



# CENTER CITY QUARTERLY



Newsletter of the Center City Residents' Association

Vol. 1 No. 2 June 2010

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## The View from The Window Box

By Virginia Nalencz

Confessing to her sister that she had come to discard her prejudice against Mr. Darcy, Elizabeth Bennet says that the change dated “from my first seeing his beautiful grounds at Pemberley.” City dwellers lacking vast estates in Derbyshire must employ smaller-scale greening to enhance their attractions: street trees, pocket gardens and window boxes soften the hard edges of urban properties, while indoor plants and flowers light up shadowy rooms. For the last 10 years, Jerry Crowley’s Window Box at 500 South 23rd Street has been a prime source in the neighborhood for plants, cut flowers, seeds and accessories for urban gardens.

Crowley’s understated advice about plant care complements the display of flowers that splashes color onto the street in front of his shop window. “Trial and error, and look around at what’s doing well,” he counsels a customer who wonders which plants will survive in the city. He describes picking up the essence of gardening on his own, learning from experience that peonies dislike being moved in the spring and that carrots must be thinned, “although it seems wrong to throw them out,” he adds.

The Window Box’s owner began his own trials and errors in the garden during his 12th summer, when he and a friend dug up part of his family’s yard in suburban south Jersey to grow vegetables. “My mother was interested in gardening,” he says, “while my father’s interaction was about mowing the lawn.” That summer, flush with the success of raising tomatoes, lettuce, carrots and squash, Crowley began to read about plants and planting, eventually discovering

classics like the work of James Crockett, author of many volumes in the *Time-Life Encyclopedia of Gardening* and of *Victory Garden*, which became a long-running show on public television, and of Linda Yang, a former Philadelphian who wrote *The City Gardener’s Handbook*.

As he continued his education, Crowley took courses in art at the Philadelphia Museum of Art and visited museums and gardens when he traveled. He served in the U.S. Navy, lived out west in Washington and California for 10 years, and, moving back east, worked in New Jersey for Mitsubishi Motors. He kept his connection with gardening, sometimes gathering sample plants from the wild (“legally,” he stipulates). Knowing that he



Plants with a tolerance for limited light often do well planted in window boxes and lining front steps.

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## CENTER CITY RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

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wanted to do something with art and to work outdoors rather than in a cubicle, he decided that having his own flower shop would feed these various needs.

By the mid-'90s, living near Fidler Square, Crowley knew The Window Box as the "mom and pop florist" in the neighborhood. The owners took a leave in the summer of 1999. By midsummer they had called Crowley to say that they would not return, and offered to sell him the shop. He settled in and, after celebrating a 10th anniversary in business on 23rd Street, calls the neighborhood "one of the best in the city: reasonably diverse, some renters, interesting student population."

Most of the changes he's observed over the last decade have been positive. The southern edge of the neighborhood has become more inviting, says Crowley, contrasting the new houses and lighting on Naudain with the former row of dark, abandoned warehouses, and the new development with the old Naval

Square, which had become a semi-wilderness, home to garbage-tipping raccoons. Crowley had a mini-wilderness of his own in his early days at The Window Box, when an open courtyard there enabled him to cultivate his garden during working hours.

Now he buys plants from around the world; the principal suppliers are in South America (Colombia and Ecuador), the Netherlands, Israel and southern California. "Holland is a very direct source," says Crowley. Flowers are cut there when he places an order and shipped to him, via flights into JFK and trucking across Jersey, within five days.

Crowley evidently enjoys his customers' conversation and questions, and generally has useful answers sprinkled with a touch of wry. He recalls one exchange that left him at a loss for words when a customer entered the shop with a pot of something so nearly dead, it was hard to tell whether it was a rose or a lily. "What is wrong?" wailed the distraught gardener. "I water it every



Jerry Crowley of the Window Box has stocked plants, shrubs, cut flowers and garden accessories for more than 10 years in the Fidler Square neighborhood.

day!" Crowley's final suggestion for the plant-averse is to start with a philodendron. "If you kill a philodendron," he says, "you can't come back."

## To Chip or Not To Chip, That Is The Question

By Jim DePaul, General Manager, Morris Animal Refuge

By now you may have read about or seen on television the story of Morris Animal Refuge's success in reuniting Snowball, the wandering flame point-Siamese mix, with his family in Corvallis, Oregon. Last August Snowball decided to escape from his family's home in Syracuse, New York as they were preparing to move to Oregon. He was found by a young woman who was moving to Philadelphia to attend college. The young woman was unable to keep the cat after she arrived here and gave him to a friend. Her friend was unable to keep Snowball also, and on March 31st surrendered the cat to Morris, located at 1242 Lombard Street.

Every cat or dog surrendered to Morris, whether owned or a stray, is scanned for a microchip. When Snowball was scanned, his microchip was detected. His family had updated his information with Home Again, the company with which his microchip was registered. We contacted the company, and they contacted Snowball's family in Oregon. The family wanted him back and paid to have him flown to Portland to be reunited with his pal, the family's 10-year-old daughter.

This story is worth remembering when you are trying to decide whether pet microchip identification is a good idea or a waste of money. Microchipping is a multi-step process. You take your pet to the vet who injects a microchip, usually under the skin between the shoulder blades. The pet identification microchip has a number embedded into it that can be read by a scanner. That number is entered into a database that will contain your personal contact information. In the event you lose your cat or dog, and the pet is brought into the local animal shelter or animal control, it will be scanned for the microchip to see if it is registered. If it is, they would be able to reunite you. Most animal shelters, veterinarians and animal control facilities have and use the scanners that check for microchips when animals are brought in.

When you stop and think about it, pet microchip identification does make sense. No matter how responsible you are or how well-behaved your pet is, it is very possible that one day they may become lost or, worse yet, stolen. While collars can fall off and tattoos can be removed, pet microchip identification is a permanent way to



Snowball, the wonderer, was waiting at Morris Animal Refuge for his flight to Portland, Oregon.

ensure that if your pet goes missing, the authorities can trace the ownership of the animal back to you.

The cost of pet microchip identification isn't as steep as one might think. A veterinarian's charge is around \$40 for injecting the pet microchip identification, and the registration fee to register with the national database may be less than \$18.

When considering if it is worth the expense, remember Snowball's story. Without his microchip and a family that updated the residency information with the microchip company, he never would have been reunited with the family that loved him and missed him.

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*Adam Schneider, CCRA President*

# President's Report

In the last issue of the CCRA newsletter, I looked at new development going on in our surrounding neighborhoods. Today, one of my goals as president is to take a hard look internally at CCRA itself and focus on organizational growth and development. We could all do with a healthy dose of honest self-assessment in an effort to think and re-think who we are, what we do, how we do it and how we can do it better. This exercise is vital to best determine how the organization needs to grow to accomplish its mission and keep its goals vital and relevant.

A natural starting point for this venture is with our mission statement, which states that the “object of the corporation shall be to make the community and its environs a better place to live, work, and pursue educational, cultural and recreational activities through cooperative action of the residents.” At its core, CCRA exists to make the community a better place to live and work. We accomplish this simple, yet noble mission in many ways. We promote good design and development, we host social events and gatherings, we provide funding and resources to improve the physical appearance of our streets and parks, and we provide information resources for new neighbors and families. Yet, room for improvement is always welcome.

It became clear to me and other CCRA leaders that the time had come to turn the focus towards you, our members (and potential members). The idea is to be more responsive and more valued by the membership, while continuing to ensure that the organization flourishes. I recently said to the board that we have set down our vision for the future of the built environment with our recently published Neighborhood Plan. Now it is time to formalize our CCRA working environment with a comparable plan for the organization itself.

We recently set out to accomplish this task by employing two “firsts” for CCRA. Board members came together for a board retreat from morning until early afternoon on a cold, rainy Saturday in March. The mood inside was considerably more sunny and optimistic than the dreary weather outside. The retreat was widely recognized as an extremely productive and worthwhile exercise.

We also conducted our first informal poll of members, asking you about CCRA through a Web-based program called IdeaScale. We garnered opinions and ideas from the survey that will help us in charting a course for the future. Here are some of the member suggestions from the survey: hosting garden tours, movie and concert series, periodic happy hours, participating in community events such as school fairs and flower markets, sponsoring our own community fair, supporting local business through contractor referral lists and a reinvigorated shop and dine program, advocating for bike lanes, advocating against bike lanes, being more stringent in zoning decisions, being more lenient in zoning decisions, being an advocate in discussions on controversial issues affecting our district, avoiding controversy and sticking to social events. Clearly, the range of opinions and ideas gathered are as diverse and contradictory at times as our membership.

Armed with data collected from IdeaScale and the retreat, we are poised to refine, revise and rethink events, procedures and membership benefits and services. To borrow a phrase from the marketing world, CCRA is considering its brand, and how to increase its strength in the market.

Another essential undertaking is to review the function and role of each committee, setting concrete goals and targets for the coming year and beyond. All of this information will be used to refine our short term and long term agenda for the organization as a whole.

We will continue to elicit constructive input from you, the membership and neighbors. The only limitation that I place on offering ideas is that there be no limitation. I also encourage you to become more active, especially in bringing to fruition the ideas that you might suggest. I am pleased to report that CCRA continues to strive towards fulfilling its mission of making our community a better place to live and work.

Respectfully,

Adam Schneider,  
President, CCRA

# CCRA Annual Meeting Full of Fun, Facts and Food

By Fran Levi

On Tuesday, May 4, Center City Residents' Association (CCRA) held its 2010 annual meeting at the Philopatrian Literary Institute, 1923 Walnut Street. Samuel Weinberg, past CCRA President and annual meeting chairperson, introduced the first speaker, Adam Schneider, CCRA President, who reported on the organization's activities for 2009-2010, and the plans for the coming year to recruit new members, expand and revitalize programs.

Following Schneider's report, Stanley Krakower, Esquire, CCRA's legal counsel, explained the election process and introduced the nominees for officers and directors. Their names and biographical information is at the bottom of this page. All CCRA members in attendance voted on the slate which was unanimously elected.

Weinberg introduced Monika Burke who presented the 2010 Bobbye Burke Historic Preservation Award, named in honor of her mother, a founding member of CCRA, to Peggy M. Trott, General Manager, Hotel Palomar, and Jack Paruta, Senior Associate, of Gensler, a global architecture and design firm. Kimpton Hotels and Restaurants beautifully restored the Architect's Building at 17th and Sansom Streets giving it a new function as a hotel. The actual award is a framed sketch of the hotel by Rachel Simmons Schade, AIA.

Schneider presented the Community Service Award to the Design Modification Resolution Team of the South Street Bridge Reconstruction Project. The

recipients were Jim Campbell, South Street Bridge Coalition, Charles Davies, PennDOT, Charles Denny, Traffic Division, Philadelphia Department of Streets, Kyle Grading and Adam Krom, WRT, William Gural, John Lutz and Tony Rogers, Bridges Division, Philadelphia Department of Streets Division, David Perri, Philadelphia Department of Streets, and Marcia V. Wilkof, Democratic Ward Leader, 30th Ward.

Seth Williams who was recently elected Philadelphia District Attorney was the evening's keynote speaker. Williams, raised by his adoptive family in a working class West Philadelphia neighborhood, worked as an Assistant District Attorney for 10 years after graduating from law school at Georgetown University. Williams said, "Unless you are willing to be part of the solution, you have no reason to complain." His parents taught him this and it has become the focus of how he lives. With this in mind, his has and will continue to reorganize the District Attorney's Office so that its conviction rate improves. "We need to be smart on crime, not tough on crime," he said.

Edward J. Vassallo, Ready Coordinator, Philadelphia Office of Emergency Management, spoke about Emergency Preparedness – how to develop a household emergency plan, the emergency supplies one should have, Philadelphia's evacuation plans, and how to stay informed before, during and after an emergency. "The goal is to make people aware of how they can prepare themselves and their family for an



Seth Williams, District Attorney, explains his plans for fighting crime in Philadelphia at CCRA's annual meeting.



Monika Burke presents the Bobbye Burke Historic Preservation Award to Peggy M. Trott and Jack Paruta for the restoration of the Architects Building into the Palomar, a Kimpton Hotel.

emergency, how they can stay in contact with loved ones during an emergency and how to make weathering an emergency much easier on you and your family," explained Vassallo.

Weinberg adjourned the 2010 Annual Meeting and invited everyone to meet, mingle and enjoy refreshments generously donated by Marathon Grill Catering.

## CCRA Elects New Board Members

### Jared Klein, Director (three year term)

Klein is a lifelong Philadelphia resident. He grew up in Mt. Airy and moved into Center City in 2004 while attending law school at Temple. He practiced law in Philadelphia for several years and is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in political science. Klein lives in the Rittenhouse Square area with his wife, Yumi Kendall, and dog, Buster. He is active in the Center City community; he is a member of the board of the Seger Park dog owners association, a member of the Rodeph Shalom young friends group, and serves on the Democratic Ward Executive Committee for the 8th Ward.

### Maggie Mund, Director (three year term)

Mund, a transportation and land use planner, is a mother of two teenagers who attend Masterman. She worked at the Schuylkill River Development Council promoting the plans for Schuylkill River Park (now Schuylkill Banks), served on the board of the Lombard Swim Club and on the vestry of her church.

### Cheri La Spada, Director (three year term)

La Spada is a communications strategist and writer with 15 years of experience in message development, public relations, and marketing. She recently

launched her own consulting business specializing in non-profit, higher education and healthcare/pharmaceutical communications. She has lived in Center City with her husband for three years.

### Joe Rively, Director (three year term)

Rively moved to Philadelphia in March of 2007 from Nashville, TN, where he worked for Vanderbilt University as a regional major gifts officer. Currently he is the associate director for international development for the University of Pennsylvania. Rively officially became a resident of Center City in July 2008

when he purchased his current home on Rittenhouse Square.

**Eunice Trevor, Director (two year term)**  
Trevor, a resident of Center City for 10 years, is a partner at the law firm of Saltz, Mongeluzzi and has focused on representing

people injured as a result of fires and explosions. She is a board member of the 2000 Delancey block association, a former chair of the board of the Anti-Violence Partnership of Philadelphia, a former vice president of the board of trustees of The Phoenix Society for Burn Survivors and

a member of the board of directors of the Philadelphia Trial Lawyers Association.

Melissa Grimm, Robin Kohles, and Derek Freres, who are currently filling the unexpired terms of directors who resigned, were elected to three-year terms.

## Joseph Fox Bookshop, A Dream Come True

By Leslie Young

Joseph and Madeline Fox were lovers of books. And in 1951 their dream of owning a bookstore became reality when they opened the doors to Joseph Fox Bookshop on Sansom Street, just a few doors down from its current location at 1724 Sansom Street, where they moved a year later. The couple ran the basement-level shop for the next 40 years.

At the time of the store's founding, many beautiful books were being published in the field of architecture and the arts. Joseph, with a tremendous passion for the art of the book, decided to make that category the store's niche. To this day, the Bookshop has arguably one of the best architecture collections in the city, as well as a refined selection of literature, non-fiction, fine art, design, music, poetry and books for children. Just ask Madeline: she's still there behind the counter most days.

A great bookstore doesn't necessarily have to be a big bookstore, and Joseph Fox Bookshop is proof. "There isn't a lot of junk between the good books here," says Michael Fox, Joseph and Madeline's son and the

current proprietor. Fox, along with input from his staff, continues the caring tradition of his parents and personally chooses each book in the stacks. While the last decade has been tough for independent booksellers, Fox says he's still in business because of this high quality inventory.

The surging popularity of large chain retailers like Barnes & Noble and Borders, not to mention on-line retailing giants like Amazon, have contributed to the demise of many local, independent stalwarts. Robin's Bookstore, which was Philadelphia's oldest independent shop, comes to mind. This phenomenon is not confined to Philadelphia though, as around the country independent bookstores are becoming harder and harder to find.

Ten years ago, the American Booksellers Association (ABA)—the national trade association for independent booksellers—had more than 3,100 members. Today there are fewer than 1,400 companies, which represent 1,750 locations across the United States. According to a representative at the trade association, ABA's "core membership" represents approximately 85% of the independent, brick-and-mortar bookstores across the country that sell primarily new books. With the presumed demise of over half of these stores in a decade, Fox attributes the decline largely to competition from the big chain retailers and on-line sellers.

Customer care is another factor Fox cites as key to survival. The Bookshop has five knowledgeable full-time staffers, including founding owner Madeline, who make every effort to accommodate their customers. Any book not in the store can be ordered and usually arrives within a day or two. Fox says he has customers who have been shopping in his store for over 50 years, but that the store also has many first time guests from out of town. Often they have heard about the shop from a friend and make a visit part of their Philadelphia itinerary.



Judi and Michael Fox (son and daughter-in-law of the store's founders) and Kate Griffith provide customers with the personal assistance for which the store is known.

In addition to superior customer service and inventory, a few innovative business decisions by the Fox family have contributed to their success in a faltering industry. Fifteen years ago, Michael Fox approached the director of the Philadelphia Free Library's Author Events program about partnering on the lecture series, and the Joseph Fox Bookshop has been the official bookseller for the program ever since. A similar partnership has been brokered with the National Constitution Center. Fox says the Bookshop has approximately 300 off-site book events with authors each year, making it unique among small, independent bookstores in the country. This direct contact with and exposure to authors and publishers has created a lucrative network for the Bookshop that continually produces new business opportunities.

The Bookshop was a dream come true for Joseph and Madeline Fox, and it's a rare gem of a local business for book lovers in Philadelphia. It's not all roses though, as Fox pointed out, "Our customers are always complaining that they can't leave because they're always spotting something else they want."

The Joseph Fox Bookshop is open Monday through Saturday from 9:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., and until 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday. For more information, call 215-563-4184 or visit [www.foxbookshop.com](http://www.foxbookshop.com).



Joseph Fox Bookshop has been located at 1724 Sansom Street for 40 years.



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# Garden Growing Greener with Grants

By Fran Levi

Schuylkill River Park Community Garden held its 2010 Annual Meeting March 17 at Trinity Center for Urban Life, 22nd and Spruce Streets. Derek Freres, garden steering committee chairperson, presided and announced grants arranged by legislators. State Senator Larry Farnese arranged for the garden to receive a \$10,000 State grant for capital improvements and State Representative Babette Josephs' arranged for an additional \$5,000. Most of these funds will be used for the continued replacement of the old arsenic treated wood borders around the approximately 72 garden plots with recycled plastic.

The garden will continue to participate in the City Harvest Program. Leslie Young explained that the program is coordinated by the Pennsylvania Horticulture Society which links the prison system where inmates grow seedlings distributed to community gardens, which then donate the food grown with these seeds to a designated "food cupboard." In 2009, the first year it participated, Young said that Schuylkill River Park Community Garden donated 160 pounds of produce. Said Young, "It will be easier in 2010 to get the produce to the cupboard because we will be paired with one in our area that will have more drop-off times instead of the one in South Philadelphia where produce could only be brought one morning a week."

Allison Rulon-Miller reported on the parkside plantings, the border outside of the garden gate that requires much work. Rob Reisley, outgoing garden treasurer, gave a full financial report on the capital and operating budgets.

The 2010 steering committee slate of officers was elected with an additional nominee from the floor. Freres, using old photographs projected on the screen, reviewed the area at 25th and Spruce Streets in the early 20th century, moving on to the first garden that was closer to the street and finally to the current garden opened in 1988. Over the past year the National Wildlife Federation has designated the garden as a *Certified Wildlife Habitat*.

Of special interest was the guest speaker, Mark Focht, Executive Director, Fairmount Park, who enthusiastically detailed the final plans for the pedestrian bridge over the Locust Street CSX tracks. Two maps of the

site to be affected were distributed to the audience, and Focht proceeded to detail the following points:

- At the Locust Street grade crossing two paths will be built. One will be for pedestrians and the other for maintenance and emergency vehicles. When a train approaches, an electric gate will close. It will open after the train passes.
- Construction of the pedestrian bridge will take 12-18 months during which the park from Delancey Place to Spruce Street will be closed.
- Construction vehicles will be parked in the "bowl."
- After the bridge is completed/installed, the park will be improved with new paving of all paths, new lighting in the park and garden, new benches installed except for the ones next to the garden fence that will not be replaced, irrigation of the park and garden border, and installation of Belgian blocks around the garden border for soil retention. The bowl will be re-graded slightly.
- The dog park will be enlarged with special dog "turf".
- \$5 million has been obtained for the project with \$1 million from CSX and the balance from the TIGER (Transportation Investments Generating Economic Recovery) Federal stimulus grant that must be spent by December 2012.



Mark Focht, Executive Director, Fairmount Park, was the guest speaker at the Schuylkill River Park Community Garden's 2010 Annual Meeting.

The audience appreciated the information that Focht provided and was glad to have the opportunity to hear the details. During the construction the community garden will be functioning and open to visitors.



The cistern in the Schuylkill River Park Community Garden provides water for the garden plots and a place where gardeners and guests gather.

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“The beating heart of Philadelphia’s food scene.”

— *New York Post*, May 2009





# Something Brewing in the Neighborhood

by Dane Wells

Ask almost any active participant in the burgeoning Philadelphia beer scene and they either know, or know of, George Hummel and Nancy Rigberg, the owners of Home Sweet Homebrew. When they began in 1984, George and Nancy were in the first wave of the homebrewing movement, and they have remained out front ever since, helping others develop the craft. Home Sweet Homebrew, at 2008 Sansom Street, was established in 1986. In 1990 George and Nancy left their jobs in the natural foods industry to take over the store.

In the 1980s, in search of better, more varied, brews, many enthusiasts were turning to homebrewing as an alternative to the limited “industrial brewery” offerings. Now, almost 30 years later, Philadelphia is one of the best cities in the US for craft beer. The availability of better beer, however, has not dampened the enthusiasm of the local homebrewing movement, which continues to grow.



For sale at Home Sweet Homebrew is a copper WORT Chiller to rapidly chill brewed beer.

Homebrewing is relatively easy, and there is nothing quite so fresh (important for beer) as one of your own homebrews. As one who has traveled the globe in search of the perfect pint, this author can say that many of the best glasses he has quaffed came from homebrewers.

George and Nancy have been very active in the Homebrewers of Philadelphia and Suburbs ([www.hopsclub.org](http://www.hopsclub.org)). Many of their meetings, where homebrewers discuss their efforts and share secrets of the art, are hosted by George and Nancy. Home Sweet Homebrew has also hosted six preliminary rounds of the American Homebrewers Association ([www.homebrewersassociation.org](http://www.homebrewersassociation.org)) national competitions.

George writes for *Mid-Atlantic Brewing News*, and his fame doubled when he appeared on the cover of *Mother Earth News* in their 25th anniversary issue in 1994. In 2008, Governor Rendell presented George and Nancy with the Governor’s Inspiration Award for promoting craft beer and brewing in Pennsylvania and for his work in setting up the hugely successful Philly Beer Week. Perhaps his skills are hereditary, for George’s grandfather and great-grandfather were both professional brewers. George and Nancy live in, of course, Brewerytown. Nancy says there are a great number of homebrewers nearby, and jokes that “if every homebrewer in our ’hood were to brew on the same day, the aroma would hark back to pre-Prohibition Brewerytown.”

Home brewing is simple. A beginner’s kit of equipment will cost you about \$70, and that includes simple, easy-to-follow instructions. You will also need a large pot for boiling. A basic kit of ingredients might cost about \$40, and will make about five gallons of beer. That sounds like a lot, but you will be sharing it with family and friends. The brewing and bottling can all be done in a small kitchen. It takes about a half-day to sanitize your equipment and to brew, but you will have free time to read or answer e-mail while you watch the kettle. Then sit back while the yeast works, a week or so, to ferment the beer. Bottling takes an hour or so, then you will wait two to three weeks for the beer to condition. You have then arrived. Relax and have a homebrew.



Governor Ed Rendell and Meryl Levitz of Greater Philadelphia Tourism and Marketing Committee (rear) and George Hummel and Nancy Rigberg after they received the Governor’s Inspiration Award, May 8, 2008.

Stop by Home Sweet Homebrew and George can give you simple instructions and he sells many good instruction books. Home Sweet Homebrew ([www.homesweethomebrew.com](http://www.homesweethomebrew.com)) is open six days a week, Sundays 12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.; they are closed on Mondays. George and his friendly well-fed shop cats are there to educate, commiserate and entertain ’til 6 or 7 in the evening.

A note about the author: Dane Wells learned to drink craft beer when he lived in Brussels, Belgium, in the late 1960s. In 1985, he became the seventh person to qualify as a Certified Beer Judge for the American Homebrewers Association. Currently, in addition to being a board member of CCRA, Dane gives lectures on the history and culture of beer and conducts occasional beer tastings. He wrote this article while brewing a British-style mild ale.



Home Sweet Homebrew is crowded with brewing supplies including bottles for home brewed beer.

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# Philadelphia's Magic Garden

By Christine Carlson

*In Philadelphia, there is a Magic Garden... where sunlight streams through tinted rainbows...where birds roost atop branches of long-abandoned bicycle wheels...and where trails weave through archways and over bridges covered in mirrors, tile, pottery and the occasional commode.*

When I first moved to the south side of Center City, I occasionally strolled down South Street to visit Penn's Landing. Crossing 16th, I noticed an unusual mosaic mural. Once east of Broad, I saw many more of them. It was clear that they were constructed by the same artist, and I began to think of them as a unique characteristic of the neighborhood. Little did I know that there were over 50 such murals in the area and that they were all created by Philadelphia artist Isaiah Zagar.

The culmination of his work can now be viewed at Philadelphia's Magic Gardens located at 1020 South Street. The entire building and adjoining lots are a three dimensional, multi-cultural and multi-layer piece of art. When I visited recently with my children, they were captivated by the complexity of layers and pathways, and textures and materials. We wandered up, down, over, and across, exploring a labyrinth of alcoves, stairs and bridges. Between constant calls of "Mommy, come here and look!" my four-year-old son looked up at me with wide eyes and said, "Isn't this a wonderful place?" And it is! We had great fun noting the varied materials – mirrors, sculptures, colored bottles, bicycle wheels, old toys, pots, tile and broken dishes. The work is earthy and primal, and the human body is a focus in many areas. My children delighted in pointing out eyes, ears, mouths, hands and feet – and yes, body parts that are usually subject to clothing. So parents concerned with exposing their children to nudity should know that there is no modesty in covering here.

Another characteristic of Isaiah's work is poetry. Sometimes graceful, sometimes provocative, whether it is a single word or a captivating phrase, language adds yet another layer to the intricacy of the garden.

Isaiah Zagar and his wife Julia moved to South Street in the 1960's, improving the area by renovating neglected buildings and installing his distinctive murals. He



*The entrance of the Magic Garden at 1020 South Street attracts pedestrians and motorists going past it.*



*The author's children are working on an art project at the Magic Garden while Marilyn Sandberg, a family friend, watches them.*

began what is now known as the Magic Garden in 1994 when it was a series of vacant lots. As noted by the organization, "He began by constructing a massive fence to protect the area from harm and then spent the next fourteen years excavating tunnels and grottos, sculpting multi-layered walls, and tiling and grouting the 3,000 square foot space."

In 2002, the Boston-based owner of the lots decided to cash in on rising real estate values and threatened to bulldoze Isaiah's work. The community came forward and successfully saved the structure. It is now a nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving and promoting Isaiah's works throughout the region as well as educating the public about mosaic, folk and public art.

As for Isaiah Zagar, the magic gardener is still very involved with his gardens. "His studio is located behind the gardens," says Ellen Owens, the Garden's executive director. "He makes repairs when necessary and often interacts with visitors. He's also a great source of ideas for all of our programs."

The Magic Gardens are open daily. Admission is free, but there is a suggested donation. Memberships and guided tours are also available. The Gardens host special events throughout the year. On Second Sundays, families are encouraged to participate in activities and art projects. A Solstice celebration is scheduled for June 26 and a Day of the Child celebration will take place in August. For information, visit [phillymagicgardens.org](http://phillymagicgardens.org).



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# CCRA Neighborhood Summer Events

## Rittenhouse Square Fine Art Show

Friday, June 4, and Saturday, June 5,  
11:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.  
Sunday, June 6,  
11:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

This is the country's oldest outdoor show of original art, and this will be its 79th year of showing fine art to visitors to Rittenhouse Square.

## Bloomsday

The Rosenbach Museum & Library  
2008-2010 Delancey Place  
Wednesday, June 16, 12:00pm - 7:00pm

Bloomsday is the day on which protagonist Leopold Bloom made his "odyssey" through Dublin in *Ulysses*. Every year, the Rosenbach joins with Joyce lovers throughout the world to celebrate "Bloomsday" on June 16. Hundreds gather on Delancey Place for this event, featuring readings from *Ulysses* by notable Philadelphians from the steps of the museum. An exhibition of Joyce materials is also on view inside the museum which is open to visitors all day. 215-732-1600, info@rosenbach.org.

## Schuylkill Banks Movie Nights by the Walnut Street Bridge

Approximately 8:15 p.m. (at dusk).  
Arrive early for free snacks and to enter a free raffle for a gift from IKEA.  
Bring your own blankets.

June 10: *Dave*  
June 24: *The Great Outdoors*  
July 8: *Romancing the Stone*  
July 22: *Best in Show*

August 5: *Groundhog Day*  
September 2: *National Treasure*

## Ladybug Release Party

Schuylkill River Park Community Garden  
25th and Spruce Streets  
Thursday, June 10, 5:00 p.m.

Children must be accompanied by an adult. It is requested that attendees bring a ladybug themed dish to share.

## Philadelphia City Institute Children's Storytime Programs

1905 Locust Street  
215-685-6621

### Baby Lap Sit Storytime

is designed for babies aged 6 – 18 months and their caregivers.  
Friday, June 4, 11, 18 and 25 at 10:15 a.m.

### Toddler Storytime

is designed for children aged 19 – 44 months and their caregivers to participate in rhymes, stories and songs.  
Thursday, June 3, 10, 17 and 24 at 10:15 a.m.

## Summer Reading Programs at Philadelphia City Institute

June 16 – August 11

### Kids' Summer Reading – Preschool to Sixth Grade

Call Ms. Karen, Children's Librarian  
for Information  
215-685-6621

### Teen Summer Reading

freelibrary.org/summerreading for  
information or call or stop in PCI.

## Summer Reading for Adults

Thanks to Friends of PCI adult participants will be eligible for six raffle drawings for gifts from local vendors. For information call or visit PCI.

## Friends of the Philadelphia City Institute Present Wednesday Matinee Movies

Every Wednesday at 2:00 p.m.  
June: Kurosawa Films  
July: Westerns  
August: Audrey Hepburn Films

## Art in the Open Festival

Wednesday June 9 - Saturday June 12

Art in the Open (AiO) is a citywide event that celebrates artists, their inspirations for creating art, and their relationships with the urban environment. Inspired by, but re-framing, the tradition of painting *en plein air*, **35 artists** working in a variety of media will create art outside along the banks of the tidal Schuylkill River - from the historic Fairmont Park Water Works and the Philadelphia Museum of Art, south to Bartram's Garden.

## Friends of Schuylkill River Park Eat, Drink & be Green

Saturday, June 5, 7:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m.

The Friends group will be holding a cocktail party to celebrate park improvements and those that make them possible, raise funds for work that has yet to be done, promote and support community greening, and to socialize with neighbors and friends. For more information visit: [www.eatdrinkandbegreen.org](http://www.eatdrinkandbegreen.org)

## Thank You Senator Farnese

In March 2010, the Schuylkill River Park Community Garden, via the Center City Residents' Association, received a grant in the amount of \$10,000 facilitated by the office of Senator Lawrence M. Farnese. These Department of Community Economic Development (DCED) funds will be utilized to continue the plot board replacement project begun by the community garden in 2009. Specifically, these funds will be used to replace many of the old, arsenic-treated wooden boards around individual plots with recycled plastic lumber. Recycled plastic lumber is sustainable, long-lasting, and has been used successfully in other urban community gardens around the U.S. CCRA and the Schuylkill River Park Community Garden would like to thank Senator Farnese and his office for his continued support of its beautification efforts and its commitment to maintaining vibrant green spaces throughout the city.



# Services and Volunteer Opportunities at Penn's Village

By Kristin Davidson

Over the past months, CCRA has collaborated with Penn's Village, a non-profit 501(c)3 organization providing neighbor-to-neighbor services to help people remain in their homes as they age or when they are temporarily disabled following surgery. Penn's Village supplies:

## Services

- Transportation for trips to doctors, hospitals or to a supermarket
- Meal delivery of appetizing, health-conscious food at reasonable prices

- Grocery shopping and running errands, such as picking up prescriptions
- Friendly companionship visits
- Check-in phone calls
- Assistance with computers and electronics
- Referrals to home health agencies
- Speedy access to vetted repair services
- Lectures and social events

## Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteers are needed for any of the above services. Those willing to drive are especially welcome right now. There are also positions handling the phones and administrative tasks in the new Penn's Village office at First Presbyterian Church at 21st and Walnut Streets.

To find out more about the services offered or to check on volunteer opportunities, contact Penn's Village at 215-925-7333. Also, visit the Website at <http://www.pennsvillage.org>.

# Slipstream Recycles the Hard Stuff

By Robin Kohles



Proceeds from the recycling helped to support CORP's outreach projects. CORP's 14 years of service recycled 2.8 million pounds of mixed paper and 8.6 million plastic bottles. Eventually, the city's curbside recycling program kicked in and CORP stopped its program. So, what is the lesson here? Start small. Start local. Watch it grow and take off. But, can we do even more? How?

Meet Aedhan Loomis, entrepreneur, environmentalist and CCRA member. Aedhan's company, Slipstream Recycling ([www.slipstreamrecycling.com](http://www.slipstreamrecycling.com)) provides monthly curbside pick-up recycling service for items that the city does not pick up: certain types of plastic, Styrofoam, batteries, etc. The company is about to celebrate its first anniversary. But what makes this company truly unique is that it was started and is run solely by Aedhan Loomis, 10th grader at Germantown Friends School and a Fitler Square resident.

Aedhan first started recycling plastics years ago when he and his family drove their plastics to Recycling Services in Pottstown two times a year. Aedhan, then a student at The Philadelphia School (TPS), tried to engage the school to recycle but it didn't completely catch on. Not discouraged, Aedhan polled his neighbors and determined that there was interest to start this service. Now, one year into his venture, he collects recycling from



30 local residents, 30 families at TPS and, as of January, milk cartons from TPS.

The program is easy. Residents sort their plastics into bags and label with the laminated tags Slipstream provides. Pick-ups are once a month and cost \$5. On pick-up days Aedhan works from 6:00 a.m. till 3:00 p.m. collecting, sorting and driving his load to the recycling center in Pottstown. His biggest load? Seventy-six 40-gallon bags. His most popular product? Yogurt containers and milk cartons. Biggest challenge? Not enough space and 28 inches of snow. His future? Expanding to restaurants and high rises. Who knows, maybe the city will expand curbside recycling to include more types of plastics.

Start small, start local. Philadelphia, the greenest city in the nation? Possible? With residents like Aedhan Loomis, maybe!

Aedhan Loomis examines the load that he collected from participants in his Slipstream Recycling Program.

Mayor Nutter has declared an ambitious goal of making Philadelphia the greenest city in the United States by 2015. A key part of achieving that goal will be residential recycling. A quick history of local recycling might help guide efforts for increased participation in all forms of recycling.

Start small. Start local. Watch it grow and take off. In mid-1994 several dedicated Community Outreach Partnership (CORP) individuals started voluntary recycling on Saturday mornings at 22nd and Spruce.

# Tree Tenders Make Greening Free

By Derek Freres

In an effort to help maintain and expand the urban tree canopy, several years ago the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS) developed the Tree Tenders program. The first goal of the program includes training citizens in urban tree care and planting through a series of classes and assignments. The second goal includes mobilizing many of these certified “Tree Tenders” into volunteer Tree Tender groups that work within their neighborhoods to plant and care for trees at no cost to property owners. At last count, there were well over 100 such groups in the Philadelphia area. To support Tree Tenders, PHS works with TreeVitalize, a partnership with the state of Pennsylvania to increase urban tree cover; TreeVitalize provides much of the funding for Tree Tenders tree plantings and PHS provides the training and general organizational support.

In 2009, a new Tree Tenders group, the Friends of Schuylkill River Park Tree Tenders, was formed within CCRA boundaries. The group is a partnership among the Friends of Schuylkill

River Park, the Center City Residents’ Association, and of course PHS; the boundaries include the area encompassed by the Schuylkill River and Broad Street between South Street and Walnut Street. Applications for new street trees are taken from landowners within these boundaries throughout the year, the applications are passed to PHS twice per year, and tree plantings occur on one date each fall and on one date each spring. The program assumes the cost of tree planting, cement cutting, and, thanks to CCRA funds, stump grinding, but cannot pay for the removal of dead or dying trees. Once applications are received, each proposed planting site must be approved by an arborist from Fairmount Park who also chooses the tree type.

Trees have a great many benefits to property owners, including decreased heating and cooling costs, beautification, stormwater management, and, according to recent work at the Wharton School, an increase in property values and a decrease in crime when trees are planted in previously barren neighborhoods.

If you are a landowner within the Friends of Schuylkill River Park Tree Tenders boundaries (CCRA Membership is not required) and are interested in obtaining a free street tree, contact the CCRA Office or visit [www.fsrp.org/treetenders](http://www.fsrp.org/treetenders) to download a brief application.

The Center City Residents' Association working with Awbury Arboretum also maintains a matching program, funded by a grant obtained by State Representative Babette Josephs. The program provides \$200 toward the purchase of a tree for its resident members. Unlike in Tree Tenders, with the matching program the property owner chooses the tree type and planting date and generally incurs out of pocket expenses of around \$250. CCRA has helped to plant over 35 trees through its matching program over the past 12 months and has received applications for over 30 trees through the Friends of Schuylkill River Park Tree Tenders to be planted in fall 2010.



Volunteer Tree Tenders are hard at work planting a tree that was provided at no cost to the property owner.

# Stories in Stone on Walnut Street

by Michael B. Smith

The First Presbyterian Church on the corner of 21st and Walnut Streets stands as a tribute to Gothic Revival architecture popular in Victorian Philadelphia. Designed by Philadelphia native and co-founder of the American Institute of Architects, Henry Augustus Sims, it marked the beginning of the post-Civil War economic boom that brought development west of Broad Street. Sims hired two recent immigrants to carve the interior and exterior of the building, praised as the “most beautiful building in Philadelphia” by *The Philadelphia Inquirer* in 1872. These two carvers would become famous for their later works. Alexander M. Calder’s contributions here led to his work on Philadelphia’s grandest civic building, City Hall, and John W. Kitson’s reputation took him to New York City where his firm, Ellin and Kitson, decorated grand homes of the city, including the Tilden Mansion.

The base stonework of the First Presbyterian Church is Richmond granite, which supports brown-toned Trenton stone quarried from near Yardley, Pennsylvania. The tracery of the stained glass windows is of Ohio Stone, and the multicolored stones highlighting some of the windows came from quarries in Seneca, NY (red), Franklin, PA (blue) and Kilmarnock, PA (green). The vibrant colors of the stone have faded in the century since the original construction, but the imagination can add the missing hues.

The entrance on 21st Street commemorates the formation of Second Presbyterian Church. The carved stone notes the founding date of 1743, when the congregation, having outgrown its early home on the Delaware River, formed another congregation in another section of the city. The doorway depicts the major crops then exported from Philadelphia. In order from the left, the crops are wheat, grapes and corn. On the right are tobacco, cotton and sugar. Various animals including a long snake, birds and reptiles live among the crops. The rows and hollows are decorated with tooth ornamentation of three designs hand carved in situ by Kitson and Calder.

The main entrance on Walnut Street is a grand combination of symbols. In the center of the tympanum is the recognizable Chi Rho representing the first letters in the name of Jesus Christ, and underneath the Greek letters Alpha and Omega representing Christ as the

Beginning and the End. Appropriate for the doorway is text from John the Evangelist citing Christ’s words, “I am the Door.” Again, elaborate rows and hollows separate the architectural tooth forms. To either side of the vesica, the bladder-shaped area on the tympanum over the main door, is an image of a grape arbor representing Christ. Found among the vines are ten birds, five on each side. One must look for birds in pairs to complete the count.

The outer red columns represent the Passover tradition, while the carved capitals illustrate the history of the formation of the Presbyterian Church. The two outer columns on each side are capped with the carvings symbolic of the followers of the faith developed by John Calvin and John Knox, including the thistle of Scotland, the shamrock of Ireland, the leek of Wales and the rose of England. Native flora and fauna of Philadelphia appear atop the other six columns. Many of these same native elements appear over the carved capitals inside the church. The central pillar unites the elements with particular attention paid to the thistle, shamrock, leek and rose.

The interior shows French Gothic influence, but the exterior reflects an English Gothic influence. While French and other Gothic traditions offered symmetrical construction, the English tradition eschewed such attempts



*The First Presbyterian Church as it appeared in the 1903 book 160th Anniversary of the 2nd Presbyterian Church looks the same today.*

at perfection. The towers and windows remain harmonious, but differ from side to side. The main tower window consists of two lights while the left tower has a single window. A careful view of the design reveals many hidden features and carved treasures such as a squirrel, birds and baby dragons. Gargoyles grace both towers with the 21st Street tower, sporting imposing drain spouts. The French fleur de lys appears in a variety of forms symbolizing the Holy Trinity.

The original church plans were not completed in a single phase. A decade after the 1872 opening, Theophilus Chandler, the founder of the University of Pennsylvania Department of Architecture, completed the Parish Hall south of the Church. In 1899, Frank Furness designed and built the main tower of the Church. First and Second Presbyterian reunited in 1949 and selected this building, one of the most important architectural sites in Philadelphia.



*The First Presbyterian Church’s three columns on the right of the doorway represent tobacco, cotton and sugar, the major crops exported from Philadelphia at the time of its construction.*



# Greenfield School to Celebrate 40th Anniversary

by Lisa Armstrong and Elizabeth Block

September 2010 will mark the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the opening of the Albert M. Greenfield School, a neighborhood K-8 public school located at 22<sup>nd</sup> and Chestnut Streets. News of a number of birthday gifts has the school community buzz with excitement.

On April 1 (not a joke!) the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) announced the award of \$200,000 for Greening Greenfield, the project that seeks to develop a green physical environment at the school, to teach the students about the Earth, to provide an oasis for the community, and to serve as an exemplary public structure. In just two years, from 2007 to 2009, the Greening Greenfield Initiative raised \$365,000 in a unique private/public partnership and completed the first phase of construction, the west schoolyard improvements. The schoolyard that started as a sparsely landscaped asphalt yard is well on its way to becoming a vibrant green space. The introduction of trees and plants native to the local environment in the infiltration beds have established a migratory bird and butterfly habitat that the US Fish and Wildlife Service is supporting with a \$5,000 grant. The Philadelphia Water Department, GreenPlan Philadelphia, and The Albert M. Greenfield Foundation were the primary funders of the Phase I construction, completed in October 2009.

The DEP grant funds the second phase of the project, focused on the east side of the schoolyard. Renovations that will improve stormwater management include a rain garden and permeable recycled rubber play surface. In addition the grant supports the next phase of a proposed green roof that will reduce the urban-heat-island effect of the school building's thermal mass. There are also phased plans for a future greenhouse classroom on the roof and improvements to the Secret Garden on the northwest side of the building and to the Chestnut Street raised planters.

A \$15,000 grant from HeadCount and the band Disco Biscuits will fund the first stages of the installation of solar panels and a solar water heater on the building roof. The Disco Biscuits presented a concert on Sunday, March 21 at New York City's Brooklyn Bowl, the largest music

venue in the country to be recognized for its environmentally-friendly practices with LEED Certification. Half the proceeds were earmarked to support Greening Greenfield.

Greening Greenfield organizes educational opportunities to enlist the school community - parents, students, and teachers/administrators - as enthusiastic advocates for sustainability. A series of speakers has presented to parents, teachers, and students the general principles of sustainability. Partnerships with PHS Treetenders Program, PECO, Delaware Valley Earth Force, the Philadelphia Orchard Program, WHYY, and Delaware Riverkeeper Network are providing supplemental training to teachers, students and parents to ensure continuity for the program. The Greening Greenfield Student Ambassadors were awarded the Schuylkill Action Network Scholastic Drinking Water Award in 2010 for their environmental stewardship and service.

On April 10 Greening Greenfield held an E-Cycle Day, while Earth Day, April

22, brought a full day of environmental activities. There were plenty of opportunities to enjoy the new gardens and our riverside proximity, plus a chance to learn about storm drainage, migratory bird habitats and water-quality monitoring. Phil Forsyth of the Philadelphia Orchard Project led seventh graders in planting strawberries and asparagus in our agricultural garden, Garth Connor showed the students the EPA's interactive model of the natural water cycle, and Ron Harvey led students in marking our surrounding storm drains to alert people not to pollute. A number of classes took walking field trips to the Schuylkill River Park - the Chestnut Street ramp to the park is only a block from the school. The day was capped with the very popular Greening Greenfield Silent Auction and Social.

Visit [www.greeninggreenfield.com](http://www.greeninggreenfield.com), or walk by the school at 22nd and Chestnut Streets to see how parents, students, educators and professionals have collaborated with federal, state and local government to bring tangible benefits to our community and city.



*This spring, the new flowers and foliage of the glorious Phase I rain garden welcomed the Greenfield students and visitors.*



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# Police Report: Community Policing

By Alex Klein

A successful method of policing the Philadelphia streets is making a comeback and it has a lot of power to mitigate much of what Center City residents have been hearing in the news over the winter and spring months. This effective method, called "Community Policing," is intended to enhance the ability of the police to respond more directly, definitively and quickly to any kind of crime, and to be proactive as well as reactive. Community Policing has many different definitions and types of deployment but for it to work best, the community must understand what it means, why it is important and what role YOU can play in this initiative.

Past articles on crime prevention in this newsletter introduced the public/private partnerships referred to as Police District Advisory Council (PDAC) and Police Service Area (PSA). These are components of Community Policing but up until now have been merely individual parts of the whole. To achieve the greatest level of effectiveness they need to be presented and understood as vital components of a cohesive plan to combat crime at every level in every corner of the city.

Wikipedia defines Community Policing as...

"...a philosophy that promotes organizational strategies, which support the systematic use of partnerships and problem-solving techniques, to proactively address the immediate conditions that give rise to public safety issues such as crime, social disorder, and fear of crime. Community Policing consists of three key components:

**1. Community Partnerships** Collaborative partnerships between the law enforcement agency and the individuals and organizations they serve to develop solutions to problems and increase trust in police.

**2. Organizational Transformation** The alignment of a law enforcement agency's organizational management practices, structure, personnel, and information systems to support community partnerships and proactive problem solving.

**3. Problem Solving** The process of engaging in the proactive and systematic examination of identified problems

to develop and rigorously evaluate effective responses."

Philadelphia Police Commissioner Ramsey has established several ways for this concept to work and has ordered all of the captains of each district to implement plans to support this initiative. Captain Dennis Wilson of the 9th District which includes much of the CCRA area has acted on this directive by scheduling the following public meetings.

**Town Hall**-Meeting held on the last Tuesday of every month at 6:00 p.m. at the Korman Suites at 2001 Hamilton Street. All residents and commercial business owners and managers of the 9th District are welcome to attend and relay any information as it relates to crime and quality of life and to hear a report on crime statistics in the 9th District.

**9th Police District Advisory Committee (PDAC)**-Meetings held the last Tuesday of every month at 7:00 p.m. at 9th District Police office at 21st Street & Pennsylvania Avenue. This meeting is not open to the public and is generally attended by the representatives and liaisons of local civic, apartment and condo associations. The format is similar to the Town Hall but is more formal in structure, addressing "area needs" more than individual needs.

**Police Service Area (PSA)**-Monthly meetings without a set date or place but generally held on a weeknight at 7:00 p.m. around the middle of the month. The intent of this meeting is to establish a direct connection between neighborhood residents and a dedicated police resource. The 9th District is divided into three PSAs with PSA#1 being most closely associated with CCRA boundaries and supported by Lieutenant Bob Nudd of the 9th District. The meetings will be announced one or two weeks beforehand either through fliers or CCRA newsletters.

<http://philapolicy9th.weebly.com>- This is the 9th District Police Website which contains an enormous amount of information, keeping you current on all crime activity and other information as it pertains to policing activities in the 9th District.

All of these resources are available to each of you. CCRA encourages your participation. Please visit the Police Liaison Committee sub site on CCRA's Website for additional information.

9th District Crime Stats (includes Lombard Street to Poplar Street and Broad Street to the Schuylkill River). Year to date through April 4, 2010 compared to same period of time in previous year.

<b>VIOLENT CRIME</b>	2009	2010	% Change
Homicide	1	0	-100%
Rape	2	3	33%
Robbery/Gun	29	16	-45%
Robbery/Other	29	20	-31%
Aggravated Assault/Gun	2	6	200%
Aggravated Assault/Other	19	19	0%
<b>TOTAL VIOLENT CRIME</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>-22%</b>

<b>PROPERTY CRIME</b>	2009	2010	% Change
Burglary/Residential	48	95	98%
Burglary/Non Residential	19	12	-37%
Theft Of Motor Vehicle Tag	10	13	30%
Theft From Person	16	14	-13%
Theft From Auto	150	206	37%
Theft	281	266	-5%
Retail Theft	129	116	-10%
Auto Thefts	35	30	-14%
<b>TOTAL PROPERTY OFFENSES</b>	<b>688</b>	<b>752</b>	<b>9%</b>

<b>TOTAL PART ONE CRIMES</b>	<b>770</b>	<b>816</b>	<b>6%</b>
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# Of Shooting Incidents	1	7	600%
# Of Shooting Victims	0	3	300%
Firearms Seized	11	11	0%

# To Feed the Hungry: MANNA

By Missy Randolph

After two years of temporary retirement following a long career in horticulture, I began to explore volunteer opportunities in our Center City community. One Monday afternoon about a year ago I walked through the front door of MANNA, located at 23rd and Ranstead Streets, across from the Armory. Once inside, I was warmly greeted and ushered to the volunteer coordinator, Rob Saxon, who immediately dropped everything and gave me a tour of the facility, which is dominated by a state-of-the-art commercial kitchen. As the tour progressed, I witnessed the heartfelt, powerful commitment to the complex issue of preparing and packaging thousands of meals for those in need. Delivery included! I needed no convincing after that first visit that I had discovered my volunteer "home."

MANNA was founded in 1990 by members of the First Presbyterian Church on Walnut Street who were searching for a way to address the

acute nutritional needs of people with AIDS. Since then the program has evolved and expanded to its current location where it sends out approximately 17,000 meals per week, three balanced meals, seven days a week for each client. In 2009, more than 723,000 frozen meals were delivered in six refrigerated trucks throughout the Philadelphia area. Client evaluation occurs every six months. Thanks to support from MANNA, many recipients eventually become self-sufficient.

The heartbeat of MANNA's mission pulses in the kitchen where staff and volunteers converge to turn out the numerous meals that are carefully sorted according to individual dietary needs, while adhering to the highest standards of safe handling. As a kitchen volunteer, I marvel at the dance that occurs while attending steaming braziers, huge stainless steel soup pots and ovens

filled with roasting entrees and baking goodies. Team cooperation "on the line" while filling meal trays really brings people together. Hardworking dishwashers are in constant motion as clean knives and pans are always in demand. As Glenda Cooke, the volunteer manager, says, "We are all 'one' in the kitchen."

The MANNA kitchen relies heavily on a huge corps of roughly 1,500 volunteers. Groups from schools, colleges, religious organizations, community residents and individuals can be found chopping mountains of vegetables, baking, or packaging meals. Last winter, a mother and her home-schooled children donated several weeks of their time, sharing the MANNA experience. In another case, a family visiting Philadelphia on vacation dropped by to help. Recently, two neighbors, Jonne Smith and Chris Beardsley, joined the ranks. There is a wonderful, welcoming atmosphere of purposeful energy at MANNA. As Glenda Cooke is quick to say, "We could not do what we do here without our volunteers."

Webster's Dictionary defines manna as "1: food miraculously supplied to the Israelites in the wilderness, and, 2: something of value that comes unexpectedly: a windfall." How appropriate to claim this word as the name of its organization. MANNA delivers nutritional, life-saving nourishment to hundreds of families and individuals who would otherwise go hungry. Those with serious medical conditions and special dietary needs are served as well. For many reasons, I feel very fortunate to live in our Center City community and doubly privileged to have an opportunity to volunteer at MANNA.

To find out more, visit [www.mannapa.org](http://www.mannapa.org) or call Rob Saxon, director of volunteers at 215-496-2662, x120.



Lynn Van Sant, Sharon Olson, Missy Randolph, and Dom Dorazio are some of the "chefs" at MANNA.

## State Representative Babette Josephs Helps Again

This year State Representative Babette Josephs facilitated a \$10,000 state grant to the Center City Residents' Association. Of the total, \$5,000 will be allocated to CCRA's tree matching program for resident members. The remaining \$5,000, is for the Schuylkill River Park Community Garden's on-going project to remove the rotting wooden plot boards and replace them with 100% recycled plastic. We thank the Representative for her continued generosity.



# The English-Speaking Union of Philadelphia

## "Creating Global Understanding Through English"

By Nancy Ambler

Does a little thrill run down your spine when you hear *Rule, Britannia*? Do you willingly suspend disbelief for Gilbert and Sullivan? Could you be ... an Anglophile? If so, you have excellent company in The English-Speaking Union (E-SU).

In the words of their mission statement, The English-Speaking Union "is committed to promoting scholarship and the advancement of knowledge through the effective use of English in an expanding global community." It was founded in London in 1918 with a view to functioning as "... an international educational institution dedicated to peace and understanding." The first American branch was formed in New York in 1920, followed later that year by the one in Philadelphia. Among the local founders were the publisher Edward Bok, [Episcopal] Bishop Philip K. Rhinelander and novelist Owen Wister. In 1926 the branch incorporated the Transatlantic Society of America, which had a similar mission.

In the period between the world wars, the branch devoted itself to countering American isolationism by presenting a series of lectures and other programs on contemporary issues of interest to the US and the UK alike. One standout presentation was a discussion of the euro long before the EU and its currency were in place. Intellectual fare was leavened by gala social events like a reception in honor of HRH Princess Margaret.

World War II altered The E-SU's focus. Its members raised funds for the Royal

Merchant Navy School, and dispatched hundreds of packets for the relief effort. Beginning in 1945 the branch contributed further to the Royal Merchant Navy School, as well as to the church of All Hallows-by-the-Tower in London and the Wakefield Trust. Locally, the speakers' programs continued; a "Books as Envoys" initiative began, to send books to schools in China and India; "Poetry Slams" were initiated to provide a venue for original verse; and professional and student exchanges and scholarships came into being. The branch also supports the British Universities' Summer School program (BUSS), and the annual Shakespeare Competition.

BUSS is open to all local secondary school teachers of English, Drama or History with a minimum of five years' experience. It provides tuition, room and board for three weeks' study at Oxford, the International Globe Centre, or the University of Edinburgh.

The annual Shakespeare Recitation Competition is 23 years old and growing. Requiring a presentation from the Bard, it attracted contestants from 21 area secondary schools last year, and 33 this spring. The first-place winner goes on to the national competition at the Vivian Beaumont Theater at Lincoln Center, where he or she must sight-read a Shakespearean passage as the final challenge. All contestants are given books, tee-shirts and a certificate just for competing, while the three winners receive cash awards. In this digital age it's heartening to know that several Philadelphians have been finalists in the national competition.



E-SU's 2010 Shakespeare Competition Contestants pictured with Philadelphia Branch President, Deborah Smith Webster (first row left), Shakespeare Competition Chair, Pat Bushyager (second row right), and MC, Steve Holt (second row left).

The Shakespeare competition involves far more than preparing and reading a speech. Local theatrical companies have "adopted" contestants, lending space, time and professional coaching. Last year's association was with The Philadelphia Shakespeare Theatre (see article on page 31), and this year's with the Arden Theater in Old City.

Nor does community involvement preclude having a good time. E-SU's monthly gatherings are famed for good food and good fellowship, and their special events, some of which are open – by reservation, please – to the public – are special indeed. A recent event was a tour and cocktail reception aboard the tall ship *Gazela* at Penn's Landing, on May 26. Then comes the annual garden party to celebrate the birthday of Queen Elizabeth II, on Sunday, June 13 at a grand house in Chestnut Hill. Partygoers are encouraged to wear their most spectacular hats, with awards going to men as well as women.

The English-Speaking Union welcomes both donors to its programs and new members. If you'd like to know more, visit [www.esus.org](http://www.esus.org) or call Judith Klein Francis (yes, daughter of CCRA stalwart Arthur Klein) at 215-545-3619, or e-mail [esu@libertynet.org](mailto:esu@libertynet.org)



The annual Garden Party is one of the English-Speaking Union's major fund raisers.

# Along the Mural Mile

By Judie Gilmore Lomnes

How many times have you walked by one of Philadelphia's murals and wondered who painted it and how? Have you ever been curious about the theme or meaning of a mural? Through an exciting new initiative, the Mural Mile, Philadelphia residents and visitors can now explore the stories behind some of the city's world-famous murals. As the Director of the Mural Arts Program, Jane Golden, says about the Mural Mile, "For the first time people can hear the stories behind the iconic murals, each of which is created by dedicated citizens who come together to transform their communities. The stories about how and why the murals are created are touching and powerful. It is a unique way to explore the city and what inspires Philadelphians."

The Mural Mile represents a group of 17 murals located in Center City that demonstrate the diversity of styles and subject matter that make Philadelphia's collection of over 3,000 murals so dynamic. In mid June, a downloadable podcast will be available at [www.muralarts.org/muralmile](http://www.muralarts.org/muralmile), that will lead you on a two and a half hour walking tour of the Mural Mile, introducing you to the muralists, community members and other voices that bring each mural to life.

The tour will lead you from 7th and Chestnut Streets to 6th and South Streets, from commercial districts to residential blocks. If podcasts aren't for you, you will also be able to use your cell phone to access the free audio narratives about each mural. Featured murals along the Mural Mile include *Legacy*, one of the largest tiled mosaics in the world, *Theater of Life*, a tribute to the artist in each of us, *Gimme Shelter*, a collage of pet portraits on Morris Animal Refuge, and *Taste of Summer*, which graces the side of one of Philadelphia's most famous restaurants. The tour is narrated by 6ABC anchor Rick Williams and contains a number of personal voices from notable figures such as Mayor Michael Nutter, Mural Arts Director Jane Golden, master muralist Meg Saligman, and world renowned chef Marc Vetri.

To celebrate the launch of the Mural Mile, through June and July Mural Arts will be hosting mural-related events, including "Meet the Muralist" days, special performances, guest speakers, happy hours and other fun-filled occasions. The organization will also be offering daily guided walking tours of the



Artist Ann Northrup and chef Marc Vetri conceptualized a lush mural about food as art and as a shared experience. It became the subject of her mural *A Taste of Summer* at 1312 Spruce Street.

Mural Mile, leaving from the Independence Visitor Center at 11:30 a.m. The guided walking tour of the Mural Mile is just one of many tours, including trolley and bike tours that patrons can take to explore murals in every neighborhood in Philadelphia.

The Mural Mile is the first of many interpretive initiatives the Mural Arts

Program hopes to create to bring the "City of Murals" to life. The interpretation components of the Mural Mile were made possible by presenting sponsor PNC Arts Alive, and by the National Endowment for the Arts and the Pennsylvania Humanities Council, the Federal-State Partner of the National Endowment for the Humanities.



Meg Saligman's *Philadelphia Muses* is located at 1235 Locust Street. It is an arts landscape filled with figures and elements symbolizing today's art and creativity.

# Helium Brings the Funny

By Leslie Young

If you purchase reserved seats, I cannot be held responsible for whatever unfolds at show time. My first experience at Helium Comedy Club at 2031 Sansom Street came at the expense of a well-intentioned suitor. We were on a first date, and he was courteous enough to have purchased tickets in advance of the show to guarantee our admission. "Reserved seats," it turned out, are directly in front of the stage. As anyone who has seen live comedy knows, proximity to the stage makes patrons fair game for joke fodder. And the comedians let my poor date have it. They poked fun at his hair, his weight, his clothes, and questioned my taste in men. It was all in good fun and quite hilarious, (plus I found out that my date was a good sport), but a word to the wise: choose reserved seats at your own risk! Nestled in the middle of the 2000 block of Sansom Street, Helium Comedy Club brings the funny in a much larger and more accommodating way than one would ever realize from the street. A

full-service bar and lounge area occupies the front of the building alongside the ticket box office. A long hallway then leads to a second full-service bar and lounge, as well as the 240-seat main showroom. Wednesday through Saturday, the club offers three-act stand-up comedy routines. Each night guarantees a headlining act with national television credentials, and often features writers and comedians from *The Daily Show*, *Saturday Night Live*, *Comedy Central Presents*, and *Last Comic Standing*, among other popular shows. Tuesday night is open mic night, and 20 burgeoning, and often local, comedians showcase their material.

Show times are generally 8:00 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday, with additional shows at 10:30 p.m. on Friday and Saturday. Ticket prices range from \$10 to \$25 per show, depending on the night, time, and headlining act. The club offers a slew of specials for birthdays, groups,

students, happy hours, etc. all of which are featured at [www.heliumcomedy.com](http://www.heliumcomedy.com).

## Know before you go

- As mentioned above, there is a difference between purchasing tickets in advance and purchasing reserved tickets in advance – an opportunity to be relished or avoided depending on your personality.
- There's a two-item minimum purchase required in the showroom, which includes drinks and appetizers.
- Patrons must be 21 or older, or 18 and over if accompanied by a parent or guardian.

For more information, visit: [www.heliumcomedy.com](http://www.heliumcomedy.com)



Bing Supernova has made appearances at Helium's Tuesday Night Open Mic Extravaganza and has started to earn a cult following.



Helium Comedy Club at 2031 Sansom Street is a great place to go for a fun evening, but be prepared to be the subject of the humor.

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# Zoning Committee Report - February, March and April

Tim Kerner and Pat Mattern, Co-Chairs

**1525 Walnut Street (C-5):** Application for the erection of one flat-wall sign extending above the bottom of the second floor and one awning sign with signage on the front only (flat-wall) accessory to the retail sales of clothing on the first and second floor in an existing two (2) story attached structure with accessory storage in the cellar (size and location as shown in the application). Refusal: The proposed, a flat-wall sign extending above the bottom of the second floor, is not permitted. Maximum sign area: 40sf vs. 131sf proposed. **Not Opposed.**

**326 S. 24th Street through to Delancey Street (R-10A):** Application for the demolition of the 1-story rear garage, the 2nd floor rear balcony; for the erection of a one (1) story (1-car) garage (11'-3" high) with an open roof deck above with 42" high railings and a 11'-6" garden wall (privacy screen) above the garage roof. Roof deck to be accessed by a walkway connection with the existing structure. For the erection of a 2nd floor rear balcony (fire escape) on the existing four (4) story structure (48" high railing), and a new stair from the balcony (fire escape) to grade; for the removal of existing fence wall. Minimum yard area: 144sf required vs. 0sf proposed. Minimum rear yard depth: 9'-0" required vs. 0' proposed. Maximum height of privacy screen: 5'-0" required vs. 11'-6" proposed. **Not Opposed.**

**1706 Panama Street (R-10):** Application for a rear addition to the first and second floors of a single family dwelling. Refusal: Minimum open area: 30% required vs. 14% proposed. Minimum rear yard area: 144sf required vs. 80 sf proposed. **Not Opposed.**

**1800 Sansom Street, SW corner (C-4):** Application for the construction of a restaurant and bakery/café in existing retail spaces. Referral: Proposed project requires modification to the following provisos which were part of the October 8, 2004 ZBA decision regarding the 10 Rittenhouse project:

There shall be a minimum of three (3) stores in the northwest corner of the new construction as shown on the "Ground Floor Plan" presented to the General Membership on June 1, 2004.

No tables, chairs, planters, bike racks, pay phones, signage or any other object placed on sidewalk.

**Provisos were revised.**

**2012-2018 Chestnut Street (C-4):** Application for the relocation of lot lines to create one (1) lot from two (2) lots, for the complete demolition of existing structure on the lot, for the erection of a six (6) story attached structure with cellar, max height 82ft with stair tower, elevator, for use as 1 retail unit, 12 acc. parking spaces including 1 accessible space, for office space 2nd through 5th floor, for covered roof terrace and a penthouse on 6th floor both for office purposes, for mechanical equipment on rooftop and for a flat wall non-accessory sign. Refusal: Whereas one (1) non-accessory sign is proposed and is not permitted. Max floor area ratio: 500% (46,000sf) allowable, 583% (53,682sf) proposed. **Appearance Canceled.**

**326 S. 24th Street thru to Delancey Street (R-10A):** For the removal of existing fence wall; for the erection of a new fence wall at the side yards of 324 and 326 S. 24th Street to a new height of 14'-0". Refusal: Maximum height of fence wall: 6'-0" required vs. 14'-0" proposed. Review of revision to previously presented project. **Opposed.**

**2117 Rodman Street (R-10A):** Application for the erection of a 10'x16' two story wood frame rear addition and for the erection of a 12'x16' deck above the 3rd floor roof with access from a pilot house. Refusal: Minimum Open area: 30% requires vs. 27% proposed. Rear yard minimum area: 144sf required vs. 128sf. Maximum number of stories: 3 required vs. 4 proposed. Maximum building height: 35' required vs. 39.6' proposed. **Tabled.**

**1915-19 Chestnut St. (thru to 19th, 20th and Ludlow) (C-2):** Application for a take-out restaurant with seating in space 15 S. 20th Street on the first floor as part of an existing structure with and existing 581 dwellings and other uses as previously approved. Referral: The proposed conditional use, take-out restaurant with seating, requires a certificate from the Zoning Board of Adjustment. **Not Opposed.**

**224-230 W. Rittenhouse Square, Space 101 (R-16):** Application for the erection of one (1) accessory non-illuminated window sign and proposed treatment of patients to include Botox, laser hair removal and other skin care services and accessory sales of cosmetics in space 101 in the same building with existing commercial spaces, 521 dwelling units and other uses as previously approved. Refusal: The proposed use is not permitted in this zoning district. The proposed accessory sign is within 150sf of the boundaries of Rittenhouse Square and is not permitted in this Zoning District. **Not Opposed.**

**2430 Spruce Street (Sec 25th Street) (R-10):** Application for existing 3 story attached structure for use as a 4 family dwelling with existing 2 story rear detached first floor accessory garage and second floor new professional office. Refusal: Proposed professional office use creates multiple uses on lot which is not permitted. Proposed professional office creates multiple structures on the lot. (No structure has its own front, side or rear yards, therefore this condition is not permitted in the zoning district.) **Opposed.**

**2117 Rodman Street (R-10A):** Application for the erection of a 10'x16' two story wood frame rear addition and for the erection of a 12'x16' deck above the 3rd floor roof with access from a pilot house. Refusal: Minimum Open area: 30% requires vs. 27% proposed. Rear yard minimum area: 144sf required vs. 128sf. Maximum number of stories: 3 required vs. 4 proposed. Maximum building height: 35' required vs. 39.6' proposed. **Not Opposed.**

**511 S. 18th Street (R-10A):** Application for a 12' x 23'-6" one story addition at the 4th story level, w/ 12' x 13' roof-deck atop 3rd story roof, access via proposed addition as part of a single family dwelling. Refusal: Maximum building height: 35' required vs. 42' proposed. Maximum number of stories: 3 required vs. 4 proposed. **Opposed.**

**1801 Walnut St. (NWC 18th St. thru to Sansom St.) (C5):** Application for a take-out restaurant with seating to include

*Continue on page 27*

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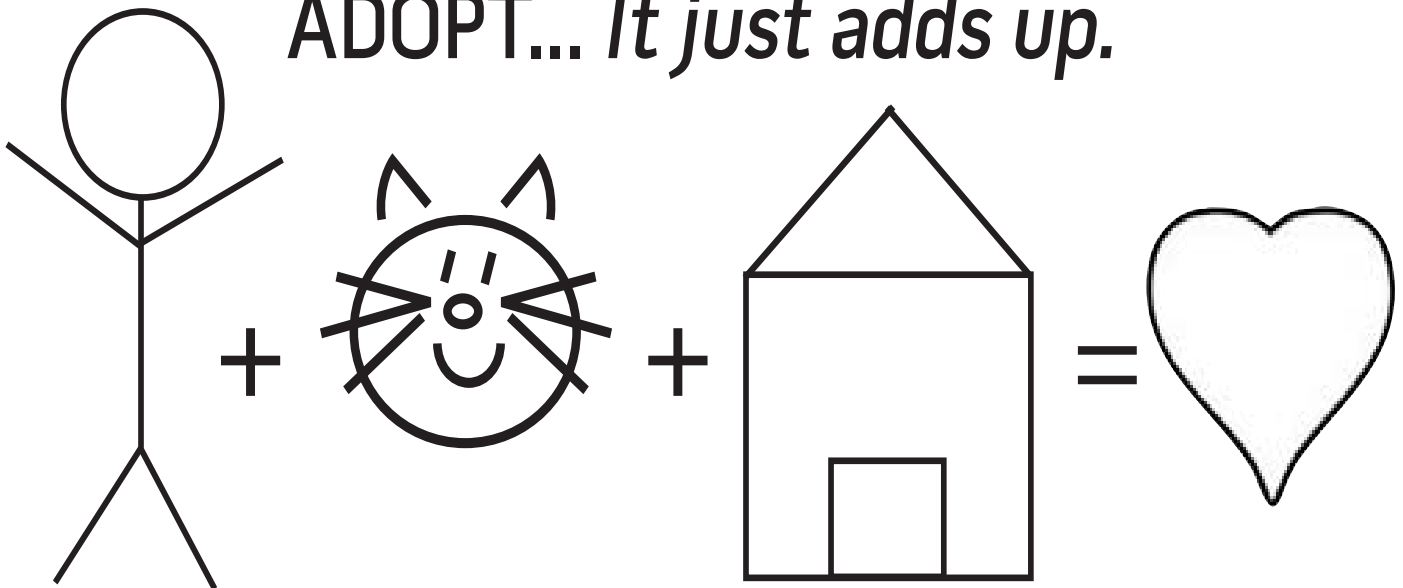
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accessory retail sale of bakery items in space 18C1 on the first floor and 18C2 on the second floor (AKA 130 S. 18th St.) and for the erection of 8 flatwall awning signs and 2 flatwall internally illuminated menu boards. Refusal: Proposed use, take out restaurant, is prohibited in the special controls for the Center City commercial area. *Applicant will also present plans for signage. Not Opposed.*

**1735 South Street (C-2):** Application for use as a take-out restaurant with seating (max. 29 seats) and all food served on non-disposable/ disposable ware for consumption by patrons on/off premises (no live entertainment) in the first floor of an existing 3 story attached structure with 1 previously approved single-family dwelling in the second through third floor to remain. Refusal: Certificate from ZBA required for proposed use, take out restaurant. **Not opposed with provisos.**

**1733 South Street (C-2):** Application for use as a take-out restaurant with seating (max. 29 seats) and all food served on non-disposable/ disposable ware for consumption by patrons on/off premises (no live entertainment) in the first floor of an existing 3 story attached structure with 1 previously approved single-family dwelling in the second through third floor to remain. Referral: Certificate from ZBA required for proposed use, take out restaurant. **Not opposed with provisos.**

## Center City's Chili Champion Is Crowned

By Dewitt Brown

On Wednesday, February 17th, the Center City Residents' Association renewed its annual Chili Challenge. This year's event was held in the Grand Ballroom the Radisson Plaza-Warwick Hotel where 17 competitors dished out their best chili recipe in an attempt to claim the title of Center City's Chili Champion.

To claim the 2010 Chili Championship, competitors had to earn the votes of those in attendance as well as please the discerning tastes of the CCRA Celebrity Tasting Panel. The panel members were Chef Michael Solomonov of Zahav, Chef Erin O'Shea of Percy Street BBQ and Audrey Claire Taichman of Twenty Manning Grill and Audrey Claire. The votes of the attendees and the panelists are weighted 50/50.

After tallying the votes, CCRA's Chili Chairman, DeWitt Brown, announced the results. Craig Morrison with his "Bullriders' Chili" won the event. Coming in second place was Geoff Rezvani's "Galaxy of Happy and Most Extreme Meats." And rounding out the top three was Son Mi Yi's "East Philly Chili," an entry from a chef at Center City's Darling's Café.

For winning the Chili Challenge, Craig Morrison was awarded a gift certificate to Percy Street Barbecue where the Chili Chairman hopes that he will have the chance to enjoy Chef O'Shea's tasty Root Beer Chili. In addition, Mr. Morrison will join past winners in chili immortality by having his name engraved upon the fabled Chili Chalice.

After tasting 17 different chili recipes, Audrey Claire Taichman expressed her

appreciation of the event and of the talent on display. "I love judging this event. It's such a nice community of people. I must say, it gets harder and harder each year." Ms. Taichman reopened one of her two restaurants as Twenty Manning Grill which now features a simple menu of American dishes made from fresh, local and seasonal ingredients. Perhaps she'll even feature a chili inspired by her experience judging the Chili Challenge?

Chef O'Shea was equally impressed by the quality of this year's entrants. At Percy Street BBQ, she features a Root Beer Chili made with root beer specially brewed by Philadelphia's Yards Brewery. When pressed by the Chili Chairman, she remained coy as to whether she will enter it in next year's competition.

Special thanks are owed to all the competitors who submitted their chili recipes. CCRA would like to thank the event volunteers - Janet Heuman, Tanya Seaman, Monica Fread and Mary Ellen Schneider - who chipped in to make sure the event went smoothly. In addition, CCRA would like to thank Megan Grineis and all the folks at the Radisson for helping to make this year's challenge a terrific success.

Finally, we'd like to recognize our CCRA Chili Challenge Chili Peppers who gave generously to help support this year's event. Habanero Peppers: Rep. Babette Josephs and Allison M. Brown (giving in excess of \$50). Cayenne Peppers: T. J. Reilly, Eric S. Cantor and Leon Kauffman. Every chili always needs a lot of chili peppers so we're hoping more folks



DeWitt Brown, Chili Challenge Chair, presents the Chili Chalice to Craig Morrison, the winner who made his special "Bullriders' Chili". Audrey Claire Taichman, one of the three judges, shows her approval.



Paul Curcio and his "Johnny Dark's Weekend" Chili are ready to take on the other contestants.

follow the lead of this year's Chili Peppers.

Plans are already underway for next year's event. So, if you think you've got the skills to compete for the fabled Chili Chalice, you've got the next year to perfect your recipe. In the words of CCRA's Chili Chairman, "Center City shall have chili and this Chili Chalice shall bear the names of our Chili Champions!"



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# Recreation for All at Markward and O'Connor

By Fran Levi

Markward Playground at 400 South Taney Street and the O'Connor Pool at 26th & South Streets are the only public recreational facilities within the Center City Residents' Association geographic boundaries. Supervised by Joe Fagan, recreational leader, both facilities are heavily used and draw a diverse group of children and adults from the neighborhood and surrounding area.

From early September through the end of the school year, the city funds an after-school program at Markward. The program is available for children, kindergarten through eighth grade, from 3:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m., for \$20.00 per week. Pick-up service is available for children attending Greenfield and Independence Charter School for an additional \$5.00. The program's staff includes Judy Crossan, assistant recreational leader, Kendall Edwards, program director, Marquis Harris and Joe Fox. They provide the children with a snack, homework help, games and supervised free play. The program's maximum capacity is 50, and there is no income eligibility to attend. Crossan stressed that "on days when students are dismissed at noon, the program covers the extra hours at no additional cost to the parents."

The summer day camp begins when the school year ends. There are 150 campers and a staff of 30 working the various camp shifts: 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. and 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., with weekly fees of \$70.00, \$80.00 and \$100.00 respectively. For an additional fee, the campers can stay until 6:00 p.m. Fees cover breakfast, snacks, all trips, a camp shirt, arts, crafts and sports. Twice a day the campers visit the O'Connor Pool for swimming lessons and free swim. Every week there is a guest speaker scheduled and a major trip planned. Because the children are in such a structured environment during the school year, Crossan says that she emphasizes "free play that is supervised but not always totally directed." No child ages out of Markward's day camp until they reach college, according



On the one large field different age groups find a place to practice softball.



Markward Playground is a magnet for children of all ages and backgrounds.

to Crossan. When they complete eighth grade, they become junior counselors and then regular counselors when they are older. She is adamant that to work at the summer camp "a counselor must be in good standing at their school. The only reason they should be attending summer school is for an enrichment program. The campers are an extremely eclectic mix, both ethnically and financially, but they all get along and are protective of one another," she said.

In addition to the day camp program, there is a six-week National Junior Tennis League (NJTL) camp run by Arthur Ashe Youth Tennis and Education Corporation for children seven through 16 years old serving 50 to 75 children at Markward. The camp has two half-day sessions, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. The fee is \$190 for the program, but scholarships are available. Campers receive instruction, equipment and camp shirts. They compete against campers at other facilities with NJTL programs. In addition, there will be U.K. Elite Soccer Summer Camps held at Markward June 14-18 and August 16-20 for children five to 14 years old and a tot camp for children three to five. Fortunately this summer the O'Connor Pool is scheduled to be open after being closed the summer of 2009. Throughout the day different groups — tots, seniors, boys, girls, etc. — will have designated hours when they will have the pool to themselves. This enables adults to swim laps after work, children to receive swimming instruction and teams to compete.

The ball field is used by the men's softball league, a neighborhood institution for 65



Marquis Harris and Kendall Edwards, program director, are supervising the children in the after-school program as they are picked up by their parents and caregivers.

years. The two-year-old women's volleyball league's season began in May. In addition there is tee ball, softball, baseball and soccer competing for the field as this very popular playground is home to an ever-growing neighborhood. The two basketball courts appear to be always in use, with organized pick-up games that anyone can join.

When visiting the recreation center, the staff requests that you say hi to Pumpkin, Markward's 16-year-old feline mascot. For many years the playground has been a welcome place to people of all ages.

For more information call 215-685-6649 or visit [www.markwardplayground.com](http://www.markwardplayground.com).

# Summer Performances and Exhibits Scheduled in the CCRA Area

(Listed are only performances from Broad Street to the Schuylkill River.)

## BALLET X

The Wilma Theater, 265 South Broad Street, 215-546-7824, BalletX.org.  
**BalletX Summer Series 2010.**  
July 21 – 24 at 8 p.m. and  
July 24 and 25 at 2 p.m.

## INTERACT THEATRE COMPANY

2030 Sansom St, 215-568-8077,  
InterActTheatre.org.  
**Black Pearl Sings!**  
May 28 – June 27.

## KIMMEL CENTER, INC.

260 S. Broad St., 215-893-1999,  
KimmelCenter.org.  
**Summer Solstice Celebration**  
June 19, 3:00 p.m. until dawn on  
Sunday, June 20.

## Global Grooves World Music Dance Parties.

Starting July 15 on Thursday nights  
throughout the month of July.

## OPERA COMPANY OF PHILADELPHIA

215-893-1018, www.operaphila.org.  
**Orphée & Eurydice.**  
June 17 – 25.  
Kimmel Center's Perelman Theater.

## THE PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA

215-893-1999, Philorch.org.  
**Dutoit Conducts Strauss.**  
June 4, 5 and 8 at 8 p.m. and June 6 at 2 p.m.  
**Mahler's Third Symphony.**  
June 10, 11 and 12 at 8 p.m.

## THE WILMA THEATER

265 S. Broad Street, 215-546-7824  
WilmaTheater.org.  
**Leaving.**  
May 19 – June 20.

## PHILADELPHIA ART ALLIANCE

251 S. 18th St., 215-545-4302,  
PhilArtAlliance.org.  
**Vanitas: Candy DePew, Myra Mimplitsch Gray, Kate Kaminsky, and Audrey Hasan Russel.** May 27 through August 12.  
**En Route: Atticus Adams & Andrea Landau.**  
May 27 through August 12.

## THE PRINT CENTER

1614 Latimer St., 215-735-6090,  
PrintCenter.org.  
**84th Annual International Competition: Photography.**  
May 1 – July 24.  
**Tracings / Transfers / Copies / Forgeries: Bill Walton.**  
May 1 – July 24.

## CCRA Returns to Rittenhouse Square's Flower Market

The Rittenhouse Flower Market is an annual event and serves to raise funds for children's charities. CCRA was pleased to participate again at year's event Wednesday and Thursday, May 5 and 6 after an absence of several years. The booth sold 12 varieties of herbs and promoted CCRA membership. A number of CCRA board members were assigned shifts at the booth. The provided advice on selecting herbs to buy and on what CCRA does on behalf of its members and the community.

Keith Cox, CCRA Membership Committee Chairperson said, "It was a lot of fun to meet so many CCRA members. Most visitors were already members, but we did succeed in signing up a number of new members which will help us towards our goal of increasing membership to 1,250 households."

If you are interested in joining the Membership Committee, please contact the CCRA office.



Jeff Braff, CCRA board member and herb specialist, assists a customer in making a selection.

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# Philadelphia Shakespeare Theatre: The Bard Lives on Sansom Street

By Nancy Ambler



William Shakespeare's plays are performed by The Philadelphia Shakespeare Theatre at 2111 Sansom Street.

Welcome to Philadelphia's West End! For contemporary theater, there's InterAct and its guest companies at the Adrienne. And just up the block is the only company in the city - indeed one of only a handful in the country - devoted entirely to the works of Shakespeare. Not "just" a venue for the best in Shakespearean production, The Philadelphia Shakespeare Theatre has become, in the phrase of its founder and director, Carmen Khan, a "Town Commons for all things Shakespeare." Its stated mission is "to produce the most excellent Shakespeare productions and education programming, accessible to all." A typical year features, onstage, professional productions in the spring and a free production of the company's Classical Acting Academy in the summer. The concurrent Open Door Project, the arts-in-education outreach program founded in 2000, brings secondary school students into the Theatre for matinees and takes professional productions into the schools. In addition the company offers Shakespeare training courses for secondary school teachers of English, and professional training in Shakespearean technique for professional actors.

The history of The Philadelphia Shakespeare Theatre is the history of its founder and director, Carmen Khan. Born in London, Carmen grew up steeped, as all Britons tend to be, in the words of the

national poet, and avidly taking in the many free presentations. At the University of London she studied music and dance, as well as English literature, then taught English and dance at secondary schools and universities. On coming to the US Carmen worked at the Hip Pocket Theater in Fort Worth, leaving to pursue an MFA in acting at The Catholic University of America in Washington. From there she was recruited by People's Light & Theatre in Malvern, bringing her to the Philadelphia area. As rewarding as that experience was, however, it failed to gratify Carmen's passion for Shakespeare. Her next step - more like a leap - was to head the Red Heel Theatre Company. This group drew on a pool of local talent to produce "little-known classics" - like Marlowe and other Elizabethan and Jacobean playwrights as well as Shakespeare. Carmen soon realized that audiences for Shakespeare himself far outnumbered those for his colleagues, and that the absence of a real Shakespeare presence in Philadelphia presented the opportunity to fulfill her dream: to dedicate a company to the greatest playwright the world has known. In this spirit Carmen reinvented her company as The Philadelphia Shakespeare Theatre.

This spring the company offered two favorites: *MacBeth*, with an original score by Melissa Dunphy, nationally known for her recent *The Gonzales Cantata*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, with original music by award-winning composer Fabian Obispo. All music was played live - by the actors. During the professional season, three matinees a week are dedicated to secondary school students, whose teachers enrich the core curriculum by bringing their students to these first-rate professional productions. Each performance is followed by discussion with the company's director of education and cast members. An additional student experience is the Artist-in-Residence program, in which teaching artists lead the students through performance-based activities based on a single Shakespearean text. Many of the teachers have also benefited by the Shakespeare Theatre's Teacher Training program, offered in conjunction with the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington. Lucy Tyson, the

Theatre's Director of Education, recalls one seasoned teacher exclaiming, "I'll never see Shakespeare the same way again!" and a student marveling that "it's not just a book anymore." Another part of the outreach to young audiences is a professional production that tours secondary schools; this year it was *MacBeth*. It's preceded in class by an in-depth study guide, Lucy's product, and it alters none of Shakespeare's words, but in deference to school schedules reduces running time to just over an hour. Each performance is followed by discussion with the cast.

In addition to the Teacher Training sessions, summer is given over to the Classical Acting Academy at the Theatre, in which working actors, under seasoned directors, steep themselves for eight weeks in Shakespearean drama and technique. Participants not only gain experience and understanding, but are in effect auditioning for roles with the company. This year's production is *Henry V*, centered on the moral Calvary of Agincourt; fully staged performances will be open to the public, at no charge.

The Philadelphia Shakespeare Theatre, at 2111 Sansom Street, welcomes your attendance and your support. You can become a volunteer usher and earn free tickets by calling 215-496-9722. For individual tickets or discounted season subscriptions, call the box office at 215-496-8001. And for more on this and upcoming seasons, visit [www.phillyshakespeare.org](http://www.phillyshakespeare.org).

*Reporter's Note:* Like most reasonably literate English-speaking people, I'd been exposed to *MacBeth* on the page, in the classroom, in the theater and on screen. None of these approached the immediacy of this production. Seating is on three sides of the intimate theater, making the audience almost part of the action. And the actors' delivery, while faithful to the cadence of the Bard, is never declamatory. The action, punctuated but never eclipsed by original music, moves relentlessly, and the denouement is both tragic and inevitable. It's perhaps the most accessible Shakespeare onstage today.



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## This Is what CCRA Has Been Doing for You this Spring:



CCRA manages a 72 plot community garden for members with five public plots awarded by lottery annually to non-members living in the CCRA district.



On Thursday, April 29, CCRA in partnership with Washington Square West Civic Association, South of South Neighborhood Association, Logan Square Neighborhood Association sponsored a Candidates' Forum for the Democratic candidates for State Representative. Babette Josephs, the incumbent, and her challenger, Gregg Kravitz presented their positions on issues and answered questions from the audience.



City planning students from the University of Pennsylvania worked with CCRA and South of South Neighborhood Association (SOSNA) to put together a preliminary vision for how the neighborhood east and south of the South Street Bridge might develop. The public was invited to give feedback on March 22 and to view their final suggestions May 10.



Stanley R. Krakower, Esquire, CCRA's legal counsel for 25 years, represents the organization before the Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA) and in court to appeal ZBA decisions.