunteer at events

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

I would like to report a problem:

Is illegal dumping a problem near you?

1	2	3	4	5
No	A little bit	Moderate	Yes	Big Issue

Do you believe access to nature has a positive effect on people's well being?

1	2	3	4	5
No	Not really	Indifferent	Maybe	Yes

How often do you go for walks in Garfield (either to get to a bus/residence or for fun)?

1	2	3	4	5
I don't	Not often	Sometimes	Often	All the time

How often do you use other parks in Pittsburgh? (Frick, Schenley, Arsenal, etc)

1	2	3	4	5
I don't	Not often	Sometimes	Often	All the time

Would you be willing to clean and/or mow a vacant lot near you in you owned it?

1	2	3	4	5
No	Too busy	Tell me more	Maybe	Yes

Do you think Garfield would benefit from well maintained walking paths and benches?

1	2	3	4	5
No	Not really	Indifferent	Maybe	Yes

Would you like more trees on your street/in front of your home?

No	Need more info	Yes
----	----------------	-----

Do you feel that access to fresh, nutrient dense food is accessible to most residents?

No	Sometime	Yes
----	----------	-----

Do you know the meaning of environmental justice?

No	Need more info	Yes
----	----------------	-----

Do you feel like your environment influences your health (explain)



# Crossword puzzle: BGC programs explained

Engineered by Amber Epps Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation

*Garfield* - In response to readers’ appreciation of our crossword debut, *The Bulletin* presents another puzzle [at right] for your gaming enjoyment.

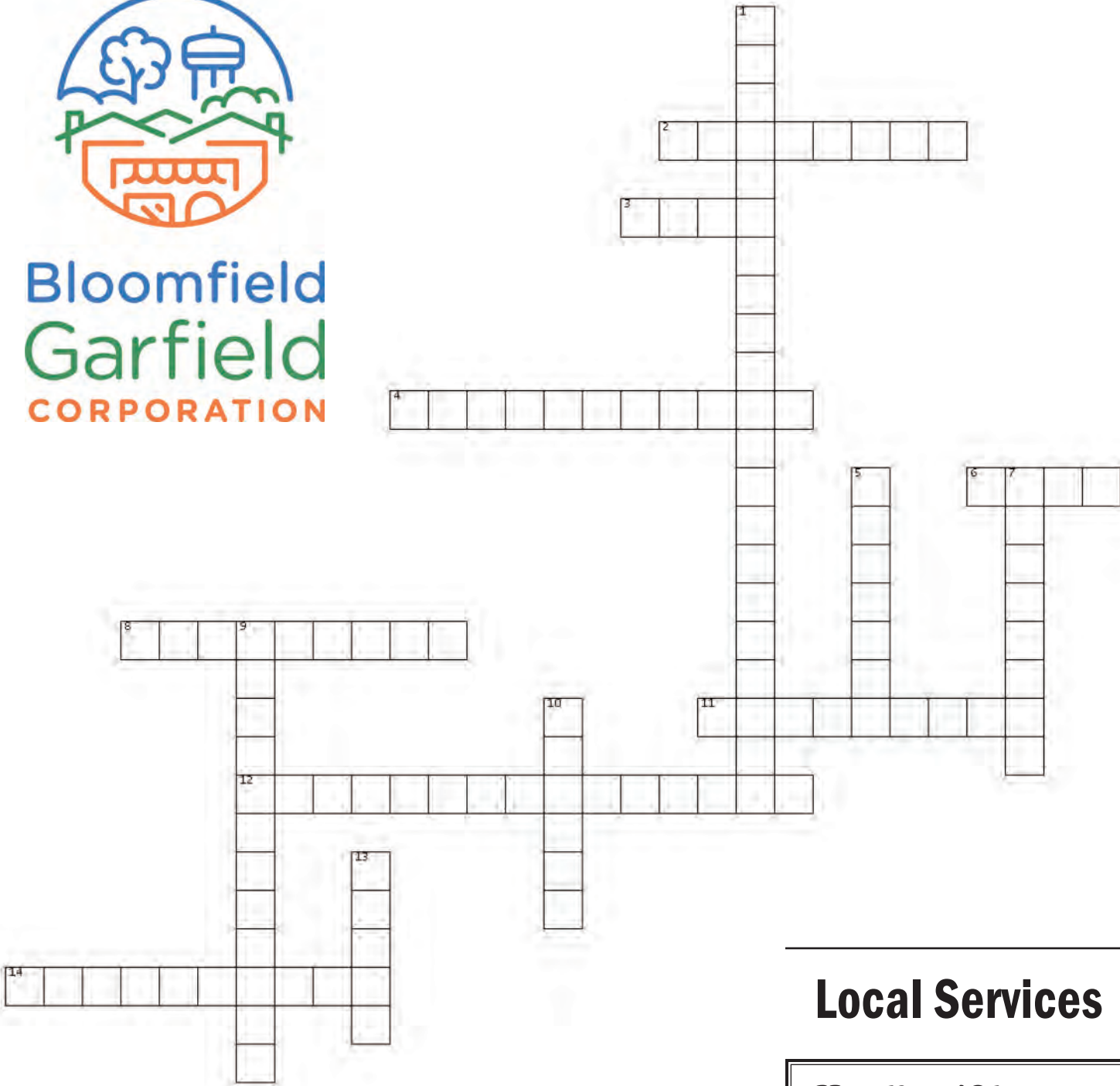
This month, let’s turn our attention to the various programs and services provided by the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation (BGC). Look to page 15 for answers to the following clues.

Across

- 2. Founded in 1975, this is one of the few remaining community newspapers in the city; it is mailed to over 14,000 residents every month.
- 3. Acronym for the BGC program that helps individuals find employment.
- 4. A program of the BGC, in partnership with the URA, that works to support current businesses and bring new businesses to Penn Ave.
- 6. Acronym for the BGC’s year-round, youth education program that helps high school juniors and seniors stay on track and develop a post-graduation plan.
- 8. On the first Friday of every month, this gallery crawl invites residents and visitors to come enjoy Penn Avenue’s creative energy.
- 11. This project aims to ensure that 30 acres of green space in Garfield remain undeveloped.
- 12. This grant program is designed for Garfield residents who may need extra help with rent, utilities, or other necessities.
- 14. The BGC has renovated or built more than 200 rental and owner-occupied units that are considered \_\_\_\_\_ housing.

Down

- 1. The \_\_\_\_\_ has convened every month since 2000 to examine current trends and work to enhance safety in the neighborhood.
- 5. The \_\_\_\_\_ twenty program allows individuals with court-imposed fines to work in the community in exchange for a reduction in those fines.
- 7. The BGC’s employment center offers a \_\_\_\_\_ lab for those who need to search for jobs, create resumes, type documents, and check email.
- 9. A six-week, summer employment program for youths (ages 14-21).
- 10. The Eastside Neighborhood Employment Center helps clients create a \_\_\_\_\_ as part of the job search process.
- 13. April 15th comes for everyone, every year, so the BGC helps low-income residents file their \_\_\_\_\_.



## Local Services

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**BELOW:** A Duquesne Light Company employee transports boxes of produce and prepared meals from 412 Food Rescue to Lawrenceville United's (LU) headquarters on Mar. 26. In just a couple hours, LU volunteers and Duquesne Light employees helped distribute food to over 30 households in Lawrenceville and other Pittsburgh neighborhoods. Photo courtesy of LU.



## ECS Middle School grows green space in Garfield

By Deana Callipare Environmental Charter School

*Garfield* - As the Environmental Charter School (ECS) introduces its plans for green space at 5525 Columbo St., school officials are encouraging local community members to track any updates by signing up for the ECS newsletter [bit.ly/ecsfacilitiesnewsletter].

The newsletter provides updates on the school district's latest developments, while also providing a forum where residents can give feedback to district leaders.

On Feb. 3, ECS publicly announced its plans to develop an outdoor recreation area for its Middle School during a virtual "Development Activities Meeting" hosted by the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation (BGC). This meeting allowed school officials the opportunity to listen to the residents' concerns, and answer questions from nearby neighbors.

"ECS is grateful for our neighbors who attended the February meeting," James Doyle, ECS Chief Operations Officer, said. "Their concerns are our concerns, and we would like to keep our surrounding community members informed while providing an outlet for feedback."

The project's objectives align with the ECS mission to "educate students to high academic standards using innovative curricula that will foster knowledge, love of, and respect for the environment and preserve it for future generations."

The district's curriculum is rooted in a multi-disciplinary, "out-the-door" learning approach. The ECS green space will also double as an outdoor educational space and recreation area for sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-graders.

The project design includes maximizing the green space for outdoor play, planting trees and other greenery, creating a storm-water management system, and providing an overflow parking area for school staff. To review the details of the Feb. 3 meeting, please visit [bloomfield-garfield.org/ecsdam](http://bloomfield-garfield.org/ecsdam).

At the meeting's conclusion, Doyle responded to unanswered questions, paying special attention to neighboring residents' concerns about the green space.

"ECS strives to be a good neighbor, and we want to continue working with the community, hear their feedback, and get them involved in any way we can," Doyle said. "ECS looks to build strong relationships with our neighbors, and it's our hope that this development is beneficial for them, and that it exists as a space for community use."

ECS leaders will meet with zoning committees in early April. Its staff and students now prepare to complete service projects and tree plantings around the building, in celebration of Earth Day, later this month. ♦

## Are you open to cremation?

We have an open door policy because we have nothing to hide.

- ☐ **Yes, we return ALL the ashes**  
Our exacting standards ensure the integrity of the entire cremation process.
- ☐ **No, we do not cremate pets in our crematory**  
However, if you wish, we will be happy to refer you to a pet cremation specialist.
- ☐ **24/7 Cremation**  
For your convenience we are available every day and we accommodate special requests and schedules.
- ☐ **"Whose ashes are in the urn?"**  
We personally perform the cremation so we know.
- ☐ **We perform all cremations individually**  
All cremations are done on-site, so your loved one never leaves our care.
- ☐ **We understand your concerns**  
That's why we explain your options and respect your wishes.
- ☐ **No hidden charges**  
Embalming is not required for cremation and we provide on-site refrigeration at no extra charge.

So if you think you're open to the idea of cremation, think of us—we can answer any questions you may have.

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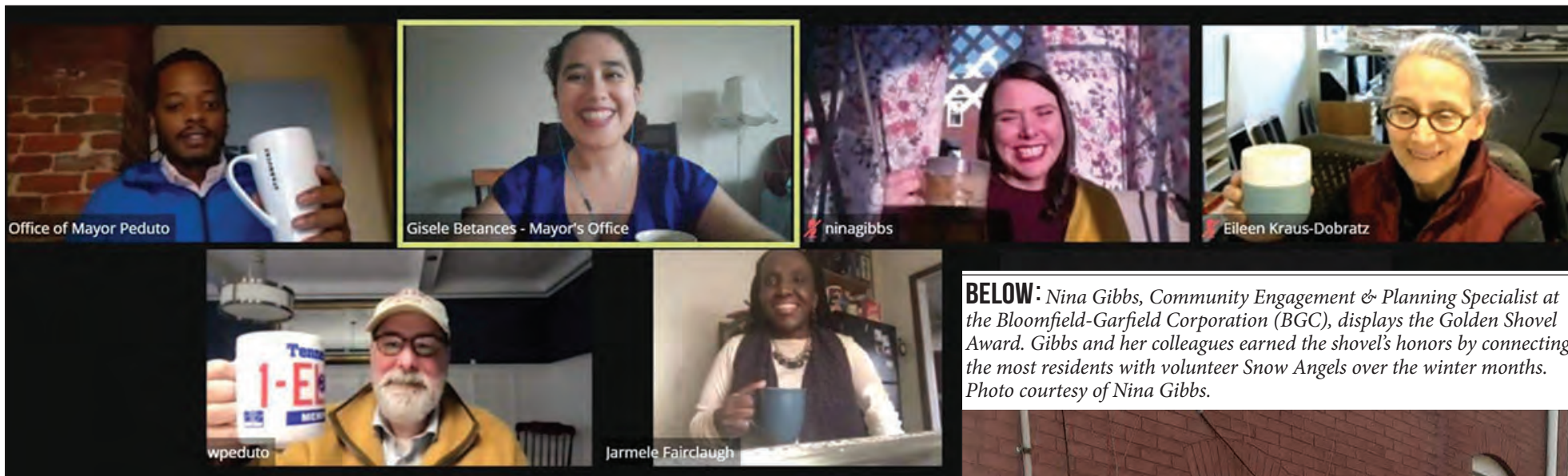
Get the latest news from your neighborhood and share some of your own.



[Neighborhoods.TribLIVE.com](http://Neighborhoods.TribLIVE.com)



# BGC matches 'Snow Angel' volunteers & neighbors in need, earns Golden Shovel Award



**ABOVE:** Pittsburgh Mayor Bill Peduto (bottom left) joins members of his administration in congratulating Board and staff members of the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation (BGC) for recruiting more Snow Angels than any other local organization. The BGC mobilized to match snow removal volunteers with neighbors in need, during one of the city's snowiest winters on record, to earn the Golden Shovel Award. Photo courtesy of Nina Gibbs.

**BELOW:** Nina Gibbs, Community Engagement & Planning Specialist at the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation (BGC), displays the Golden Shovel Award. Gibbs and her colleagues earned the shovel's honors by connecting the most residents with volunteer Snow Angels over the winter months. Photo courtesy of Nina Gibbs.



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## BECOME A PITTSBURGH FOOD EQUITY AMBASSADOR



The PghFoodTeam is delighted to announce the launch of the PFEA Program! This program centers marginalized residents' voices and leadership of those most impacted by food insecurity.

### Ambassadors:

- Build community and share their experiences with 14 cohort members and local leaders.
- Gain a deeper understanding of food system challenges and policy making processes.
- Develop leadership skills to support advocacy in this program and beyond.
- Are compensated \$585 for participating 9 two-hour meetings over the course of 6 months.

For more information and to apply, visit [pittsburghfoodpolicy.org/projects](http://pittsburghfoodpolicy.org/projects). Applications due April 9, 2021 by 11:59 p.m.

Questions? Call the Pittsburgh Food Policy Council (412) 406-6061, or email Olivia Carter at [olivia@pittsburghfoodpolicy.org](mailto:olivia@pittsburghfoodpolicy.org).



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[ANDREW@BLOOMFIELD-GARFIELD.ORG](mailto:ANDREW@BLOOMFIELD-GARFIELD.ORG).



# 'Shirley you jest': April Fools' Day origin stories

By John Kohl *Bulletin contributor*

*Ship of Fools/Insight* - There is nothing quite like April Fools' Day. Celebrated on the first day of April in many Western nations, April Fools' gives people a chance to tell bad jokes, pull stupid pranks, etc. - things they shouldn't make a habit of doing, but that are allowable just for one day.

How and why did we ever begin celebrating such a foolhardy holiday in the first place? No one knows for sure, but many believe it all started in Paris, France. In the 1500s, the French were living under the Gregorian calendar. Under this calendar system, the Hindu model, the New Year begins with the spring equinox around April.

Granted, some people were not too enthusiastic about accepting the Apr. 1 start date. Those who thought the calendar should rightfully reset on Jan. 1. soon began mocking any adopters of the April "Fools' Day."

Some of their pranks included placing paper fishes on gullible individuals' backs, labeling them *poisson d'avril* - "a young, easily caught fish."

The ancient Romans partied at *Hilaria* festivals, celebrated at the end of March by the cult of Cybele and its followers. Attired in various disguises, participants derided their fellow citizens, and even their local magistrate. The festival was rumored to have been inspired by Egyptian legend.

Some historians speculate that the date is aligned with the vernal equinox - the first day of spring in the Northern Hemisphere, when Mother Nature "tricked" people with ever-changing, unforeseeable weather.

April Fools' Day spread throughout Great Britain during the 18th century. Scotland ex-

tended its holiday into a two-day extravaganza, beginning with a game called "hunting the gowk" [a "gowk" is used to describe a cuckoo bird, an image symbolizing a fool].

The local residents endeavored to complete a number of fictitious tasks, only to be followed by the nefarious "Tailie" - a character that flanked with pranks, pinning "kick me" signs on their backs.

Radio, television, and internet news outlets continue participating in the popular Apr. 1 custom of reporting outrageous stories that are just believable enough to fool us for a second. In 1957, the BBC almost got away with a "surplus" joke about Swiss farmers teaching Italian farmers how to grow spaghetti.

But you don't need a fancy media empire, or anything for that matter, to pull off a really great prank. Just think about somebody you know and love, arm yourself with a loud "April Fools!" exclamation at the ready, and have fun.

Looking at the trajectory of the past year and COVID-19's grim death toll, let's consider ourselves fortunate, if not blessed, that we can go outside on Apr. 1 and try to bring joy to others.

If we can endure a pandemic, we deserve a few laughs on April Fools' Day. ♦

**BELOW:** A chicken crossing the road knows nothing of the mystery that is this Bloomfield turkey, and why it trots along Liberty Avenue. Our sources confirm the bird is not, as some had reported, too fowl. Happy April Fools' Day! Photo by Karen Becker.



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## WHAT HAPPENED TO THE LOCAL REAL ESTATE BLOTTER?

*The Local Real Estate Blotter, a regular Bulletin feature usually found on this page, is now on hiatus. Allegheny County's online real estate portal, where the blotter's listings are sourced, has not been updated since 2020.*

*The Bulletin will resume publishing real estate listings as soon as the County website refreshes its database. Until then, readers can look to the Sunday edition of the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette for updated listings.*

*The Bulletin encourage readers to contact their elected Allegheny County Council members to ask why the real estate portal is not up-to-date for 2021.*

## Garfield Jubilee's YouthBuild Program

Garfield Jubilee Association, Inc. is now recruiting for its YouthBuild Program. Eligible youths must be 16-24 years of age, meet low income requirements, and live in the City of Pittsburgh or Allegheny County. Participants without a high school diploma may complete the necessary GED requirements. Career tracks include opportunities in construction, as well as health care (CNA); the age requirement for this career track is 18-24 years, and participants must have a high school diploma.

Information on the YouthBuild Program is available at [garfieldjubilee.org](http://garfieldjubilee.org). For more info, call program coordinator Dion Jones at 412-665-5206; email [Di-onJones@garfieldjubilee.org](mailto:Di-onJones@garfieldjubilee.org) or [YouthBuildPgh@gmail.com](mailto:YouthBuildPgh@gmail.com).



# BOOM Concepts seeking project manager, resident artists

## A Message from BOOM Concepts

Garfield - BOOM Concepts (5139 Penn Ave.) is looking to hire a project manager, with 1-3 years of experience, who will be responsible for overseeing public and in-house events and projects, including facilitation.

The job focuses mainly on mural projects and resident programming. The Project manager will have access to BOOM Concepts' space in Garfield, and will also be able to work remotely to complete their management duties.

This position is part-time; it pays a \$15 hourly rate. To apply, please email your CV/resume to boomconcepts1@gmail.com [subject: "BOOM Concepts Project Manager Inquiry"].

For BOOM Concepts' 2021 season, and in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Unblurred First Friday Gallery Crawl has been transformed into a new, on-site residency program called "BOOM Universe."

The new program is supported by The Opportunity Fund, The Advancing Black Arts in Pittsburgh Fund, and the R.K. Mellon Fund. During its beta launch last year, BOOM Universe featured artists/organizations Morgan Moody, Let's Get Free, Danielle Robinson, and Dafna Rehavia.

To apply, please email your CV/resume to boomconcepts1@gmail.com [subject: "BOOM Universe Residency 2021"]. ♦



## A Season of Change

We can all remember coloring eggs, eating chocolate candies and wearing our finest clothing. But the true sentiment of Easter is the hope that it brings.

As we reflect on Christ's resurrection and see the coming Spring, we receive a promise of future joy.

Let this season of change be a reminder that even life's deepest sorrows can be followed with new beginnings.



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# Rental assistance available to local tenants

By Rick Swartz Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation

Allegheny County - The city and county received over \$75 million in combined funds to help out local tenants who have fallen behind in their rent payments. If your landlord is willing to cooperate, the process is fairly easy, and any tenant can get the ball rolling by visiting covidrentrelief.alleghenycounty.us, or calling ACTION-Housing, Inc. at 412-248-0021.

But what happens if a landlord decides that he or she wants no part of the program, or doesn't respond to your request to be supportive? The federal program did make provisions for that possibility. Here's what a tenant will need to do:

- 1) Send a letter to the landlord – one copy by certified mail and one copy by regular mail - requesting that the landlord allow you to participate, and will agree to accept whatever assistance you qualify for under the program. Allow 14 calendar days for the landlord to respond, preferably in writing.
- 2) If you receive no response in writing, then make three attempts - on consecutive days even, by phone or by e-mail - asking for the landlord's participation. Make sure to archive any e-mails you send.
- 3) If you receive no response after completing Steps 1 & 2, or the landlord responds that he or she does not want to participate in the program, then you can ask the rent relief program to send the funds directly to you; program officials will be authorized to do that. You can then use the funds to reduce the balance on your rent account without the landlord's participation.

If you should need help with any of this, please contact either Paris Wright (412-441-6950, ext. 114) or Brendan Duckett (412-441-6950, ext. 123) at the Eastside Neighborhood Employment Center (113 N. Pacific Ave.). You can make an appointment soon to get help with the application process. ♦

## Crossword: answers to page 10 puzzle

Ready to see how you fared on the crossword puzzle from page 10? If you didn't know the answers, feel free to call the BGC at 412-441-6950. We welcome you to learn more about the organization. The crossword answers are as follows:

### Across

- 2. Bulletin
- 3. ENEC
- 4. Mainstreets
- 6. CCRP
- 8. Unblurred

### Down

- 11. Green Zone
- 12. Neighbors in Need
- 14. Affordable
- 1. Public Safety Task Force
- 5. Fifteen
- 7. Computer
- 9. Learn and Earn
- 10. Resume
- 13. Taxes ♦

## TELL THE CITY WHAT YOU WANT TO SEE IN GARFIELD!

Neighborhood plans create a path to sustaining a place - and its people - at the local level, but the ForgingPGH Comprehensive Plan aims to set a vision for the entire city.

ForgingPGH incorporates city-wide goals into each neighborhood's plans for growth and development. View the City's plan, and sound off on what you'd like to see in your neighborhood, at forgingpgh.org.



# GARFIELD COMMUNITY CLEAN UP

FEBRUARY 20, 2021

MARCH 20, 2021

APRIL 17, 2021

MAY 29, 2021

JUNE 26, 2021

JULY 24, 2021

AUGUST 14, 2021

SEPTEMBER 25, 2021

OCTOBER 16, 2021

NOVEMBER 13, 2021

ALL CLEAN UPS WILL BEGIN AT 9AM UNTIL NOON. PARTICIPANTS WILL MEET AT BGC OFFICE AT 113 N. PACIFIC AVENUE TO PICK UP CLEAN UP SUPPLIES AND BE ASSIGNED PRIORITY AREAS IF APPLICABLE. ALL CLEAN UPS ARE WEATHER-PERMITTING, IF NOT FAVORABLE A RAIN DATE WILL BE SCHEDULED. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS PLEASE CONTACT PORCHEA ANDREWS AT [PORCHEA@BLOOMFIELD-GARFIELD.ORG](mailto:PORCHEA@BLOOMFIELD-GARFIELD.ORG).



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# CLP celebrates 125th anniversary with commemorative library cards

A Message from Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh



**ABOVE:** Garfield artist D.S. Kinsel, of BOOM Concepts, designed a special library card in honor of Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh’s (CLP) 125th anniversary. Photo courtesy of CLP.

*Pittsburgh* - In 1895, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh (CLP) opened its doors as one of the first public libraries to give all people free access to art, music and literature – a pioneering concept at the time.

In 2020, the Library asked four highly esteemed Pittsburgh artists to design a library card based on their interpretation of “What does free to the people mean to you?” Taka-ra Canty, Cue Perry, D.S. Kinsel and Janel Young rose to the challenge in creating new, vibrant library cards that are now available to new and existing library card holders.

“I was really inspired by the motto ‘Free to the People’ and wanted to find an intentional intersection for the commission and my *Nothing But Love* series,” Kinsel said. “I really connected to the idea of how CLP’s history of offering free art, music, and literature was a true expression of love. I believe the Library allows for exploration of knowledge, culture, and love by being ‘Free To The People.’”

Library cards remain free to the public. Learn how to obtain a commemorative 125th anniversary card:

- Pennsylvania residents (13 years of age and over) may opt for one of the four commemorative library cards while supplies last. Cards may be acquired in-person at any CLP location, or through curbside service. Residents 12 years of age and under must register with an adult caretaker who agrees to assume responsibility for the card.
- To receive a commemorative card via curbside pickup, patrons should either a) call their preferred pickup location ahead, register, and schedule a pickup time; or b) arrive at their preferred CLP branch, and register over the phone so that staff can deliver an active card in a few moments.
- Patrons will be asked for ID - acceptable forms of ID are available on the Library’s website. Staff will not physically handle IDs.
- If a patron has an existing library card (physical or online), their new card will have a different barcode number. The patron will be asked to turn in their old, deactivated card when they pick up a new one. Changing the barcode does not alter existing account information, checkouts, or balances.

Real-time assistance is available from Library staff seven days a week. To access library services, call 412-622-3114, chat using the “How can we help?” icon on the Library’s website ([carnegielibrary.org](http://carnegielibrary.org)), or text 412-775-3900. ♦

**May Bulletin Deadline: Wednesday, Apr. 14th**

Download advertising information: [bit.ly/bulletin\\_ad](http://bit.ly/bulletin_ad)

Download guidelines for stories, photos, and notices: [bit.ly/bulletin\\_news](http://bit.ly/bulletin_news)

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