

# the Bulletin

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## 'Next Steps Fund' aims to close local homeownership gap

By Elizabeth Sensky

*East Liberty Development, Inc.*

*Allegheny County* - Catapult Greater Pittsburgh is on a mission to help more Black families become homeowners. The organization has a range of programs to this end - from financial counseling to a pre-purchase homeownership program called "DOOR" (Development Ownership Opportunities for Residents).

Its latest initiative, the "Next Steps Fund," takes this mission one step further by assisting first-time buyers with down payments and closing costs.

"The Next Steps Fund was birthed out of Catapult's dedication to economic justice opportunities for individuals seeking generational stability," Brettney Duck, Catapult's director of homeownership ex-

See **Next Steps** | page 2



**ABOVE:** Jerry Kraynick (left), Rocky Cristobal (center), and Jacinta Synnott catch some rays outside Kraynick's Bike Shop (5003 Penn Ave.). In spite of a wall collapse on May 6, Rocky plans to reopen the Garfield shop this summer. Read more on page 8. Photo by Alan Guenther.



**ABOVE:** Prospective homebuyers learn about the real estate market on Saturday, May 14. NeighborWorks of Western PA hosted the educational session in concert with Apollo Trust and the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation. Photo by Rick Swartz.

## Former synagogue finds new life as 'Negley Rotunda'

By Joe Reuben *Bulletin contributor*

*Garfield* - In the wake of recent progress made by its owner, Beacon Communities LLC, the historic rotunda building in the 300 block of N. Negley Avenue might find a second life after remaining empty for close to three decades.

Beacon, which bought the building last year, has worked for over two years with the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation and a number of consultants to ascertain what will have to be done, and how much it will cost, to salvage a structure that did not receive much care after the synagogue

closed its doors in the early 90s.

Courtney Koslow, development director with Beacon [at its offices based in Boston], said the new rotunda concepts could add a new dimension to everyday life in Garfield, East Liberty, and other nearby neighborhoods - a dimension that many have told her is missing today.

"That is a place where all can gather to experience those events that define our lives, as well as life in the community around the rotunda," she said. "The arts will figure

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*BULLETIN SUMMER VACATION:  
'GONE FISHING' UNTIL SEPTEMBER*

*REMEMBERING SHIRLEY GLEDITSCH,  
DEARLY DEPARTED WARRIOR*

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## Next Steps continued from page 1

plained. "Through this fund, we aim to close the racial homeownership gap in Allegheny County."

The idea for the fund came from seeing DOOR participants struggle to save enough money to cover closing costs; many were being forced to empty their retirement funds or emergency savings just to close on the property.

Catapult Executive Director Tammy Thompson told the *Pittsburgh City Paper*: "We knew that we wanted to offer support."

Launched last year, Catapult's "Next Steps Fund" has awarded \$129,158 to 32 individuals and families [to date]. Eligible buyers must complete the DOOR program, or a home-buying education workshop from another program, as well as Catapult's "Homeownership Fast-Track

Session."

The fund initially got off the ground with support from a generous group of Pittsburgh women.

As reported in the City Paper, Jennifer McDowell, Catherine Raphael, Ebe Emmons, Georgia Berner, Nancy Bernstein, and Diane Petronko felt compelled to take action in their communities after studying the racial disparities in Pittsburgh. Through the course of their research, they connected with Thompson and eventually decided to raise money for the fund. Catapult also received \$200,000 from the Pennsylvania Housing Affordability & Rehabilitation Enhancement Fund to support the new initiative.

One of the families who benefited from the fund, Tyler and Gloria Coulverson, received approximately \$5,000 to help cover

their down payment and closing costs on a three-bedroom, single-family home in Duquesne.

"Receiving this support from the Next Steps Fund has meant so much to me," Tyler said. "It has allowed me to allocate funds to furnish my home, and also take care of some initial expenses. My 401k [retirement fund] remains unbothered and my future retirement plans are still intact."

Catapult is currently accepting applications for the fund and - with help from state, foundation, and individual donations and grants - the organization aims to keep offering support for years to come.

The criteria for families or individuals interested in receiving assistance from the

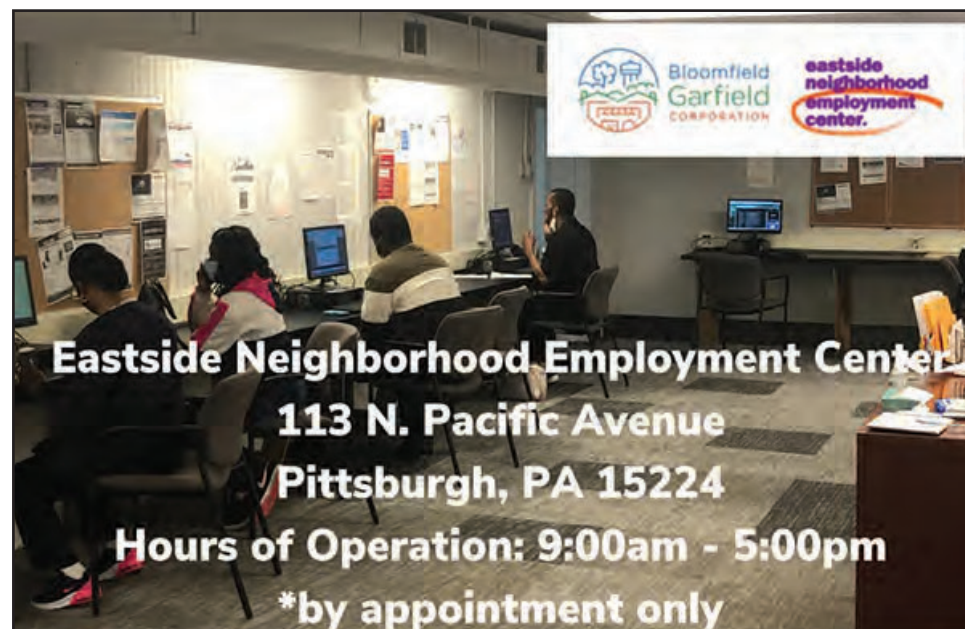
Next Steps Fund are as follows:

- Must be purchasing a home within Allegheny County
- Cannot earn more than 115% Area Median Income (AMI)
- Must be a first-time homebuyer
- Owner Occupant (Buyer must be a full-time resident of the property)
- Must participate in the Catapult Greater Pittsburgh DOOR program, earning a "First-Time Homebuyer Certificate."
- Buyer must contribute no less than 1% of the total purchase price to the transaction.

Those interested in becoming DOOR participants may reach out to Brettney Duck at [brettney@catapultpittsburgh.org](mailto:brettney@catapultpittsburgh.org). ♦



**ABOVE:** Homebuyers Tyler (right) and Gloria Coulverson are proud of their purchase, which was facilitated with support from the Next Steps Fund. Photo courtesy of Elizabeth Sensky.



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*This summer, we're pausing publication for July & August. You can rest assured that we're not being put out to pasture, and that we'll keep improving your favorite East End news source in the coming months.*

*The Bulletin will be back, and better than ever, in September. We can't wait to share our summer musings with you!*

## Family tradition: Turkano Mada earns full ride to attend Carlow College

By Judy Lubarski Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation



**ABOVE:** Turkano Mada, Perry High School Class of 2022 salutatorian, follows in the footsteps of her hard-working family. Photo courtesy of Judy Lubarski.

*Perspective/Garfield* - When Turkano Mada was a young girl, she and her family moved to the U.S. from Nairobi, Kenya. Now residing in the city's Northside, the Mada family is no stranger to the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation (BGC).

Turkano, a Perry High School graduate [Class of 2022] and four-year Learn & Earn student, recently completed her second year in the BGC's College & Career Readiness Program. Building on her experiences in various programs and internships over the last few years, she graduated as the salutatorian of her class - boasting a 3.9 GPA.

Turkano fielded a number of scholarship offers before accepting a full ride to attend Carlow College, where she will begin studying early education this fall.

For more than a decade, Turkano and her extended family have excelled in various BGC youth programs.

As each Mada graduates and follows their family's commitment to higher education, they never forget to help out their neighbors along the way. Because all the Mada sisters - Isha, Nuriya, and Turkano, just to name a few - have received some form of scholarship, their family has been able to avoid the financial burden of college tuition payments.

Congratulations, Turkano, and good Luck at Carlow College!

Are you a high school student who would like help plotting the course for your career path? Join the BGC's youth programs to prepare for your college or career journey; call 414-441-6950 (ext. 124 or 125) today. ♦

# the Bulletin

Serving Pittsburgh's  
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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 [Pam@Bloomfield-Garfield.org](mailto:Pam@Bloomfield-Garfield.org) for more details.

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

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# Immaculate Conception parishioners file Vatican appeal, plead case for 'The Mac'

By Alan Guenther *Bulletin contributor*

*Bloomfield* – As expected, Pittsburgh Bishop David Zubik has rejected an appeal by a group of parishioners who asked him to reopen the Immaculate Conception Church of Saint Maria Goretti Parish in Bloomfield.

By order of the bishop, the Immaculate Conception Church closed at 12:01 a.m. on May 2, hours after its final service. In a letter dated May 11, parishioners filed their appeal of the bishop's order with the Vatican.

"In the appeal, we request, as is our right, that the bishop's closing decree of March 25, 2022 be reversed and that Immaculate Conception Church be opened immediately," said parishioner Linda Vacca in a press release.

The Diocese of Pittsburgh is offering St. Joseph's Church (4712 Liberty Ave.) as the new home for those who formerly attended the Immaculate Conception Church, affectionately known as "The Mac."

In the press release, Vacca said that St. Joe's, constructed in 1872, has air quality problems and is not a safe place for worship. The Diocese has denied these allegations. Repair work at St. Joe's will be completed within two years, Diocesan officials told *The Bulletin* last month.

St. Joseph's will stay open and form a new parish with Our Lady of the Angels in Lawrenceville. Next year, the faithful will select a name for the new parish.

Catholic officials said The Mac, in the 300 block of Edmond Street, is a victim of declining attendance at Mass. Combined weekly Mass attendance at The Mac, St. Joe's, and Our Lady of the Angels declined from 1,013 attendees in 2012 to about 500 in 2019, and declined even further to 262 attendees in 2021, according to figures provided by the Diocese.

In all three churches, funerals are outpacing baptisms by more than two to one. In 2014, there were 46 baptisms and 96 funerals. In 2020, baptisms declined to 18, while 50 funerals were held.

"For us to sit in Bloomfield, or any area of the Diocese, and think that it's 1950 - that the churches are filled, the schools are filled, and that we're overflowing with priests - we would be fooling ourselves," Father John B. Gizler, III, regional vicar, told *The Bulletin* in April.

He said the Diocese is consolidating parishes throughout the area. By the time the process is complete next year, the number of parishes will drop from approximately 180 to 59. Many parishes have more than one church, and Rev. Gizler said he could not estimate how many churches will close. ♦



**ABOVE:** Parishioners take in one of the final church services - backlit by a breathtaking, stained-glass window - at 'The Mac' in Bloomfield. Photo by Alan Guenther.



**ABOVE:** Immaculate Conception Church parishioner Linda Vacca at her desk. She recently appealed the local Diocese's decision all the way to the Vatican. Photo by Alan Guenther.





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**SUMMER 2022**



## Lawrenceville Corporation welcomes neighbors to annual meeting

By Mary Jane MacArthur *Lawrenceville Corporation*

*Insight/Lawrenceville* - In celebration of its 22 years of community development work, Lawrenceville Corporation (LC) will be welcoming neighbors and local businesses to its annual LC meeting on Monday, Jun. 6. Guests will get a chance to learn about LC's community involvement while enjoying food, drinks, music, and raffle prizes from local supporters.

The event also provides opportunities for guests to network, allows LC members to participate in board elections, and incorporates a presentation from community leaders who are driving sustainable, equitable development in Lawrenceville.

This year, LC will provide a sneak peek of its sweeping report on neighborhood metrics, which describes neighborhood life and development from several angles. The full report, tentatively titled "Lawrenceville Neighborhood Metrics," will be published over the summer.

While the neighborhood's revitalization offers much to celebrate, it has also displaced many of our neighbors' housing; affordability is now scarce, and Lawrenceville is experiencing an uneven distribution of neighborhood gains.

Focusing on the past decade, the report dives into data on the neighborhood's loss of Black residents. It also details recent job growth and related cost-of-living increases, as well as any infrastructure investments and real estate developments.

Most of the findings are not necessarily surprising. For better or worse, these changes are reflected in the lived experience of our community members. The report quantifies these observations, offering unique context for each trend.

While our neighbors' input will always be valuable to Lawrenceville Corporation, it's the numbers that can really help our organization shift priorities to meet their changing needs.

The report is comprised of three main sections. The first, "Living in Lawrenceville," describes changes in community demographics and housing markets, as well as metrics on civic engagement and public health & safety within the neighborhood. The second section, "Economic Vibrancy," analyzes statistics on Lawrenceville's business corridors and development projects.

The "Infrastructure & Environment" section concludes the report with a focus on transit and mobility, land use, and environmental factors. Content from each section will be displayed at the annual meeting, along with information about how LC is responding.

Our report combines census and municipal data, expertise from LC's contacts across the city, and insights from our own programs and research. We are providing this information to the public in hopes that it will empower Lawrenceville residents to interpret the vast data at their fingertips, understand its context, and respond as needed.

In order to keep our work relevant to our neighbors, LC will return to these sources in an effort to continue tracking neighborhood trends.

We encourage community members interested in the LC report and our other programs to attend the annual celebration. The Jun. 6 event will be held on the rooftop of 3700 Butler Street, from 5:00 to 7:30 p.m. To learn more about LC's annual celebration, and to register online, please visit [Facebook.com/Lawrenceville.Corporation](https://Facebook.com/Lawrenceville.Corporation). ♦

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# Negley Rotunda continued from page 1

prominently in that picture. But it will also hopefully become a place where anyone can gather to celebrate, to educate or be educated, and to enhance what's happening in the world around them."

"We have Rothschild Doyno Architects working pretty diligently at the moment to flesh out what those concepts could be," Koslow told *The Bulletin* recently. "We started this process with community *charrettes* back in the summer of 2018. We now have floor plans that show everything from a town hall meeting space to a theater in the round - from a venue for weddings and other private events to an art market, art gallery, and even a temporary shelter for people to find safety when some type of calamity has struck the area."

Koslow said that Beacon does not intend to own the rotunda when the renovations are ready to begin.

Instead, it will transfer ownership of the facility to a local nonprofit [with whom

Koslow says they recently executed a memorandum of agreement] and allow that organization to oversee the planning and fundraising efforts necessary to make the concepts a reality.

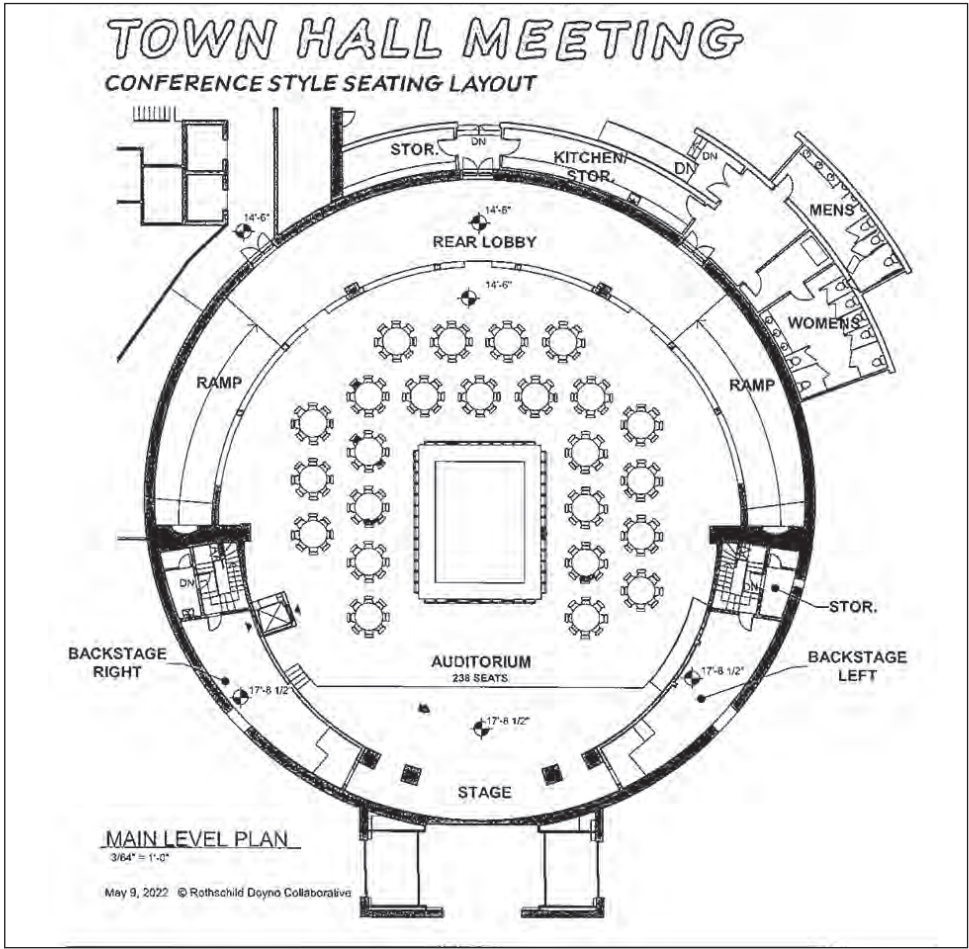
"That group, which I won't identify today, will soon be reaching out to the neighbors of the rotunda to obtain their input on the reuse of the space," Koslow explained.

"From there, the group will lead efforts to get zoning approval from the city, put together a parking plan for visitors to the facility, and then begin knocking on doors in order to raise the necessary funds. They also want to create a separate nonprofit, which they're going to call the 'Rotunda Collaborative,' to oversee the facility's month-to-month management and programming."

Koslow anticipates that it could take the community as long as four to five years to secure what might be in excess of \$8 million to deal with all of the build-out work.

"Beacon will help as well because we're talking about a structure that has been stripped clean of everything. But I'm certain the community will take it in phases," Koslow said. "The first goal is clean it out and bring some temporary utilities to the space. We want to be able to open it for pop-up events and other interim programming, and then begin to add important features such as an HVAC system, new domed roof, new bathrooms, new lighting, and a leveling out of the existing floor."

Look to future editions of *The Bulletin* for progress updates as the former synagogue is transformed into a multi-functional, community hub. ♦



**ABOVE:** A schematic shows how the Rotunda at 327 N. Negley Ave. could be utilized as a public meeting space, among other uses. Graphic courtesy of Beacon Communities.

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## Summer fun slated for Garfield Greenzone

By Madeline Weiss Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation

**BELOW:** BGC staffer Kuwame Kinsel, who specializes in conservation, clears out space for the Greenzone's new Hillcrest Trail. Photo by Madeline Weiss.



*Insight/Garfield* - The Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation (BGC) has been hard at work in the Greenzone this year, installing the first segment of a new trail plan. Although the full trail plan, which will be implemented over several years, will integrate pedestrian and bike trails throughout the neighborhood - this segment is isolated to the old Healecrest Farm site (N. Pacific Ave. & Hillcrest St.).

Dubbed the "Hillcrest Trail," the project comes from a partnership between the Allegheny Land Trust, which owns the land, and the BGC, which will maintain the space. The site is open to the public, and the trail is ready to be enjoyed by our neighbors.

Over the summer, there will be projects-a-plenty at the site. BGC staffers will join volunteers and local youths to work on invasive species management, plant pollinators, build habitats, and grow vegetables. We are working to develop more partnerships to help us host sustainable workforce trainings and educational workshops on tree care, native habitat, and more this summer. Visit the BGC's website ([bloomfield-garfield.org](http://bloomfield-garfield.org)) and Facebook page (@BloomGarCorp) for updated event listings.

The Hillcrest Trail is intended for pedestrian use. As a means of preventing damage to the trail, which is still fragile, no motorized vehicles are permitted on the site.

We aren't just limiting ourselves to the Hillcrest Trail site, as Greenzone staffers will organize clean-ups, hopefully at least once a month, and plant native vegetation throughout Garfield. We're teaming up with Learn & Earn youths again this year, and planning fun activities that not only benefit the neighborhood, but also provide meaningful learning opportunities to participating students.

While we prepare for a hot summer, it's vital that we keep in mind all the important work we can do to keep our core temperatures down this summer. One helpful tip involves reducing the "heat island" effect. According to the EPA, heat islands can cause a temperature increase of up to seven degrees in a given area - in comparison to areas with more greenery and less asphalt. Urban environments exacerbate heat island effects due to heat-absorbing infrastructure like pavement and standard buildings. Evenly distributing greenery and sustainable spaces can help reduce the dangerous heat burden we experience under the summer sun.

We need volunteers and community support to help maintain Garfield's vital green spaces, so please join us this summer. Together, we can work to keep the neighborhood safe, healthy, and green. See below for details on Garfield Greenzone clean-up events scheduled throughout the summer.

**Garfield Greenzone clean-ups are scheduled for the following Saturdays: Jun. 25, Jul. 23, Aug. 27, and Sept. 24. Clean-ups will last from 10 a.m. to Noon; we'll meet at 113 North Pacific Avenue [any location changes will be reflected on the BGC website and Facebook page]. Water and light refreshments will be provided and, though volunteers may bring their own gloves if they prefer, we'll provide rubber gloves and/or gardening gloves. Please email [madeline@bloomfield-garfield.org](mailto:madeline@bloomfield-garfield.org) with any questions. Garfield residents who'd like to organize their own clean-up outside of these dates are encouraged to reach out for help in arranging supplies and promotion. ♦**

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# Neighborhood FOCUS

## Collapsed wall no match for good vibes at Kraynick's Bike Shop in Garfield

By Alan Guenther *Bulletin contributor*

**Garfield** – A side wall towards the rear of the building collapsed. The electric and water were turned off. The building was temporarily condemned by the city. But Rocky Cristobal, the 42-year-old owner of Kraynick's Bike Shop (5003 Penn Ave.), says reports of his shop's demise are greatly exaggerated.

"It's just a speed bump," he observed. While Cristobal waits for the necessary construction permits from the city, he continues greeting customers and repairing bikes on the sidewalk in front of his store. On May 6, the day the side wall of his shop fell out, he had 38 bikes to repair. He vows to finish them all.

Cristobal believes heavy rains and demolition work at an adjacent building damaged his shop. Insurance will pay for the damages, and he expects the matter will ultimately be resolved in court.

With serene confidence, he maintains that the shop will be fully repaired and open again this summer. To those who know Kraynick's Bike Shop, that sort of go-with-the flow calmness comes as no surprise.

Kraynick's is like a "Zen on Penn" paradise - a place that borrows, philosophically, from some of the same ideas in author Robert Pirsig's *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*, which explores value systems and quality-of-life improvements.

In many cases, people do not pay Cristobal to fix their bikes. Instead, he teaches them to fix their own.

When the shop is open, he said, "you'll see a graduate student, a teacher, and a homeless person - and everybody all working side by side at the shop."

"Everybody's equal," he explained. "We want to educate people and let them know about their bikes - so they can be able to work on them and become more independent. And that happens here every day."

Those who know him say Cristobal cares more about helping people than making money. Last month, for example, he gave a bicycle to an Afghan refugee.

Mount Lebanon resident Jacinta Synnott estimates that, over the years, she has brought more than 500 broken or damaged bikes to Kraynick's, where they are re-conditioned before being gifted to disadvantaged kids. She cannot imagine a Pittsburgh without Kraynick's Bike Shop. "It's an important part of the community," she said.

Cristobal is a medical doctor, though he does not practice in the United States. He lives in Squirrel Hill with his two children, Rocco, 9, and Isaiah, 2. His wife, Jennifer, works as a landscape architect and planner, and he credits her with keeping the

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**BELOW:** A collapsed wall, and the debris left in its wake, at Kraynick's Bike Shop in Garfield.



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family financially stable.

The doctor says he rejects medicine as it is practiced in America, where the system is corrupted by money. Many Americans put off trips to the hospital because they are afraid of the costs, and insurance companies deny people the care they need.

He wanted to help people, but he didn't want to be part of a broken medical system. So, he fixes bikes.

"I had a chance to not only run a bike shop, but to continue a legacy," he said.

The legacy, of course, was created by the former owner, Jerry Kraynick, 78. Kraynick moved the bike shop from the Hill District, where his father operated it, to its current location in Garfield in 1976. He bought the building at 5003 Penn Ave. for \$5,000.

He fondly recalls when he first met Cristobal.

*'You'll see a graduate student, a teacher, and a homeless person - and everybody's working side by side at [Kraynick's Bike Shop].'*

- Rocky Cristobal, Owner, Kraynick's Bike Shop

"You've got to remember," Kraynick noted, "that his family are all doctors."

After finishing high school, Cristobal earned an anthropology degree at Pitt. He then decided to return to the Philippines, where he earned his medical degree. The young doctor soon came back to Pittsburgh and passed all his medical boards. But slowly, he began to realize his true passion.

"All of a sudden, he started volunteering here at the bike shop," Kraynick explained. "And the idea comes to him: 'Hey, this is what I want.'"

The bike shop revived a childhood dream. In 10th grade, Cristobal remembers, he wanted to run a bike shop, and the dream stayed with him. When Kraynick planned to step away from the business, he wanted to make sure the vibe and spirit he had created there would continue.

Five years ago, Cristobal bought the shop.

"I was able to do it," he said. "I had the resources to change paths. I feel fortunate that I was able to do it, with pretty good support from my family."

His grandfather once told him "it doesn't matter what you do, just do something wonderful." In Cristobal's search for a true calling, this axiom illuminates the life path ahead of him. ♦

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# Holding Shirley Gleditsch in the light

By Carol J. Gonzalez *Bulletin contributor*



**ABOVE:** Shirley Gleditsch was a fixture behind the front desk at Thrifty, a secondhand store she founded at 5123 Penn Avenue. Photo by Andrew McKeon.

[Editor's Note: At the age of 90, Garfield resident Shirley Gleditsch passed away peacefully on Jan. 16, 2022. From her work as a BGC Board member to her role in founding the East End Community Thrift Store, Shirley touched many lives with her boundless compassion. She was a fierce advocate for social justice, not to mention a savant in the world of auto sales. The Thomas Merton Center recently shared this tribute to Shirley's legacy.]

**Garfield** - Shirley Gleditsch was the daughter of a merchant, a proud alumna of Grove City College, the wife of a minister, Mom to two children, grandmother, great grandmother and family to the many whom she welcomed with open arms.

Shirley was the director of music for several congregations, worked with troubled youths as a counselor at the Warrendale Youth Development Center, sold cars, and owned the East & West International Restaurant.

She was a social justice advocate striving for a world of peace. Shirley fought for justice in Pittsburgh; she fought for justice in the United States, and the entire world. Shirley was arrested multiple times for protesting injustice, standing up to nuclear weapons, and fighting for the environment.

She was a board member for the Thomas Merton Center (TMC) for many years. In 1993, Shirley founded the East End Community Thrift Shop ["Thrifty"] in Garfield to support TMC's staffing needs. She also served as the manager of Thrifty until 2017, when she retired.

Thrifty remains a central place in the community. Women coming out of incarceration, single moms, and women in shelters all get free vouchers to buy clothing - and anyone receiving food stamps or any other fixed incomes receive free vouchers for Christmas. Currently, 50 churches and 35 agencies use Thrifty's voucher system; they give out gift vouchers to help their clients shop for free.

A member of Pittsburgh North People for Peace and North Hills Anti-Racism Coalition, Shirley fought for civil rights for Black Americans; she fought for equal pay for women; she fought for marriage equality for the gay community; and she was an advocate for the incarcerated and the released.

In 1995, Shirley joined members of Pittsburgh Peace Links on the Peace Train from Helsinki, Finland to Beijing, China for the International Women's Conference.

She was a leader and lay minister in her church, having served for many years as the Chair of the Consistory at the Community of Reconciliation, an intentionally interracial and inclusive Protestant community worshipping in Pittsburgh's Oakland neighborhood since 1968.

Shirley received much recognition for her life's work, including when Pittsburgh City Council named May 22, 2014 to be "Shirley Gleditsch Day."

She was also an active member of the Pittsburgh Poetry Society. In her free time, Shirley was an avid sports fan, following the Steelers and Penguins - and her favorite, the Pirates. Shirley also enjoyed traveling, dining out (especially Ritter's Diner), and collecting toy giraffes.

Shirley had the spirit of a warrior. She cared - deeply and passionately - for people. Shirley was the embodiment of one of Thomas Merton's principles: "Our job is to love others without stopping to inquire whether or not they are worthy." She lived this principle daily. Most importantly, Shirley was a gift for all who knew and loved her. Her kindness, generosity and stubbornness will be carried in our hearts.

Left to cherish her memory are: her grandsons Casey Biddle [and his wife, Lauren], Michael Biddle, and Joseph Biddle; great-grandchildren Dylan Biddle and Dustyn Biddle; sister-in-law Phyllis Gleditsch, niece Beth Walker; Maggie, her dog; Brody, her cat; and many dear friends, cousins, and other family members. In addition to her parents and husband, Shirley was predeceased by her two children, Michael Biddle and Judy A. Jewell; brother-in-law Ray Gleditsch; and her dear friends Jen Lieb and Anne Kuhn.

Contributions may be sent in her memory to the Community of Reconciliation or The East End Community Thrift Store.

Please donate to the Thrifty building fund at [thomasmertoncenter.org/thrifty](http://thomasmertoncenter.org/thrifty). ♦



**Father's day is a special day** of the year to remember our fathers and father figures.

**Yet, as we know,** it can also be a very difficult time for those who grew-up without or who have lost a father.

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## New book highlights Lawrenceville's historic Allegheny Arsenal

A Message from Lawrenceville Historical Society

*Lawrenceville* - The Lawrenceville Historical Society (LHS) recently released its first new book since 2005.

While the society's first three books - published between 1993 and 2005 - were anthologies filled with stories about people, sites, and community events, the new publication is dedicated solely to the Allegheny Arsenal and its place in local and national history.

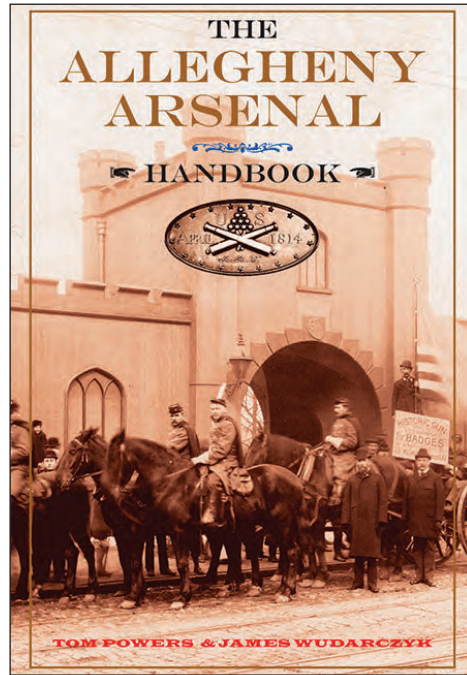
Written by Tom Powers and James Wudarczyk, *The Allegheny Arsenal Handbook* is a comprehensive examination of a major Pittsburgh military facility from its inception in 1814, all the way through to modern times.

Michael G. Kraus, Curator/Historian of Soldiers & Sailors Memorial Hall & Museum, wrote the introduction. "This book," he noted, "for the first time, pulls together the complete history from 1814 to the present - with well researched text and copious illustrations."

Powers and Wudarczyk are known in historical circles throughout Pittsburgh and the surrounding vicinities for their lectures and writings on a wide array of topics. Powers, a graphic designer by trade, is

responsible for illustrating the book while also contributing new text and research. Wudarczyk has been researching the Allegheny Arsenal since 1980; he published a 100-page primer [*Pittsburgh's Forgotten Allegheny Arsenal*] in 1999.

Five years ago, Powers suggested it was



ABOVE: Powers and Wudarczyk's new book. Graphic courtesy of LHS.

time to update Wudarczyk's text because both men had collected additional materials on the Allegheny Arsenal since the previous printing.

In 2012, they collaborated on a series of lectures to commemorate the tragic arsenal explosion of 1862, which claimed the lives of 78 persons during the Civil War.

In addition, they have co-authored numerous articles that explored local history. When the idea of a book on the Allegheny Arsenal surfaced, neither had anticipated a history of 340-pages with scores of maps, photographs, and illustrations. They spent five years sifting through hundreds of reference sources to prepare for the book's publication.

While most people who research the Allegheny Arsenal concentrate on the Civil War explosion from the perspective of the coroner's inquest into the tragedy, Powers and Wudarczyk examine the under-reported military inquest.

They reason how and why the facility

came to be located in Lawrenceville, illustrate its national contributions across five wars, offer a complete list of commanding officers, and flesh out numerous side-line stories about some of the people and events that made the facility - bounded by the railroad tracks, Penn Avenue, 39th and 40th Streets - an important place in history. The book also includes the only known photograph of one of the victims of the 1862 explosion.

*The Allegheny Arsenal Handbook* is now available via mail-order for \$20, plus \$5 postage & handling (total cost: \$25). Please make checks payable to "Lawrenceville Historical Society"; mail payments to LHS, 417 Fisk Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15224.

For more info, and to download an order form, visit the LHS website at [lawrencevillehistoricalsociety.org/publications](http://lawrencevillehistoricalsociety.org/publications). Print copies may also be obtained, without the shipping cost, at personal appearances and lectures featuring Tom & Jim. Check out their schedule on the LHS website. ♦



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# LOCAL REAL ESTATE BLOTTER

- Bloomfield, Friendship, Garfield, East Liberty, Lawrenceville, & Stanton Heights -

Real Estate Sales for the month of March 2022

Compiled by Lillian Denhardt, Residential Realtor

## Bloomfield

A Wayne Ferens to Sarah Jo Lacy at 248 1/2 S Winebiddle St. for \$361,000.

Amanda L Daugherty to Madeline Farina at 254 Edmond St. for \$211,375.

Beth A & Timothy K Amos Humensky to O'Neills Investments, LLC at 424 Pearl St. for \$150,000.

D & D Design & Build, LLC to Alexander Frelrier at 4023 Mintwood St. for \$349,250.

Dennis McKevitt to Pabean Property, LP at 340 West Penn Pl for \$280,000.

Elaine C DiBenedetto to Zhenya Yuferova and Choi Chi Young at 618 Edmond St. for \$279,000.

Gary J & Cynthia Crnkovich Fischerkeller to Alan Sweitzer at 4035 Howley St. for \$375,000.

Ha Mong & Ngoc Lan Thi Vo Nguyen to Yih-Liang & Jou at 210 S Mathilda St. for \$206,000.

Joseph J & Dolores M Bailey to Brian P Baer at 312 Sapphire Way for \$165,000.

Joyce Cetra to Cash For Homes PGH, LLC at 161 Morewood Ave. for \$130,000.

Ke Ren to Qian Wang at 420 S Aiken Ave. Unit B2 for \$155,000.

Kenneth H Haywood to Skd Holdings, LLC at 515 Gross St. for \$270,000.

## Friendship

No sales to report.

## Garfield

5349 Kincaid, LLC to Rae Koshida at 5349 Kincaid St. for \$292,000.

East Liberty Development, Inc. to Allegheny Land Trust at 0 Kincaid St. for \$1.

TS PIT, LLC to Allegheny Land Trust at 0 Kincaid St. for \$1.

## East Liberty

David L Williams to Sellers Direct, LLC at 524 Mellon St. for \$180,000.

East Liberty Development, Inc. to Paul

D'Alesandro at 708 Moga St. for \$6,500.

L Magee Properties, LLC to Baum & Mitchell Limited Liability Company at 5732 Baum Blvd for \$1,600,000.

Melanie S Tabb to Shanel A Woodruff at 6212 Huntress St. for \$130,000.

Saint Clair Apartments, LP to Benjamin McDonald at 5810 Rippey St. for \$424,700.

Timberdale Imperial, LP to Elsie Marie Bannon-Jones at 5815 Station St. for \$587,000.

## Lawrenceville

1301Grandview I, LLC to Owen C Watt at 335 39th St. for \$417,000.

3811 Associates to 21 Katz Crew, LP at 3505-07 Butler St. for \$2,610,000.

3811 Associates to 21 Katz Crew, LP at 3801 Butler St. for \$2,610,000.

Ana Maria Caula to James Rindfuss at 127 44th St. for \$580,000.

Casa De Kaha, LLC to Alexander Hill at 252 46th St. for \$473,800.

Casa Renovata, LLC to Michael Daniel McKenna at 5219 Poe Way for \$285,000.

Casey Slotter to Joseph V & Nancy L B Draper Schaeffer at 5307 Holmes St. for \$700,000.

Christian C Schrader to Oliver F Fleischmann at 170 Home St. for \$435,612.

Deborah J & Thomas Zabielski to Davis Ross, LLC at 176 42nd St. for \$385,000.

Elizabeth A Wolfskill to Gabriel & Melinda McGovern Naccarato at 5123 Holmes St. for \$135,000.

Estate Of Yvonne Kaczmarek to Helmet Holdings, LLC at 230 43rd St. for \$235,000.

Frank Villa to Nicholas John Disanti at 166 1/2 38th St. for \$340,000.

Freedom Buyers, LLC to Wa2 Developers, LLC at 5140 Dresden Way for \$130,000.

Gerard & Karina Grande to Henry & Leighann Marquiss at 5106 Dresden Way for \$100,000.

Jenny E Halfhill to Kaitlin Parente at 278 46th St. for \$423,500.

Joseph Mark Nolan to Derek James Gieraltowski at 309 45th St. for \$410,000.

JSJ Sustainable Investments, LLC to Yusuf Kaan Islak at 3928 Mintwood St. for \$345,000.

Kathleen A Peltz Asset Protection Trust to Frank & Courtney Matarazzo at 4220 Post St. for \$295,000.

Kay F Byrne to Reipittone, LLC at 264 45th St. for \$390,000.

Lacey J Walters to Christopher Clemens at 4030 Willow St. for \$520,000.

Lauren A & Brandon Z Bell to Peter Kipling & Desiree Soteres at 5110 Carnegie St. for \$515,000.

Lawrenceville Lofts, LLC to Elyse Lorenzato at 3725 Butler St. Unit 304 for \$610,500.

Lawrenceville Lofts, LLC to John R Jr. & Tracy H Null at 3725 Butler St. Unit 509 for \$635,000.

Lawrenceville Lofts, LLC to Lucas Quebbeman at 3725 Butler St. Unit 402 for \$594,000.

Lawrenceville Lofts, LLC to Philip Yastrow Revocable Trust at 3725 Butler St. Unit 503 for \$649,000.

Lawrenceville Lofts, LLC to Scott & Alexandra Schinderle at 3725 Butler St. Unit 404 for \$611,200.

Lawrenceville Lofts, LLC to Thomas M McGilloway at 3725 Butler St. Unit 410 for \$564,400.

Lawrenceville Lofts, LLC to Torey L Sharp at 3725 Butler St. Unit 209 for \$535,000.

Lizabeth R Walters to Steven P & Lori A Larrabee at 5287 Holmes St. for \$525,000.

Marc5 H2, LLC to Julianna Higa at 194 43rd 1/2 St. for \$405,000.

Michael Hull to Paul M & Patricia Anne Bojarski at 3509 Leech St. for \$308,000.

Michael Piontek Sr. to Dennis J & Colleen Steigerwalt at 337 46th St. for \$155,000.

Milestone Custom Homes, LLC to Jesse J & Cassandra Wilson at 120 Locarna Way for \$715,000.

Moore Navarro Properties, LLC to Christine Manasterski at 3916 Woolslayer Way for \$195,000.

Nickolas D Surra to Amanda Elyse Cowell at 5309 Carnegie St. for \$601,000.

Patrick X Gray to Lauren Levant Bland at 3906 Howley St. for \$300,000.

Paul Carl & Haley Lynn Wulff to Joseph Ielapi at 4606 Hatfield St. for \$700,000.

Samuel Algeo to Michael & Diana Palagashvilli at 5333 Holmes St. for \$140,000.

Sfr3-000, LLC to Neuman Investing, LLC at 106 44th St. for \$195,000.

Simone Fujikawa to Michael Paolini at 317 39th St. for \$402,000.

Thomas R Bland Jr. to Michael Boyd Owen at 187 42nd St. for \$346,500.

William & Margaret M Barron to Easy Rentals, LLC at 3702 Penn Ave. for \$325,000.

William Drozd to 3935 Howley, LLC at 3935 Howley St. for \$262,250.

Wylie Holding Co. to Maren K Ketcham at 4217 Dunkeld Way for \$267,000.

## Stanton Heights

Annabelle Flom Irrevocable Trust to Jeremiah Miller at 1560 Hawthorne St. for \$280,700.

Barbara J Kline to Casey Roeder at 1127 Normahill Dr for \$144,000.

Barbara Louise Slaney to Daniel & Diane Bradley at 1513 Hawthorne St. for \$59,999.

Feras Alkhattar to Robert Jared & Margaret Elizabeth Lindenberg at 5136 Rosecrest Dr for \$360,000.

John & Joann Jennings to Lauren Zurchin at 5609 Wickliff St. for \$90,000.

Kathryn M Haas to Robert Hartle at 1621 Hawthorne St. for \$235,000.

Norman S & Georgia A Marciniak to Alexander Carne-Clark at 1014 Downlook St. for \$359,000.

Peter A & Audrey Carricato to Amy Cunningham at 6026 Sawyer St. for \$212,500.

Pinkie Reed to Kirberg Construction, LLC at 1001 Premier St. for \$160,000.

Reed E McManigle to Scott A Harris at 4307 Stanton Ave. for \$230,000.

Steven Peepels to Rolley Holdings, LLC at 1021-1023 Woodbine St. for \$200,000.

Thomas D Kennedy to RDH Investments, LLC at 4305 Upview Ter. for \$129,000.

*This column, which uses data from Allegheny County's online portal, contains occasional errors. If something looks off, please let us know. Feel free to call with questions, or just to chat, about real estate in your neighborhood. Contact Lillian at lillian@agent-lillian.com or 412-335-6068. ♦*

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# Local groups slam developers’ lawsuit against inclusionary zoning policy

A Message from East End community development organizations

[Editor’s Note: The following statement has been edited for space.]

*Op-Ed/Pittsburgh* - One of the key areas highlighted by Mayor Ed Gainey’s transition team report is the critical need for more affordable housing for Pittsburgh families.

And yet - on the same day the Gainey Administration joined more than 50 community leaders to announce recommendations that lift up the city’s Black and brown communities, low-income and working families, and those whose voices have been left out - the Builders Association of Metropolitan Pittsburgh (BAMP) announced its vision for corporate greed by filing a lawsuit against the new Mayor’s first affordable housing policy.

Gainey won the mayoral election with a pledge to focus on affordable housing and expand inclusionary zoning. All Pittsburghers, no matter what neighborhood they live in or how much money they have, should have the ability to find a home in any corner of this city. But BAMP, a special interest group comprised of corporate real estate developers, is now suing the administration, prioritizing exorbitant profits over people.

“All of us, regardless of where we live or what we look like, deserve homes that are safe, affordable, and accessible,” said Jennifer Rafanan Kennedy, Executive Director of Pittsburgh United. “But groups like BAMP rig the rules to jack up prices, build only for the wealthiest few, and hoard even more profits for themselves. We need common sense solutions like inclusionary zoning to ensure every Pittsburgher has a safe, secure home to raise our kids, pursue our dreams, and make memories.”

Unaffordable housing has displaced thousands of Pittsburghers - pushing them further from access to food, transit, health care, neighborhood & family support systems, and jobs. The absence of affordable housing has pushed hundreds of low-income families - particularly Black families - outside of the city limits.

Pittsburgh lost 10,660 Black residents between 2010 and 2020, a 13.4% decline. In just five years, Lawrenceville lost more than half of its Black population, half of its kids under 18, and half of its long-time homeowners, even as the neighborhood experienced its largest housing boom in decades.

“BAMP’s preposterous statement that ‘Pittsburgh doesn’t have an affordable housing problem’ shows they’re perfectly satisfied with ongoing segregation as long as they get to keep generating their profits,” said Christina Howell, Executive Director of Bloomfield Development Corporation (BDC). “Their open contempt for struggling families in our city proves the need for bold action from policy makers,” she explained, “to ensure that Pittsburghers from every neighborhood have access to safe, secure, affordable housing.”

As prices skyrocket on everything from gas to bread, housing is becoming one of the hardest expenses to cover, especially in quickly gentrifying neighborhoods. This means that the most vulnerable Pittsburghers are faced with increasingly terrible choices.

Thankfully, the city has tools like inclusionary zoning (IZ) at its disposal to help alleviate the affordable housing crisis. By requiring large housing developments to include a percentage of units for lower-income households, IZ ensures that new development meets the housing needs of everyone.

Inclusionary housing policies have existed for decades, producing more than 100,000 affordable homes across the country. These ordinances have been repeatedly challenged by special interest groups like BAMP across the country, but have been upheld consistently in state and federal courts.

Studies have shown that inclusionary zoning is effective at reducing displacement, and creating more affordable housing, in neighborhoods with lower concentrations of poverty and good schools.

Pittsburgh’s inclusionary zoning ordinance went through a robust, extensive process with local and national experts and the local community - receiving overwhelming support in the neighborhoods where it has been implemented and winning unanimous approval from the City’s Planning Commission and City Council. In Lawrenceville, it has already set the stage for the construction of 40 new units of affordable housing; more projects are already in the works for the Lawrenceville, Bloomfield, and Polish Hill neighborhoods.

Councilwoman Deb Gross, who introduced the ordinance, has repeatedly lauded it as a successful example of residents driving policy to realize a collective vision for their neighborhoods.

“As Mayor Gainey’s transition team made clear, more can and should be done to address the affordable housing crisis in Pittsburgh,” Dave Breingan, Executive Director of Law-

renceville United (LU), noted. “Despite BAMP’s evidence-free claims and many factual errors, inclusionary zoning is a sensible, proven policy that’s already working – one that will help Pittsburghers who are disproportionately hurt by the costs of displacement and rising rents.”

Monica Ruiz, Executive Director of Casa San José and co-chair of the Gainey Transition Committee on Equitable Development, elaborated on the need for affordable housing.

“Pittsburghers in every city neighborhood want a safe, secure place to call home. Yet here in our ‘most livable city,’ a lack of affordable housing is reaching crisis levels. This most basic of human needs – shelter - is put out of our reach to turn a quick profit for the corporate developers who make up special interest groups like BAMP. If we truly want Pittsburgh to be ‘the most livable city’ for all of our residents, we need solutions like inclusionary zoning.”

Pittsburgh United, LU, Lawrenceville Corporation, Polish Hill Civic Association, Oakland Planning & Development Corporation, Casa San José, BDC, and Pittsburgh Community Reinvestment Group are calling on Mayor Gainey and City Council to stand by their mandate to build a “Pittsburgh for all.” These community groups are now vigorously defending the city’s IZ ordinance against any legal challenge, expanding IZ’s impact city-wide, and aggressively pursuing other policies to address the affordable housing crisis in Pittsburgh.

Now is the time for members of BAMP, and all community-minded builders and developers who do business in Pittsburgh, to speak out against BAMP’s regressive attacks against community-driven housing policies. The coalition of neighborhood groups demands that BAMP stop attacking working-class families and good, lawful housing policy by immediately withdrawing its legal challenge to IZ.

Instead of filing baseless lawsuits that will waste taxpayer resources, BAMP members would be better served by working with local housing advocates and organizations to create real solutions to Pittsburgh’s housing crisis – promoting inclusive, mixed-income communities with opportunities for everyone. ♦







**ABOVE:** Melissa Ciccocioppo (left) and Wynne Lanros admire the contributions to a Victor Navarro, Jr. memorial in Bloomfield. The sidewalk outside Yinz Coffee (4525 Liberty Ave.), where Ciccocioppo works as a server extraordinaire, is devoted to the memory of her favorite customer. Victor's friends have decorated his former domain with flowers, artwork, and even tobacco offerings. Roses courtesy of Eric Hauser. Photo courtesy of Melissa Ciccocioppo.

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# BOOM Universe spotlight: resident artist Clara Kent

Interview by J. Thomas Agnew BOOM Concepts

*Garfield* - BOOM Universe kicks off a new season of its residency program with multi-talented artist Clara Kent. While she is well-known as a budding musical performer, Kent aims to build on her artistry by pursuing different forms of expression on her own terms. The following interview has been excerpted from the full conversation, available at boomuniverse.co.

**BOOM:** What artistic skills are you looking to hone during this residency?

**Kent:** “I’m looking forward to furthering my acrylic painting skills, drawing fantastical landscapes and architecture, and learning methods for better composition. Also, self-documenting and diving into film work!”

**BOOM:** How important is it to be part of a residency that’s not project-based?

**Kent:** “It’s vital to me. I’m currently unlearning a codependency practice that many artists face. We often feel we must create for something other than love or self-expression. Having a residency allows me to come into the ‘Fool’s Journey,’ meaning I can release the need to exist or create for something other than the process itself. It gives me room, both physically and mentally, to step into a fully creative space - without a deadline looming over my head, or having to rush towards an accomplishment or goal. The main goal is to learn, unlearn, and enjoy the process.”

**BOOM:** How does having a separate space to create - away from your living space, where you’ve probably been forced to work before - help your creative process?

**Kent:** “Again, it’s vital! I need alone time in a concentrated space to focus and immerse myself fully in the art. I’m highly intuitive about painting, and I use the guidance within to connect to the canvas. Being in a specific space that allows me room to be wild and untamed, or even calm and still, educes a genuine connection to an authentic experience and artwork. Also, it can be complicated to do this at home; my home is a space of

rest and recovery, with limited space to make large-scale paintings, and my inspiration can be narrow there. Being around other creative people, having resources to grow as an artist, and a focused space to artistically unleash is undeniably enriching!”

**BOOM:** What are some roadblocks you’ve encountered on the path to achieving your full creative self, and how do you hope to overcome them in a healthy way?

**Kent:** “I can list many, but they all lead to one thing: well-being. Whether it’s inner or outer interference, I’ve come to see that without wellness of mind, body, heart, and soul, it’s not sustainable to create. We believe it’s noble to be a ‘struggling artist’ and, unfortunately, many still follow that path. I was one of those people, especially as a teenager. Being Black in America, we are taught that we are only worth our work. We are taught from many situations - historically and presently - that our art, labor, and time are worth more than the lives we live. I’ve recognized this in my views, tucked under deep pockets and grooves in my mind. Steadily, I’ve been clearing these beliefs and transmuting them into songwriting, journaling, art therapy, and many other self-reflection practices - enabling me to return to art with joy as the centerpiece, and not ‘accomplishment’ or abusing art to ‘earn’ satisfaction. I’m still a work in progress and, for that, I am grateful.” ♦




**ABOVE:** BOOM Universe resident artist Clara Kent. Photo courtesy of BOOM.

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