



Newsletter of the Center City Residents' Association

Vol. 2 No. 3 September 2011

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The Work Has Begun!

By Josh Abbell



Construction began in June on the new 25th Street entryway to the Philadelphia School.



The new entryway will face a "green" play yard that will welcome students at the beginning of the 2011 school year.

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The Philadelphia School (TPS) held a meeting June 6 to update neighbors on the construction plans and schedule for upcoming work on its existing property at 25th and Lombard streets and its new facility at 25th and South streets. The construction team of Becker Frondorff,

a Center City owner's representative, and Wolfe Scott Associates, a neighborhood construction management company, were introduced to the audience. The neighbors were informed that the construction will take place over the next two years.

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By mid-June, construction began on a new entryway on the northwest corner of the current school building. This new canopied entryway will create a more welcoming and accessible front door for the school. The existing blacktop play yard on 25th Street will be “greened” with pervious brick and landscaped with shrubs and flowers. The current chain link fencing will be replaced with a new decorative metal fence and brick piers. Work on the new entryway, schoolyard and adjacent interior spaces and classrooms will be completed in time for the 2011 school year.

Construction began in late July on the 25th and South streets site that was formerly a Department of Licenses and Inspections vehicle maintenance yard. This site will house the future Early Childhood Education Center, a multipurpose performance space (in the old four-bay maintenance garage), a

5,000 square foot landscaped play court and garden, as well as admissions offices and some on-site parking. This work is scheduled to be completed for the 2012 school year.

The construction team reviewed their roles, which include managing daily construction activities and coordinating communication between the school and neighbors. To assist in communication with the neighbors and community, the school established a website for construction project information (www.tpschool.org/www/constructionp.php) and a construction hotline for neighbors to call with construction-related questions or concerns between 8:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Neighbors were invited to sign-up for periodic e-mail updates by contacting tpscommunications@tpschoool.org.

The audience was informed of the construction plans and potential neighborhood impacts

associated with the ongoing work. While some temporary sidewalk closures will be necessary to safely accommodate work areas, street closures are not anticipated. Work hours will be in accordance with City Code. Material deliveries and dumpster removal will also be scheduled to occur during work hours. The construction dumpsters will be located within the construction areas.

In addition to improving The Philadelphia School’s facilities, expansion to the South Street site and enhancements to the existing Lombard Street school building will support gradual enrollment growth to about 450 children over the next five to six years and enable the school to better serve its students and the neighborhood. The upcoming construction will significantly enhance the outward appearance of these two properties in the neighborhood.

Save Our Sites

By Dane Wells

Save Our Sites was formed by David S. Traub and John Dowlin to raise public awareness of endangered properties and promote urban preservation in Philadelphia. Originally a group called Save Our Square was formed to save Rindelaub’s Row on 18th Street between Sansom and Walnut streets, which John Dowlin called one of the most charming corners in the area. After losing that effort in 2006, Save Our Square regrouped with a broader goal, changing its name to Save Our Sites, or S.O.S., to try to avert other similar losses. Save Our Sites, like the Preservation Alliance, publishes an annual list of endangered properties, and it also offers several free tours each year.

S.O.S. is a non-profit urban preservation organization, but the organizers try to keep it simple. According to David Traub, there is no board, there are no dues and there is no formal fund raising. “We have a steering committee,” says Traub, “and we strive for complete transparency.” S.O.S. has general membership meetings in the spring and fall to set an agenda for the year. Traub says, “We’re here to complement the other preservation organizations, not to compete with them.” Dr. Richard Tyler, the former long-time Executive Director of the Philadelphia Historical Commission, told the *Weekly Press*, “I like the idea of a concerned lay organization and that (S.O.S.)



David Traub, center, Save Our Sites co-founder, leads a tour of the Little Streets around Quince and Irving streets in Washington Square West.

is not highly structured. It’s a citizens group. One of its functions is to lend support to other groups.” Traub likes to think that S.O.S. gives a grass roots perspective to Philadelphia’s preservation efforts.

S.O.S. does have an e-mail list of more than 200 names, and also sponsors very good free tours and programs. Some recent tours have explored the Mid-Town Village in Center City; the Wagner Institute in North Philadelphia; Madison Square and St. Albans Place, the landscaped pedestrian residential streets near Naval Square and the Girard Estates in South Philadelphia.

Traub is a Pine Street resident and has been a member (and former board member) of Center City Residents’ Association for about 40 years. A native of Louisville, Kentucky, Traub has his master’s degree in architecture from the University of Pennsylvania. In

1964 he participated in an international master class with Louis Kahn. From 1970 to 1973 he worked with Kahn, and in 1974 he established his own office, now located in a restored carriage house in the Girard College neighborhood.

Co-founder John Dowlin lives in West Philadelphia; he arrived here in 1972 from Detroit. Dismayed by the deterioration of Detroit, Dowlin was motivated to help Philadelphia remain a healthy urban area. One of his favorite authors, Jane Jacobs, has shaped his outlook on urban issues.

Save Our Sites will be holding its next meeting on September 21 at 7:30 p.m., at the Ethical Society on Rittenhouse Square. For more information, visit the website: www.saveoursites.org or e-mail davidtraub@verizon.net

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Jeffrey L. Braff, CCRA President

President’s Report

Those who attended our annual meeting in May know that I ran unopposed for president. I did not campaign for this position. I had no platform. And I made no campaign promises.

So what do I hope to accomplish during my two year term? What are my goals for CCRA? These certainly are fair questions to ask. As I step into the office, these are my goals:

1. Place CCRA In A Position Of Financial Stability. This is our most pressing issue. The past three years have been extremely challenging for most non-profits, and CCRA has been no exception. Our operating costs are largely fixed and do not vary greatly with membership numbers. But our revenues have been sliding downwards. We have lost members and corporate sponsors. And we can no longer count on receiving grant monies from Harrisburg procured through the efforts of Representative Babette Josephs. As a result, we have been dipping into our cash reserve. At the present rate, unless we turn things around, we will be out of business before my term is over.

How do we turn things around? By implementing goals 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6.

2. Enhance CCRA’s Visibility. The readers of this wonderful publication know what CCRA is and the extraordinary work performed by our board and committee members. But there are too many in our community for whom CCRA has little meaning. We must be forever vigilant in tooting our own horn. This will pay dividends in the recruitment of new members and additional corporate sponsors. (You can help by telling your friends about CCRA.)

3. Increase Membership In CCRA. The recession has taken a toll on our membership figures. But with the imagination and energy of our Membership Committee, we have already turned the corner. There are some 15,000 families in the CCRA neighborhood. Our goal of enlisting 3,000 new members may be a long shot, but it certainly is one that is worthwhile. Increasing membership not only raises revenue, but it also makes it easier to obtain corporate sponsors and sell ads. Perhaps even more important, increasing our membership numbers increases our clout with the numerous agencies and representatives with which we interact.

4. Improve Fundraising. In the past, CCRA’s fundraising efforts have consisted of the House Tour (ticket sales and tour book ads), the Celebration of Center City Living (tickets and sponsorship) and the Spring Sidewalk Appeal (now the “Neighborhood Beautification Campaign”). Our fundraising committee is already hard at work in “refreshing” these traditional vehicles and developing possible new ones.

5. Reap The Benefits Of The New CCRA Website. As Adam Schneider pointed out in the last Quarterly, a group of tech-savvy board members completely redesigned our website. It features detailed information on our committees, multiple blogs, a community calendar and important contact information and links. It also contains a great slideshow that touts many of CCRA’s accomplishments. (Go to the home page, click on “About CCRA,” then “CCRA Slide Show.”) Used to its full advantage, the website should enhance CCRA’s visibility, increase membership and even reduce our operating costs.

6. Explore Operating Efficiencies. Though our costs are largely fixed, there certainly are areas where costs might be trimmed without harming our programs and services. The office committee is already investigating the possibility of shared office space. We need to continue to make better use of computers and electronic media, and we should also be able to reduce our postage and copying costs.

7. Build A Cadre Of Volunteers. Many of you have volunteered your time for various endeavors, never to be contacted. We must do a better job of soliciting volunteers for particular projects and taking advantage of your offers to volunteer. (Join a committee through the website. Go to the home page, click on “About CCRA,” then “CCRA Committees”).

We have many challenges ahead of us. Fortunately, with a host of new initiatives (e.g. the weekly e-newsletter, new website, Judith Eden Community Commons Lecture Series), my predecessor has placed us on the path to success, and we have a truly stellar collection of officers and directors. I am the 33rd president of this organization: I do not intend to be the last!

Jeffrey L. Braff, President

New Outdoor Classroom in the Secret Garden at Greenfield School

By Fred Kaulbach

This fall students at the Albert M. Greenfield Elementary School will enjoy learning in the new outdoor classroom located in the school's Secret Garden.

Architect Vincent Kling originally conceived the Secret Garden, located at the corner of Chestnut and 23rd streets, as an integral, outdoor part of the school's education facilities. Over the last 40 years, it has seen various stages of use. As part of the Greening Greenfield initiative, a dedicated volunteer group of parents transformed the space into a revitalized outdoor classroom equipped with tables and seating that allows classwork to continue uninterrupted in this lush shade-garden environment.

Sheltered from the busy Chestnut Street corner behind a tall brick site wall but beyond the walls of the traditional classroom, the Secret Garden offers Greenfield students a unique place to explore and think. The L-shaped plan features a curvilinear, pea-gravel path defined by raised planters that culminates in a 28-foot by 12-foot cobblestone patio. The patio provides a framework for Greenfield's

K-8 teachers to hold productive class time under magnolia and apple trees, amongst native plantings that already attract mourning doves, orioles and other native fauna to this unlikely oasis.

This phase of Greening Greenfield was completed for under 1,000 dollars by leveraging the volunteer skills and labor of

students, parents and alumni—who include among their ranks masons, contractors, landscape architects and others who just enjoy getting dirt under their fingernails. Master gardener Martin Warman provided guidance, and Brandywine Realty Trust and Mecco Constructors, Inc. generously donated recycled cobblestones from the 30th Street Post Office project.



To enter the Secret Garden visitors walk on the curvilinear pea gravel path. Student tile work is on the brick wall enclosing the Secret Garden.



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Be a House Detective – Establish the Chain of Title

By Pip Campbell

You've always wondered about the family that built your house, when that back addition was added or who converted it into a boarding house, apartments or condos. If you have been following this series of newsletter articles, you have learned how to find information from the Philadelphia Historical Commission, on websites and through maps. But to undertake detailed research, the list of property owners, called the "chain of title," must be developed. If the property is located in the Ritt-Fit Historical District (or another city-designated district), you may be able to conduct at least a partial title search in the Historical Commission files in City Hall. If not, you will have to research City property records to create the chain of title. These records generally include property ownership transfers by sale, wills, mortgages or sheriff sales.

Using records in Philadelphia can be confusing because all the records are not in one location. Where records are stored depends on the type (for example, deeds versus wills) and on the age of the record. An excellent resource for navigating Philadelphia records, compiled by Jefferson Moak, is available through the Athenaeum on Washington Square (www.philaathenaeum.org/bookstore2.html). The book guides you through many types of resources available throughout the Philadelphia area and is well worth its cost because of the timesaving tips that make the search process easier and smoother.

The property owner list is created by tracing ownership changes recorded in property deeds, however, ownership may also change via wills or sheriff sales. Titles are generally searched backwards from the present owner to, in Philadelphia, the William Penn Land Grant, or as far back as time and energy permit. Transactions such as property sales or mortgages are recorded in books. These books are numbered, and transactions are tracked by book and page number (for example, deed book 1208, page 22). The person who sells a property is called the Grantor, and the purchaser (the buyer) is called the Grantee. One way to begin a physical title search is to find the transaction of your sale – in other words, find the book and page number where the deed transfer is recorded for the present owner (you or another person/company).

Like most cities, Philadelphia is beginning to computerize records. Most deeds

from 1977 to the present can be accessed electronically, for a fee, through a City website (<http://philadox.phila.gov/picris/splash.jsp>). A one-hour fee of \$15 will allow you to print out the title search from 1977 forward. The database provides the type of document (e.g., deed), the date of the transaction, the grantor and grantee. Click on the individual record to determine the book and page number where the recording can be found. You can then identify the book and page number for the earliest recording (presumably 1977) and go to City Hall and access that book and page number to find earlier records. The record will indicate the name of the person from whom the property was purchased (the seller or Grantor), who purchased (the Grantee) it, and the book and page number where the previous sale

is recorded. Then go to the book and page number for the previous sale, and so on, all the way back as far as you are interested in recording the owners.

Once you have the list of owners, you can find other documents, many of which are online, to learn more about who owned or lived in the house, their occupations, any remodeling that was done, who the architects or contractors may have been and what uses the house may have served over time. Another city website, Open Data Philly (www.opendataphilly.org), lists all records that are available electronically with links to the websites. See previous issues of this newsletter and the next issue for information on how to search other records and how to learn more about property owners.



Through research a homeowner is able to find historic information on their old houses.

J. Christensen

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KLEIN'S KORNER

Simple Solutions to a "Flashy" Problem

By Jared Klein

Usually I use my column to discuss the inconveniences we face in our daily lives, such as parking, dog waste and construction detours. However, I feel compelled to address a more serious problem facing our city: so-called flash mobs.

Recently youth violence has escalated and expanded in the Philadelphia area. Within a two week period this summer three separate incidents occurred. A Sears store in Upper Darby was nearly destroyed by a mob of teenagers. Shortly thereafter, several people in the Fairmount neighborhood were attacked while walking on Green Street. Most alarming was the incident at Max Brenner's on 15th Street where patrons were robbed and punched by a mob of teens following a North Philadelphia concert.

These incidents and my concern about violence led to my decision to skip the July 4th celebration on the Parkway. In hindsight, this was a wise decision as there were several stabbings and gunfire reported in Love Park. The City has denied these reports, I assume, out of fear of losing our Welcome America corporate sponsors.

The failure of our city leaders to take swift, decisive action to curb these mobs is, frankly, outrageous. Recent census data shows that Philadelphia's population has risen in the last decade, due in large part to new Center City residents. Our city cannot survive without retaining young professional residents. It does not take a social scientist to determine that allowing citizens to be attacked by mobs will result in a swift flight to the suburbs.

So, what can be done? I offer these suggestions:

- Establish community courts at all large city events and deliver stronger penalties. When the 700-level at Veterans Stadium became a danger zone, the city created a court in the basement to deal with troublemakers. This approach can work at large-scale city events. A small area of the Parkway should be cordoned off and staffed with a judge who would provide swift justice.
- Penalties for those arrested must be expanded. For many, an arrest during a flash mob is a first offense

carrying a sentence of a fine and some community service. For a punishment to be a deterrent, it must include incarceration. Offenders must be charged as adults so that their actions carry life consequences. This will not solve the problem by any means, but it may make a teen think about the consequences before joining a mob.

- Enforce our curfew. Other cities have crafted successful solutions. Violence occurred at the Coventry Street Fair in Cleveland Heights, Ohio, a suburb of Cleveland, when a crowd of teens descended on the fair and created chaos. Three days later Cleveland Heights City Council passed a new curfew law banning unaccompanied minors from the business district from 6:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. and giving the police power to remove violators from the streets.

It may surprise you to learn that Philadelphia also has a curfew for minors, and it applies equally to flash mobs, or the small groups of neighborhood youths recently seen defacing private property and Schuylkill River Park. Given the number of violations I see on a nightly basis, I assumed there was no such law. However, a quick search of www.phila.gov revealed that minors cannot be in a public place after 10:30 p.m. on weeknights or after midnight on weekends unless the minor is with a parent or is engaged in lawful employment during curfew hours. The curfew extends until 6:00 a.m. Moreover, parents cannot knowingly allow minors to violate the curfew law.

The problem with meaningful enforcement of our curfew law is the penalties. Currently, police can either take a minor home or issue a citation at the police station. In order to make our curfew an effective tool to combat mobs, violations should be misdemeanor offenses with a real sentence, and parents should face a substantial fine for each violation. Even a parent who is unconcerned about where a child is or what the child is doing, will care when it impacts the parent's wallet.

I don't claim to have all the answers to this problem. What I do know is that Center City residents should not have to live in fear for their safety while walking our streets. The City has a moral and economic responsibility to ensure that Center City is safe for everyone, including teens that live and visit here.

Take Tots for a Tour on Two Wheels

By Robin Kohles

The fall brings cooler weather and with it plenty of opportunities to bike in Philadelphia with kids. The following are some ways you and your children can safely bike around the city for fun:

- The Brothers Cromie offer architectural tours through the neighborhoods of Philadelphia. You'll need your own bikes. See The Brothers Cromie on Facebook.
- Philadelphia does not have any drive-in movie theaters, but it now has a Bike-In Movie. Keep your eyes peeled for the next Bike-In Movie sponsored by the Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia. Movies are shown on the top floor of the Whole Foods parking garage at 10th and South streets.
- Bike across the Ben Franklin Bridge walkway; it's steep and quite a challenge, but, ah, what a view. The walkway is open weather permitting, 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. daily in the spring/summer season and reverts to the fall/winter schedule, 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., on October 1.
- Safe Routes Philly's youth instructor will teach a 45–60 minute in-class lesson to any private, parochial, independent or charter school in Philadelphia County. The bicycle safety lesson targets fifth graders in order to provide the skills necessary for safe urban riding before they reach the critical age of 12, when City law requires bikers to ride in the street (and not on the sidewalk). In addition to riding safety, students learn to view the bicycle as a good means of recreation, exercise and transportation. See www.saferoutesphilly.org.
- Join the Bicycle Coalition of Philadelphia on the morning of Sunday, September 11 for Bike Philly 2011, Philadelphia's largest annual bicycle ride on certified car-free city streets. See www.bicyclecoalition.org.
- Enter your children in a kids-only triathlon organized by the TriYouthalon organization. "Fighting childhood obesity one multi-sport at a time" is its mission and mantra, but the



Friends of Schuylkill River Park recently offered a free Safe Routes Philly Bike Rodeo Class at Markward Playground. Participants learned the rules of the road and practiced bicycle maneuvering skills. After completing the class attendees received a free bike helmet.

organization also understands that if it is not fun, kids will not do it. TriYouthalon organizes triathlons held in the Philadelphia park system and designed mostly for children age seven and older (some races are available for ages three and older). See www.triyouthalon.org.

- The City of Philadelphia Mural Arts Program offers bike tours of murals in Center City and the Fairmount areas. Tours leave from Lloyd Hall. See <http://muralarts.org/tour/bike-segway-tours>.
- Take the Kelly Drive bike path from Center City to East Falls, eat lunch, cross the Queen Bridge and take the West River Drive bike path back. The total ride is almost 10 miles. Plan to stop for lunch, a snack or a bathroom break at the fifties-themed Trolley Car Diner located in the newly renovated Bathey House located on Ferry Road off Kelly Drive, just south of the Roosevelt Expressway overpass. West River Drive is closed to vehicular

traffic on Sundays during Daylight Savings Time from 6:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The lower section of the drive, from the Art Museum to Sweetbriar Road, is only closed until 12 noon.

- Plan camp for next summer. Neighborhood Bike Works offers a Summer Cycling Day Camp where campers learn to recondition a bicycle and earn a bike helmet and lock. Over the course of two weeks, campers complete the Earn-A-Bike curriculum, participate in outdoor activities, take educational field trips and learn about safe cycling, nutrition and healthy lifestyles. See www.neighborhoodbikeworks.org.
- Love the idea of touring by bike but not sure you want to do the work? Try a tour of the picturesque streets of Rittenhouse Square on the back of a Velopark bike taxi. See www.velo-park.com/tours.php.

Tempesta di Mare: Philadelphia's Unique Baroque Orchestra

By Nancy Ambler

Does Bach fill you with serenity? Vivaldi take you into another, more civilized place? If you're not already a fan of Tempesta di Mare, a single performance will make you one.

Named for the iconic Vivaldi concerto grosso and working in the true Baroque tradition, Tempesta is the only permanent Baroque orchestra in the country that plays without a conductor. A true ensemble, its members are all of long standing; there are no "rotating" players. All play either period instruments or faithful replicas, giving an "antique" lustre to the sound. Period wind instruments are extremely rare because the very act of playing, involving constant changes in temperature and humidity, tends to destroy the instrument. Fortunately there are still craftsmen who make fine working reproductions.

How to define the Baroque? In point of time, of course, roughly 1600 – 1750. For its nature, think first in terms of architecture and art: Bernini and Michelangelo's San Pietro, or the chiaroscuro of Caravaggio's St. Sebastian. They're larger than life, full of drama, yet with an intimate connection to the human spirit. With the possible exception of Bach, however, Baroque composers fell out of favor with the general public from the mid-19th century until well into the 20th, giving place to those of the Classical and Romantic schools. Only about 1950 did conductors and

musicians rediscover the wealth of material that preceded these schools, and their interpretations often seemed filtered through a 19th-century sensibility.

Gwyn Roberts and Richard Stone, spouses and co-founders and co-directors of Tempesta di Mare, came to this music from another direction. Gwyn's mother, a singer, was an exponent of Renaissance music, exposing her highly receptive daughter from childhood to these early forms and overseeing her training in piano and flute. When Gwyn's interest turned to the Baroque, it was evolving toward, rather than reconstructing, the sound and structure of the music. In pursuit of this understanding, she studied at Bryn Mawr, then at the Utrecht Conservatory. There, under the tutelage of Marion Verbruggen, she perfected her technique on the traverse flute and recorder. During this period Gwyn toured Europe informally, then returned to the US to join Piffaro, the Renaissance band.

Meanwhile Richard Stone majored in guitar at SUNY. He also became enamored of Baroque music and added the lute to his arsenal. After graduation he sought out Nigel North, at the Guildhall School of Music in London, for further study in lute and theorbo, a Renaissance instrument with the body of a lute and fingerboard and basses spanning four octaves.

Continue on page 10



Tempesta di Mare is a Baroque orchestra, and its members play either period instruments or faithful replicas. Richard Stone, seated, front center, and Gwyn Roberts, standing behind him, are the married co-founders and co-directors of the orchestra.

Hidden Musical Works Discovered

By Nancy Ambler

Like many interpreters of early music, Gwyn Roberts and Richard Stone of Tempesta di Mare are always on the lookout for "new" 17th and 18th century material. Much was created, but time, war and politics have destroyed or buried vast quantities. Gwyn and Richard were fortunate to come upon two troves: one from the Berlin Zing Akademie, hidden during WWII in a Polish castle and repatriated to Berlin in 2000, and a second unearthed in a vault deep under the Dresden Library, leveled during the firebombing of 1943. The Dresden cache in particular had suffered major water damage; it escaped total destruction only because the manuscripts nearest the door formed a sort of cork that protected the rest. Sadly many of these manuscripts were from the Bach family archive. Richard was a major participant in the rescue operation.

After the scores were painstakingly smoothed and dried, Richard recorded them on photodisk. As might be expected, the images were too badly smudged to function as working scores. However, using software called – fittingly enough – Sibelius, the music publisher Pro Gloria Musica (PGM) was able to enhance the images to the point that they were playable. Treasures from the Bach family, from Johann Friedrich Fasch and other Baroque composers were suddenly available for publication, performance and recording. Gwyn and Richard established with Brian Clarke of PGM a sort of high-culture barter system, with Richard supplying the disks, PGM publishing the scores as first editions and offering Tempesta di Mare performance rights to material not heard in, literally, centuries.



The Berlin Zing Akademie housed 17th and 18th century music that was hidden during World War II in a Polish castle. Eduard Gaertner's painting depicts the Akademie in 1843.

Richard returned to the States, finding a musical home in Philadelphia, and soon thereafter Gwyn “recruited” him for a Piffaro concert.

As time went on, they began to dream of their own ensemble, not a group of “antiquarians,” but, in Gwyn’s words, a group devoted to “exciting music in its own idiom, speaking Baroque music as a native language.”

In 1999 they wrote their first grant proposal. The Presser Foundation funded their first season, and this year marks their 10th, not just in Philadelphia, but in many other US and European venues. They’ve also received support from the Pew Charitable Trusts and from the William Penn Foundation. In addition they’ve formed an important liaison with the music publisher, Pro Gloria Musica, and have signed a recording contract

with the prestigious British label Chandos. Three CDs are out, to international acclaim, and a fourth is scheduled for release in the US in November. The current performance season is an exciting one, with Center City concerts scheduled from October through May, in St. Mark’s church at 1625 Locust Street. For dates, programs and tickets, phone 215-755-8776 or go to the website, www.tempestadimare.org.

Storytime for Adults

By Leslie Young

Writing a story about a story-telling competition, rather than just publishing the winning story, might fly in the face of good journalistic practice. But First Person Arts has a message: the individual perspective is important. The group’s StorySlams involve both featured storytellers and audience members empowered with score cards and encouraged to “make some noise.” Last month, I was a noisemaker.

First Person Arts is a local non-profit organization whose mission, according to its website, is “to transform the drama of real life into memoir and documentary art.” Through the StorySlam competition, First Person Arts gives local storytellers the opportunity to share personal accounts of events and experiences.

StorySlam storytellers are not simply spinning yarns. The competition doesn’t set out to find the tallest, most sensational tale. These are real people telling true stories. The mechanics of a StorySlam are simple, but the format provides an element of surprise even for the storytellers. Each Slam has a theme, and storytellers can prepare their stories in advance. However, no one knows in advance who will get a chance to tell a story that night. Potential storytellers write their names on slips of paper and drop them in a bucket as they enter the venue the night of the event. Ten competitors’ names are drawn from the bucket, one at a time as the event progresses. Each storyteller has five minutes to tell a story and impress the audience. The highest-scoring storyteller for the evening wins the Golden Ticket, an invitation to the biannual GrandSlam. There, winners will compete for the title of “Best Storyteller in Philadelphia.”



A contestant tries to win over the StorySlam audience by sharing her personal accounts of events and experiences.

Some themes—*Bad Idea*, *Strange Encounter*, *Deception*—lend themselves to the outrageous, while others—*Small World*, *Back to School*, and, on the night I attended, *Neighbors*—ask storytellers to mine the mundane. A middle-aged man who lives on the outskirts of the city began his, “Twenty-five years with a shared driveway tells you all you need to know about my story.” Another storyteller, a long-time city resident, began with tongue-in-cheek: “South Philadelphians have a way of helping offending neighbors shift their paradigm.” Then, to demonstrate her point, she launched into an accented, curse-laden tirade. The audience knowingly guffawed. Another variation on the theme detailed a bourbon-fueled evening featuring a microwave popcorn fire that united a neighborhood. Still another story masterfully wove arachnophobia and a lifelong dream to live next door to a Chinese restaurant. This tale was the audience favorite and overall competition winner.

The confessional and somewhat spontaneous aspect of StorySlam creates an exciting atmosphere for the audience. Will he bomb? Is she losing her train of thought? Could I get up there and tell a story? Do I want to? And although it is a competition (audience members rate participants on a 10-point scale for both content and performance), the room exudes a positive vibe. The audience wants to like the stories, wants to laugh and wants performers to succeed.

StorySlams are held on the second Monday of each month at World Cafe Live (3025 Walnut Street) and the fourth Tuesday of each month at L’Etage (6th and Bainbridge streets). Stories begin at 8:30 p.m., and tickets are \$8 for First Person Arts members and \$10 at the door for non-members.

For the schedule of StorySlam dates and themes, and more information about First Person Arts, visit www.firstpersonarts.org. The First Person Festival of Memoir and Documentary Art also runs Nov. 10–20.

Growing a Great Neighborhood School – A Trip to the Principal’s Office

By Jacqueline Bershad

To anyone who has walked by Greenfield Elementary School at 22nd and Chestnut streets in the last two years, the transformation the school is undergoing is obvious. In the schoolyard there are trees, birds and even strawberries where once there were parked cars. There are kids spinning and swinging on new playground equipment and studying how rainwater makes its way to the river. Inside the changes and buzz of excitement are just as obvious. Greenfield is returning to its roots, becoming again both a true neighborhood school and a model for diversity and community involvement.

One of the biggest changes in the last few years was the instatement of a new principal, Dan Lazar, in the fall of 2009. In 2004, Lazar moved from the San Francisco area, where he taught middle school science and math, to Philadelphia to pursue a doctorate in education at Penn; in 2011 he was awarded an Ed.D. The title of his dissertation, “Building Trust One Parent At A Time: One Principal’s Journey in Creating Relational Trust With Parents,” summarizes the philosophy that has spurred many of the developments taking place at Greenfield. The school historically has had a vocal and active Home and School Association (HSA) that recently spearheaded many significant upgrades to the school, including exterior greening and playground, restroom and auditorium renovations. The door to Lazar’s office is always open, although he is often found on the playground in a game of touch football with the middle school kids or surrounded by a huddle of parents.

This sense of trust and cooperation is helping to fuel the growth of Greenfield as a neighborhood school. More and more young families would like to stay in the city and good public schools are a magnet that draws and keeps them. Strong arts and academic programs at Meredith Elementary in Queen Village create a sense of community at the school. In West Philadelphia, being in the catchment of the Sadie Alexander School, a public school supported in part by Penn, can raise home values 25% or more above those just a block away. Lazar is well aware of the draw of Sadie Alexander. He lives in the catchment and stood in



Greenfield Principal, Dan Lazar, receives a warm welcome from Ms. Gordon’s kindergarten class.

line outside the school at midnight to enroll his son for kindergarten next year.

Many factors are encouraging this return to the neighborhood school. The city ended desegregation busing in 2008. Years of general economic slowdown have encouraged parents to re-evaluate and re-invest in public schools. Five years ago about 10% of the Greenfield kindergarten class was from a catchment area that is very similar to that of the Center City Residents’ Association: Broad to the Schuylkill and Bainbridge to the Parkway. This year it was over 50%. Yet the class is still amazingly diverse, with children who speak Russian, Portuguese and Hindi as fluently as English. The goal is for 75% of the school’s enrollment to be from the catchment with 25% coming from across the city to maintain racial and economic diversity.

To allow the school to become a true K-8 experience, Lazar is focusing significant attention on the middle school. At Greenfield and many other public and charter schools, top students leave at fifth grade to go to Masterman or private

schools. This creates a drain on the middle schools and puts significant emotional and financial pressure on children and parents. In order to retain neighborhood kids, Greenfield is creating a true middle school experience that prepares its students for acceptance to the best high schools in the city. This June, 97% of the graduating class was accepted to selective high schools with 25% being accepted to Central and 20% to Science Leadership Academy.

Greenfield is in some ways an old fashioned school with emphasis on “the three Rs,” while also encouraging a new fourth “r”—responsibility. Lazar’s goal is “...to teach children to take ownership for their actions and understand how they affect those around them.” This lesson of personal responsibility encompasses everything from a trip to the principal’s office for dress code violations to understanding that the trash you leave in the playground makes its way to the river. Greenfield is working diligently to nurture a wiser student, a stronger school and a better neighborhood.

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The Other Side of the State

By Christine Carlson

There are so many things to see and do in Center City, but every now and then, distant horizons beckon. Heeding the call, my husband and I loaded up our station wagon and ventured to a place we'd never been—Western Pennsylvania. This was our first road trip with our two children. Would familial harmony survive two weeks on the road without a DVD player?

First we traveled to Illinois to attend a family reunion so our foray began in Pennsylvania's southwest corner on the Historic National Road. We could have easily spent over a week exploring this Pennsylvania stretch of our country's first federally funded road, but in a single day we took in Fort Necessity National Battlefield, where we learned about George Washington's first (and only) surrender, and Frank Lloyd Wright's Fallingwater, where special tours for kids age five and up introduce architectural concepts using blocks and Fallingwater itself.

Next, we headed to Pittsburgh, where our guidebook contrasted an 1866 Atlantic Monthly article describing the city as "hell with the lid taken off" with a 1990 New Yorker writer praising it as one of the three most beautiful cities in the world, along with Paris and St. Petersburg. The latter reigns true. We could have spent all day just in the children's rooms of the Carnegie Museum of Natural History, let alone the rest of the museum. There is also Phipps Conservatory (with a terrific children's garden) and the Cathedral of Knowledge (which we pretended was Harry Potter's Hogwarts).

Traveling north, we experienced what came to be known as our Fossil Fuel Fun Day. First, in Tarentum, we descended the Tour-Ed Coal Mine. Our guide worked in the mines for 40 plus years and brought the history of coal mining to life with his stories. I had no idea what dark really was until he turned off the lights 160 feet below ground. Then we drove to Titusville, site of the first commercial oil well. After the cramped corners of the mine, the Drake Well Museum and Park allowed little legs to run free. Arriving in Erie, we settled in to watch the sunset over the water, something my kids had never seen before. We spent the next day on Presque Isle peninsula—who knew Pennsylvania had beaches?—where my daughter loved swimming in a cold Lake Erie. We also visited a fantastic Maritime



Frank Lloyd Wright's Fallingwater offers special tours for children five and older. The author's children explored hands-on architectural concepts using blocks and the famous house itself.

Museum which included a tour of the replica flagship Niagara, on which Commodore Perry led a pivotal battle in the War of 1812, later reporting "we have met the enemy and they are ours." Next, we headed southeast and experienced the Pennsylvania Wilds. We hiked through an old-growth forest and goggled at the spectacular Pine Creek Gorge, aka Pennsylvania's Grand Canyon.

On the way home, we stopped in Harrisburg. Love or hate its inhabitants, the Capital Building is worthy of a tour—the murals are amazing. Stopping at a sidewalk café on nearby Restaurant Row is essential for those who enjoy people-watching – it explains where the "vain" in Pennsylvania comes from.

When I traveled as a child, there were no seatbelts so my brother and I could take great pleasure antagonizing each other by trespassing on the other's side of the car. Now that I'm in the front seat, it's great that children must stay strapped in their booster seats. A box full of distractions including pipe cleaners, etch-a-sketch, maps and books kept backseat passengers occupied, as did audio-books (Harry Potter enthralled all four of us—we even missed an exit) and CD's of Broadway musicals also ensured that our familial harmony remained intact. In fact, it far surpassed my expectations. If you will be traveling with kids, check out www.momsminivan.com for the words to all those old road songs, print-out scavenger

hunts and helpful hints. Our Moon Pennsylvania Handbook was invaluable and we loved the author's quirky style.

Back in Philadelphia, we drove a victory lap down the Benjamin Franklin Parkway. I've lived here for 12 years, but the sight of the flags flying and the yellow-faced City Hall clock still makes my heart sing. It was a great trip, but I'm glad to be back on our side of the state.



The author and her children explore the Pennsylvania State Capital from a tourist's point of view.

The Bridge over the Railroad Tracks CSX

By Fran Levi

The City and the Schuylkill River Development Corporation (SRDC) hosted a meeting Monday, June 27 at Trinity Memorial Church, 2212 Spruce Street, to update the community on the construction of the Schuylkill River Park Connector Bridge, which will connect Schuylkill River Park and Schuylkill Banks by crossing over the CSX Railroad tracks at Locust Street.

March Focht, First Deputy Commissioner, Parks and Facilities, Philadelphia Parks and Recreation, welcomed the standing-room-only audience. He introduced Joseph Syrnick, SRDC's President and CEO, and Sarah Clark Stuart of the Bike Coalition. Stuart briefly reviewed the federal court suit that led to the decision to build the pedestrian bridge and secure grade crossings at Locust and Cherry streets when these crossings are blocked by trains. On April 24, 2007, the City of Philadelphia and CSX Railroad agreed that the construction of the Americans with Disabilities Act compliant pedestrian bridge would be completed by October 2009. After an extended design process with input from various parties the completion date is now projected for October 2012. The work was scheduled to begin the following day under the supervision of the Philadelphia Department of Streets. Construction is anticipated to last 16 months.

Focht informed the audience of the "project benefits" that will result from the bridge's construction. The improvements to the small and large dog parks will include a seven percent enlargement, doggie turf and permeable pavers surfaces, pet drinking fountains and new landscaping. Many paths in Schuylkill River Park will be repaved, and new and upgraded lighting and irrigation systems will be installed. Although neighbors had expressed concern about 27 trees being removed for the project, Focht said: "We do not remove trees lightly, and 108 trees in the park would be preserved."

The audience was invited to ask questions. As a majority of the audience appeared to be people using the two dog parks, most questions concerned the temporary small and large dog parks. Focht committed to considering their requests for a larger



Portions of Schuylkill River Park are closed to the public as construction of the pedestrian bridge over the CSX tracks begins.



To secure the grade crossings at Locust and Cherry streets the City of Philadelphia installed electric gates that close when trains block these crossings.

temporary dog park. (Subsequent meetings with this advocacy group resulted in improvements to the temporary dog parks and a reduction in the number of trees to be removed. Visit www.riverparkalliance.org/ drupal to read the letter from Michael DiBerardinis, Deputy Mayor for

Community and Environmental Resources, Commissioner, Philadelphia Parks & Recreation, detailing these improvements.)

All questions about the project as it progresses should be directed to bridge@fsrp.org.

Celebrate National Park(ing) Day

By Pamela Zimmerman, Organizer - Philadelphia Park(ing) Day

The number of parks throughout Philadelphia will increase dramatically this September. Friday, September 16, 2011 is National Park(ing) Day, an event where activists, artists, architects and other citizens will transform metered parking spaces into temporary public parks.

“By turning parking spaces into instant parks, National Park(ing) Day is a creative way to demonstrate the real need to create more parks in our cities. Across America, cities are renewing their investments in parks because our civic leaders have come to recognize that close-to-home parks, gardens and playgrounds are essential if we are to have cities that aren’t just livable, but lovable,” says Will Rogers, president of the Trust for Public Land. “The quality of our daily experience is enhanced by places that get us in touch with nature, with each other and with ourselves.”

The art collective Rebar originated Park(ing) Day in 2005 in San Francisco as a way to re-imagine the potential of the metered parking space. In 2006, the Trust for Public Land (TPL—a San-Francisco-based, national non-profit that conserves inner city and rural land for people to enjoy as parks, gardens and other natural places—became the national sponsor of Park(ing) Day. TPL expanded the event throughout the U.S. and internationally, allowing Park(ing) Day to become a global exploration of the creative potential of streets. This annual event celebrates parks and other pedestrian-friendly spaces in all cities and also raises awareness of the need for more of these spaces for public interaction.

Park(ing) Day first occurred in Philadelphia in 2008, and it was extremely successful and enjoyable. Thirty teams constructed spaces to listen to music, relax, play games and experience a prototypical bike share where there was a two station bike share network. One station was in Center City at 16th and Locust streets, and the other was in University City at 34th and Walnut streets. People could sign out a bike at either location and return it to the same place or cycle to the other station. Park(ing) Day 2009 and 2010 were also successful, with more parks and participants, including an appearance by the cupcake truck, a plant give-away and a place to sketch outdoors.

Anyone from local businesses to individual citizens can sign up to host and create a Park(ing) Day spot. Hosting a spot is free, but participants pay for their own materials for installations in their spots. Participants report spending anywhere from zero dollars

to several hundred dollars on materials, with most at the lower end of the scale.

For more information, including a map of host spots, see www.parkingdayphila.org.



After turning a parking space into a temporary park, the team takes a rest and admires their work.



A temporary pond was constructed in a parking space on Walnut Street between Broad and 13th streets. The public was invited to make and float a paper boat in the temporary pond.

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New Location and Hours for Center City Philadelphia Social Security Office

The Social Security Administration has requested that the following information be provided to Center City Residents' Association members.

The Downtown Social Security office located at 1234 Market Street moved. Residents living in zip codes 19102, 19103, 19105, 19106, 19107, 19108, 19109, 19110, 19123, 19130, 19146, 19147 and 19155 can conduct Social Security business at Suite 2000A on the 20th floor of 2 Penn Center Plaza located at 1500 John F. Kennedy Boulevard, Philadelphia PA 19102.

In addition, the hours that it is open to the public were reduced 30 minutes each weekday. The new hours are Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. While agency employees will continue to work their regular hours, this shorter public window will allow them to complete face-to-face service with the visiting public without incurring the cost of overtime. Congress provided Social Security with nearly \$1 billion less than the President

requested for the budget this fiscal year, which makes it impossible for the agency to provide the amount of overtime needed to handle service to the public as we have in the past.

Most Social Security services do not require a visit to an office. If residents have access to an Internet connection, they may conduct business online at www.socialsecurity.gov. Visitors can apply for benefits, request a new Medicare card, get a Proof of Income letter, change their address or phone number, get directions to Social Security offices, download publications or arrange for other services at an easy-to-use, secure and convenient internet website.

Social Security business can also be conducted at the public's convenience by calling, toll-free, 1-800-772-1213. Representatives are available from 7:00 a.m.

to 7:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Some of the services available include scheduling an appointment, requesting a change of address and signing up for Direct Deposit. Automated telephone services are available 24 hours a day, including weekends and holidays, for services such as requesting a replacement Medicare card, and requesting Social Security forms and publications.



Mousetrap Makers at Odyssey of the Mind World Finals

The June 2011 *Center City Quarterly* included an article about the Independence Charter School (ICS) fourth and fifth graders who represented our neighborhood, city and state at the 2011 Odyssey of the Mind World Finals Memorial Day weekend at the University of Maryland. The team "created mousetrap-powered cars that delivered an object, jumped a ramp, and hit a target..." Student teams strove to solve problems in unique ways, and obviously the ICS team succeeded.

Competing against 52 teams, the ICS students finished seventh. Only six places were recognized, and the team missed a place on the podium. Nevertheless, the children were excited about the trip to the finals and had a great time.



Independence Charter School students competed against 52 teams at the 2011 Odyssey of the Mind World Finals at the University of Maryland.

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CCRA Neighborhood Fall Events

Rosenbach Museum and Library

2008 - 2010 Delancey Place
215-732-1600
rsvp@rosenbach.org
www.rosenbach.org

Open House

Free event. Drop in to see the Rosenbach brothers' historic house and our three NEW exhibitions! Staff and volunteers will be on hand to answer questions as you explore the museum and library.
Saturday, September 24,
12:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Reading Group: Melville's Moby Dick

Grapple with Herman Melville's classic whale of a tale in this six session reading group led by Melville scholar and Associate Professor at St. Joseph's University, Dr. Peter Norberg. Advance registration required. First Thursday of the month, October to March, 6:00 p.m. – 7:45 p.m.

Dracula Festival returns this October to the Rosenbach, home of Bram Stoker's original notes and outline for *Dracula*. This month-long festival will give you something to sink your fangs into! Visit www.rosenbach.org for specific programs, events and exhibits!

Stoker's Dracula

This NEW 75-minute adaptation of *Dracula* has been called "intensely frightening." Watch as adapter/performer Josh Hitchens inhabits 14 characters in a chilling solo performance of Stoker's tale of terror. Included with general admission, RSVP required.
Thursday, October 27, 6:00 p.m.

All exhibitions are included in general admission. Please call 215-732-1600 or visit www.rosenbach.org for details.

Philadelphia City Institute (PCI)

1905 Locust Street
215-685-6621

Children's Storytime Programs

Baby Lap Sit Storytime is designed for babies aged 6–22 months and their caregivers.

Friday, October 4, 11, 18 and 25, 10:15 a.m.
Friday, December 6, 13, 20 and 27, 10:15 a.m.
Look forward to a special Halloween Costume Party for babies on October 25.

Toddler Storytime is designed for children aged 23 months–four years and their caregivers to participate in rhymes, stories and songs.
Thursday, October 6, 13, 20 and 27, 10:15 a.m.
Thursday, December 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29, 10:15 a.m.

Pajama Storytime where children aged 3–7 years wearing their pajamas and accompanied by their favorite stuffed animal and their caregivers enjoy stories, surprises, and tasty cookies and milk. Children should bring their library card to enter the raffle.
Wednesday, September 28, October 26, November 30 and December 28, 6:45 p.m.

For more information on all children's programs call Ms. Karen at 215-685-6621.

Philadelphia City Institute (PCI) Fall Film Series - Philadelphia Roots

Wednesdays, 2:00 p.m.

Wild Strawberries, September 7.
Stormy Weather, September 14.
Kitty Foyle, September 21.
Friendly Persuasion, September 28.
Dancing Dreams, October 5.
Philadelphia Here I Come, October 12.
Great Caruso, October 19.
Music Room, October 26.
The Gleaners, November 2.
Like Water for Chocolate, November 9.
La Graine et le mulet, November 16.
Wedding Banquet or Eat, Drink, Man, Woman, November 23.
I am Love, November 30.

Rittenhouse Square Fine Art Show

Celebrating 80 years of fine art.
Friday, Saturday and Sunday, September 16–18

Schuylkill Banks Events

Schuylkill Banks River Tours continue through October 16 and Kayak Tours continue through October 1. Visit www.schuylkillbanks.org or call 215-222-6030 x103 for tour descriptions and a complete schedule of Schuylkill Banks fall tours and events.

2011 Fish Fest

This free catch-and-release fishing competition is open to people of all ages and levels of experience and will be followed by an awards ceremony.

The Philly FUN Fish Fest is hosted by the Philadelphia Water Department and Philadelphia Parks and Recreation in conjunction with the PA Fish and Boat Commission and Schuylkill River Development Corporation. For more information, visit www.schuylkillbanks.org or call 215-222-6030 x103.
Saturday, September 10, 7:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Blues and Brews on the Banks

Friends of Schuylkill Banks will host a fun evening of food, drinks and live music performed by the Brian LaPann Trio to benefit maintenance and operations of the Schuylkill Banks trail and greenway! For more information or to purchase tickets, visit www.friendsofsb.org.
Saturday, September 17, 5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Albert M. Greenfield School Kindergarten Open House

22nd and Chestnut streets
<http://greenfieldhsa.org/index.php>
September 28, 2011

The World City Walk Philadelphia

Penn's Village - Neighbors Helping Neighbors will co-sponsor a block party to view the Japanese documentary about the streets of Philadelphia and outtakes which include the 23rd Street birdhouses described in the June 2011 *Center City Quarterly*.
22nd and Rittenhouse Square streets
Sunday, September 18, 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
Please RSVP at 215-925-7333 or info@pennsvillage.org.

CCRA to Sponsor Elementary School Information Fair

In November, CCRA will sponsor an Elementary School Information Fair. We want all residents to know that Center City is chock full of good schools, and there is no need to move to the burbs when children enter kindergarten. Members and guests are invited to the fair to learn about school options in the public, parochial, private and charter schools. The CCRA weekly e-newsletter will announce the date and location of the fair. Be sure to spread the word!

Zoning Committee Report

Pat Mattern and Brian Johnston, Co-Chairs

May, June and July 2011

416 South 24th Street (R-10A).

Application for the erection of a third story addition and a rear second story addition. Maximum height not to exceed 35 ft. as extension to an existing single family dwelling. Refusal: Open area at second floor: 30% (273.6sf) required vs. 26.31% (240sf) proposed. **Not Opposed with Provisos.**

133 South 18th Street (C-5). Application is for the retail sale of food with accessory preparing and serving of food for take-out (Dunkin Donuts) on first floor with an existing nail salon on second floor in the same building with an existing one apartment on third floor. Referral: Proposed Use, Take-out restaurant, requires a certificate from the Zoning Board of Adjustment. **Note: Fast Track. Tabled.**

1533 Chestnut Street (Through to Ranstead Street) (C-5). Application for the partial demolition of the second, third and fourth floors to create an inner courtyard (16' wide) with the creation of an open walkway bridge at the third floor level and a fourth floor balcony (w/ 42" high railings) and for the partial demolition of the third and fourth floors to create a second inner court yard (12' wide); for the erection of a fifth floor pilot house addition to access the new roof deck (above the fourth floor roof) w/ 42" high railings, as part of an existing attached building for use as an existing retail camera shop with a new entrance lobby area on the first floor, six new family dwellings on the upper floors and utilities/accessory storage (NTE 25% GFA) in the cellar, (size and location as shown in the application). Two Refusals: Any wall with one or more legally required windows shall be located so that every point of the wall shall be a minimum horizontal distance which is not less than 25' from any opposing wall on the same lot; whereas the distances between the walls creating the court yards are only 12' and 16' apart. Any side yards or courts without legally required windows shall have a minimum width of eight feet; whereas the court between the fifth floor level stair towers are only 4'-4" apart. **Not Opposed with Proviso.**

2105 Spruce Street (R-10). Application for the erection of a 4th floor addition 32'x14'6" with a roof deck as shown

above the fourth story addition with access from a 18'x 6' pilot house stair enclosure and the erection of a 2nd floor rear deck 14'2"x20'. Refusals: Building Height Limit: 35' required vs.56'8" proposed. Maximum number of Stories: 3 required vs. 5 proposed. Any deck or patio shall be constructed so that is no closer than 3' from the edge of a driveway or rear property line, whereas the rear second floor deck abuts the property line. 3' required vs. 0' proposed. **Not Opposed.**

2312 Delancey Place (R-10). Application is for the documentation of a 6' high fence (rear); for the legalization of a rooftop deck above the third story roof (less than 30" above roof level, with guardrails 42" high) of an existing 4/3 story structure with cellar with a proposed eight family dwelling. Size and location as shown in the application. Refusals: Proposed deck, an extension of a use previously approved by the ZBA must also be approved by the ZBA. **Not Opposed with Proviso.** Proposed Use (eight family). Rear yard minimum requirements: 844sf required vs. 475sf proposed. **Opposed.**

2026 (a/k/a 2040) Market Street (C-4). Application for conversion of the existing AAA building into a mixed-use residential/commercial building with 275 apartments; eight story addition on top of existing five story building with 12 story additions on Ludlow side of property. 205 car underground parking, 15,088 sf of retail/restaurant space on the ground floor of existing building. Size and location as shown in the application. Refusals (to be confirmed 6/28/11): Multiple dimensional and setback variances. Floor Area Ratio: 500% allowable vs. 729% proposed. **Not Opposed.**

133 South 18th Street (C-5). Second appearance before Zoning Committee. Application is for the retail sale of food with accessory preparing and serving of food for take-out (Dunkin Donuts) on first floor with an existing nail salon on second floor in the same building with an existing one apartment on third floor. Referral: Proposed Use, Take-out restaurant, requires a certificate from the Zoning Board of Adjustment. **Note: Fast Track. Opposed.**

1622 Spruce Street (R-15). Application is for use as a professional office on the

first floor, second floor front, for the refacing of an existing non-illuminated flat wall sign, for the erection of a non illuminated flat wall sign, for the removal of a projecting sign, in an existing structure with two previously approved dwellings second floor rear (one dwelling unit), third/ fourth floors (one dwelling unit) (total two dwelling units) (one owner occupied) all in an existing four story structure. Size and location as shown on the application). Refusals: The proposed use, "professional office" is not permitted in this district. The proposed use, "non illuminated sign" is not permitted in this zoning district. **Not Opposed with Provisos.**

2307 Naudain Street (R-10A). Application is for a two story addition over existing one story first floor addition; 300sf roof deck; rear bay window and interior alternations. Refusal: Two story rear addition exceeds required rear yard setback at each level of construction. Rear yard required setback: 9' required vs. 5'4" proposed. **Not Opposed.**

31 South 19th Street (C-5). Application for the erection of two free standing signs (23'5") high and for the creation of forty off-street parking spaces including with two handicapped and ten compact spaces and for the erection of 6 feet high fence on vacant lot. Refusal: The proposed use, public parking lot, is prohibited use in this zoning district. The proposed use, free standing signs, is not permitted in this zoning district. **Opposed.**

210-20 South 25th Street (RC-4). Application for the conversion of an existing private parking lot granted by the ZBA as accessory parking for the property located at 2400 Locust to a non-accessory public parking lot with no change to the parking area or the existing 72 spaces including 17 compact spaces and 4 accessible spaces. Refusal: The proposed use-public parking lot is not permitted in this zoning district and the ZBA having previously granted this as a private parking lot as accessory parking lot for 2400 Locust Street, any change of this parking to non-accessory parking not accessory to 2400 Locust Street must be granted by the ZBA. **Not opposed with Proviso.**

1420-28 Pine Street (SWC South Carlisle Street thru to Waverly Street) (R-10).

Application for the legalization of two double faced projecting signs (one @74" x 42" x 60" projection at 24.5' above grade and one @ 74" x 42" x 60" projection at 22' above grade) attached to an existing seven story attached building accessory to an existing school with administrative offices and other uses. Refusal: The proposed accessory projecting signs are not permitted in this zoning district. **Not Opposed.**

1430 Pine Street (thru to Waverly Street) (R-10).

Application for the legalization of one double faced projecting sign (74" x 42" x 60" projection at 22' above grade) attached to an existing three story attached building accessory to an existing school with administrative offices and other uses. Refusal: The proposed accessory projecting sign is not permitted in this zoning district. **Not Opposed.**

1434 Pine Street (SEC of 15th Street thru to Waverly Street) (R-10).

Application for the legalization of one double faced projecting sign (74" x 42" x 60" projection at 22' above grade) attached to an existing three story attached building accessory to an existing school with administrative offices and other uses. Refusal: The proposed accessory projecting sign is not permitted in this zoning district. **Not Opposed.**

2226 Lombard Street (@ the S/E Corner of 23rd Street) (R-10).

Application to legalize 8'-6" x 18' open-air/off-street parking space in the rear yard accessory to a two family dwelling. Refusal: Where open-air private parking is provided to the rear of the building, the required rear yard shall be maintained between the building and the property line. Rear yard minimum depth: Required 9'-0" Proposed: 2'-6" Referral:

Off-street parking controls: Off-street parking shall not be required or provided for any one-family or two-family dwelling, except for parking accessed by a common driveway easement that serves three or more abutting properties. Off-street parking serving any one-family or two-family dwelling unit on a lot, except for parking accessed by a common driveway easement serving three or more abutting properties, shall require a certificate from the ZBA. **Not Opposed.**

32 South 18th Street (between Market Street and Chestnut Street). Application for approval of outdoor seating for restaurant. **Not Opposed with Proviso.**

2000-02 Sansom Street (SWC 20th Street) (C-4). Application for the preparation and serving of hot and cold food for take-out as part of an existing restaurant. Referral: The proposed use, preparation and serving of hot and cold food for take-out, requires a certificate from the ZBA. FAST TRACK. **Not Opposed with Proviso.**

1414 South Penn Square (S.W. Corner South Broad Street) (C-5). Application for the erection of a flat wall sign (50' x 50') accessory to an existing 45 story mixed use structure, 1st floor retail as previously approved, below ground parking and residential dwelling units and hotel units floor 2 thru 45. Refusal: This use, accessory sign exceeds the districts maximum allowable of 100 S.F. by 2,400 S.F. and is above the bottom of the 2nd floor, is not permitted in this zoning district. **Not Opposed with Provisos.**

2003 Delancey Street (R-10). Application for the demolition of a rear wall, erection of a one story garage addition with a one story greenhouse at the 2nd floor level, and a sun deck. Refusal: The proposed zoning

is refused for the following: Required vs. Proposed: Rear yard minimum depth: 9' vs. 0'0"; Rear yard open area: 144 square feet vs. 0'0"; Minimum open area of lot (%) 30% vs. 5%. **Not Opposed.**

2114 Naudain Street (R-10A).

Application for the erection of a third floor addition above the existing two story main structure and erection of a second floor addition above the existing one story rear accessory garage and erection of open deck with stair connecting two structures use as a single family dwelling. Refusal: The proposed zoning is refused for the following: Required vs. Proposed: Open area: 290 square feet vs. 152 square feet; Rear yard: 9 ft. vs. 0.0 ft. The proposed two single family building create multiple structures on the same lot, (No structure has its own front, side or rear yards) therefore this condition is not permitted in the zoning district. The proposed use is refused for the following: The proposed two single family use creates multiple uses on the same lot and is not permitted in this zoning district. **Not Opposed with Proviso.**

1801 Delancey Place, NWC 18th through Cypress Street (R-10). Application for the erection of three air condensing units, for raising the height of an existing skylight (maximum height NTE 40.11 feet) for the creation of one interior off street parking space all accessory to an existing four story structure used as a single family dwelling. Referral: The proposed use, 'off street parking' requires a certificate from the ZBA. Refusal: Height of skylight: Allowable 35 ft. Proposed 40.11 ft. **Not Opposed.**

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Philadelphia, at the Center of the Fringe

By Robin Barnes, Director of Marketing and Communications, Philadelphia Live Arts Festival and Philly Fringe

Fifteen years ago, Philly Fringe began as a cluster of innovative performing arts productions in Philadelphia's Old City neighborhood. Since its inception, the organization and its programming have grown into what is now the curated Philadelphia Live Arts Festival and the all-access Philly Fringe. Today, the citywide festivals attract artists from around the world and tens of thousands of attendees to venues across Philadelphia. And Center City venues are the core of the 2011 festivals.

Live Arts on the Avenue of the Arts

Lady M tells the story of *Macbeth* through the eyes of its doomed anti-heroine, Lady Macbeth. Swim Pony Performing Arts gives the Lady a chorus of witches to rebuild the story of her life and to re-imagine what might have driven this woman to such extremes in Shakespeare's darkest tragedy. The show runs through September 9 at the Arts Bank at University of the Arts (601 South Broad Street).

Also at the Arts Bank, on September 16 and 17, *More Movements für Lachenmann* finds the confluence of concert performance, theater and dance. French choreographer Xavier Le Roy directs eight musicians who, while performing the work of German composer Helmut Lachenmann, take on the rigorous task of separating the act of creating sound from the act of moving.

The Prince Music Theater (1412 Chestnut Street) plays host to two Live Arts productions. Lucidity Suitcase International's *WHaLE OPTICS* connects worldwide telecommunication systems, humpback whales, Carl Sagan, and dinner at Applebee's in an immersive theatrical experience—the stage is the size of a humpback whale, and audience members sit on either side. *WHaLE OPTICS* runs through September 11. The following weekend, *Play* will make its U.S. debut at the Prince. A dance piece, *Play* creates a place for experiments between two riveting performers: Antwerp-based Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui, the sinuous, western, contemporary dancer whose movements ride a wave of chaos, and the Indian dancer Shantala Shivalingappa, whose exquisite control of movement comes from her mastery of the classical Indian form Kuchipudi.

Throughout the Festival, Pig Iron takes on Shakespeare at the Suzanne Roberts Theatre

(480 South Broad Street) with *Twelfth Night, or What You Will*. Groundbreaking New York choreographer John Jasperse brings *Canyon* to The Wilma Theater (265 South Broad Street) September 9 through 12. The Live Arts Festival ends with a bang and its biggest event ever, when *Traces* brings the amazing feats of 7 Fingers—from the circus hotbed that is Montreal—to the Merriam Theater (250 South Broad Street). *Traces* runs September 15 to September 18.

The Fringe in Center City

The Philly Fringe has 183 different performances scheduled for 2011. The breadth of the Fringe astonishes; offerings from debut performers to award-winning companies will interrogate the nature of 21st-century privacy, offer a traveling planetarium, and re-explore Greek tragedy. Following are three Center City happenings that represent the diversity of what's on tap this year:

On September 3 and 10, Spiral Q Puppet Theater brings a puppet carnival to Broad Street Ministry (315 South Broad Street). *QARNIVALE of the PEOPLE* fills Broad Street with giant puppets for afternoons of agitprop, puppet pageants and popcorn.

On a more existential bent, the Luna Theater Company asks audiences to examine the meaning of identity, the possibility of escape, and the chance for rebirth. Their show, *How To Disappear Completely and Never Be Found*, runs at the Playground at the Adrienne (2030 Sansom Street), for the duration of the Fringe.

All three Fringe weekends breathe life into superheroes with *Superheroes Who Are Super* at Plays and Players (1714 Delancey Street). These word-for-word, staged readings of classic comics feature wordplay, witticism, and your favorite superheroes in low-budget costumes. These masked do-gooders can be found in Plays and Players' Skinner Studio on September 3, 4, 10, 11, 17, and 18.

All of these shows, of course, are just a taste of what Live Arts and the Fringe have to offer. For a complete events list, tickets, and the most up-to-date information on both festivals, visit www.livearts-fringe.org. The Live Arts and Fringe Festival blog at www.livearts-fringe.org/blog features behind-the-scenes rehearsal videos, interviews with artists and more.



Laurent Philippe

Indian dancer Shantala Shivalingappa will perform at the Prince during the Philadelphia Live Arts Festival and the Philly Fringe.



Illustration by Julian Crouch

The Deveil and Mister Punch By Improbable will have its world premier at the festival.



Jason Frank Rothenberg

Alex Torra (left) James Sugg (center) and Josh Machiz (right) will perform in The Pig Iron Theatre Company's production of *Twelfth Night, or What You Will*.



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Pets of All Denominations Welcome at Blessing of the Animals

By Nancy Stinson

Household pets, exotic and working animals and their humans are invited to the annual Blessing of the Animals on Saturday, October 1 at 9:00 a.m. at Trinity Memorial Church, 22nd and Spruce streets. The blessing will take place rain or shine.

The celebration is held in early October every year to recognize the importance of animals in our lives and to honor the life and teachings of St. Francis of Assisi, one of the world's most beloved religious figures.

It is said that St. Francis, born October 3 in 12th-century Assisi, north of Rome, demonstrated an extraordinary rapport with animals. He preached to birds and tamed the wolf Gubbio, who attacked villagers because he was starving. St. Francis persuaded the villagers to feed the wolf which ended the attacks.

Some believe that his affinity with animals represents the saint's return to the state of innocence experienced by Adam and Eve in Eden. St. Francis had great consideration for, and a sense of identity with, all elements of the physical universe. For this reason he is the patron of natural conservation and ecology.

In many areas of society recognition of the importance of animals in our lives is growing, perhaps due to the burgeoning conservation, ecology and green movements. And while St. Francis was a Catholic monk, Christianity is not the only religion that incorporates animals into its religious community. California Rabbi Neil Comess-Daniels of Temple Beth Shir Shalom held the shul's first "bark mitzvah" two decades ago. The affair continues to be held in the "barking" lot; participants receive a bark mitzvah certificate and for a token fee a commemorative photo.

According to Rabbi Neil, the bark mitzvah is meant to be a fun event, "but the reality is that there is this beautiful underlying seriousness to it...it's a way to bring the community together."

More and more churches are holding blessings and even academia is exploring the intersection of religion, animals and ethics. Dr. Paul Waldau, former director of the Center for Animals and Public Policy at the Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine at Tufts University, founded the nonprofit Religion and Animals Institute

(www.religionandanimals.org) to promote awareness and curricula related to the topic.

In an article published by Columbia University Press titled *A Communion of Subjects: Animals in Religion, Science, and Ethics*, Waldeau seeks to "engender vigorous, lucid debate, and even to birth a kind of new community, addressing the many issues arising at the intersection of, on the one hand, concerns for and about "religion," and, on the other hand, our inevitable interaction with the non-human living beings that we generally refer to as "animals."

"The remarkably diverse perspectives on nonhuman lives found throughout humankind's religious traditions offer, when collected together, an unparalleled opportunity to see certain complex features of the many

different topics we might reasonably collect under the heading "religion and animals."

Whether or not we adhere to a religious tradition, we love our pets for a million reasons. Even when we come home to find that Rover has knocked over the potted palm, scattered dirt across the room and chewed up the plastic pot, we usually can't stay mad at him for long.

"Our pets are our companions, confidants and sometimes the only reason we get any exercise," said Rev. Donna Maree, rector of Trinity Memorial Church. "For many people, the only physical comfort they experience is cuddling and stroking their animals. The love we receive from our pets is some of the most unconditional love we receive in our lives. Come, affirm their blessing and ours."



Trinity Memorial Church holds an annual Blessing of the Animals to recognize the importance of animals in our lives.



I didn't knock over the plant.

Trinity at 22nd Fall Events

September

Poor Richard's Opera Sunday 9/4 thru Saturday 9/10, 6:00 p.m.
 9/11 Anniversary Observance, Sunday School begins 9/11, 10:30 a.m.
 Sundae Sunday 9/18, 10:30 a.m.
 Cookoff: 200 frozen meals for homeless 9/18, 12:30 p.m.
 Astral Artists Concert Sunday, 9/25, 3:00 p.m.

October

St. Francis's Day Blessing of the Animals Saturday, 10/1, 9:00 a.m.
 Temple Chorus Concert Sunday, 10/16, 3:00 p.m.
 Yoga Concert Thursday, 10/20, 7:00 p.m.
 Celebration of New Ministry: the Rev. Donna Maree Saturday, 10/22, 3:00 p.m.
 Al Bustan Saturday, 10/29, 6:00 p.m.

November

Astral Artists Concert Sunday, 11/6, 3:00 p.m.
 Al Bustan Friday, 11/18, 8:00 p.m. & Sunday, 11/20, 3:00 p.m.
 Cookoff: 200 frozen meals for homeless Sunday, 11/20, 12:30 p.m.
 Interfaith Thanksgiving Worship, place tba Wednesday, 11/23, 7:00 p.m.

December

Holiday Bazaar, Café Noël, and Wreath Sale Saturday, 12/3, 10-3
 Al Bustan Saturday, 12/10, 6:00 p.m.
 Nutcracker for the Very Young Saturday, 12/10, 11:00 p.m.
 Liebesfreud Beethoven's Birthday Concert for CORP Sunday, 12/18, 5:00 p.m.
 Children's Christmas Eve Service Saturday, 12/24, 3:30 p.m.
 Christmas Concert, Christmas Eve Liturgy, Reception Saturday, 5:30 p.m.
 Christmas Day Sunday, 10:30 a.m.



Trinity at 22nd welcomes the Reverend Donna L. Maree, new rector of Trinity Memorial Church.

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Where Are You Going with My Laundry?

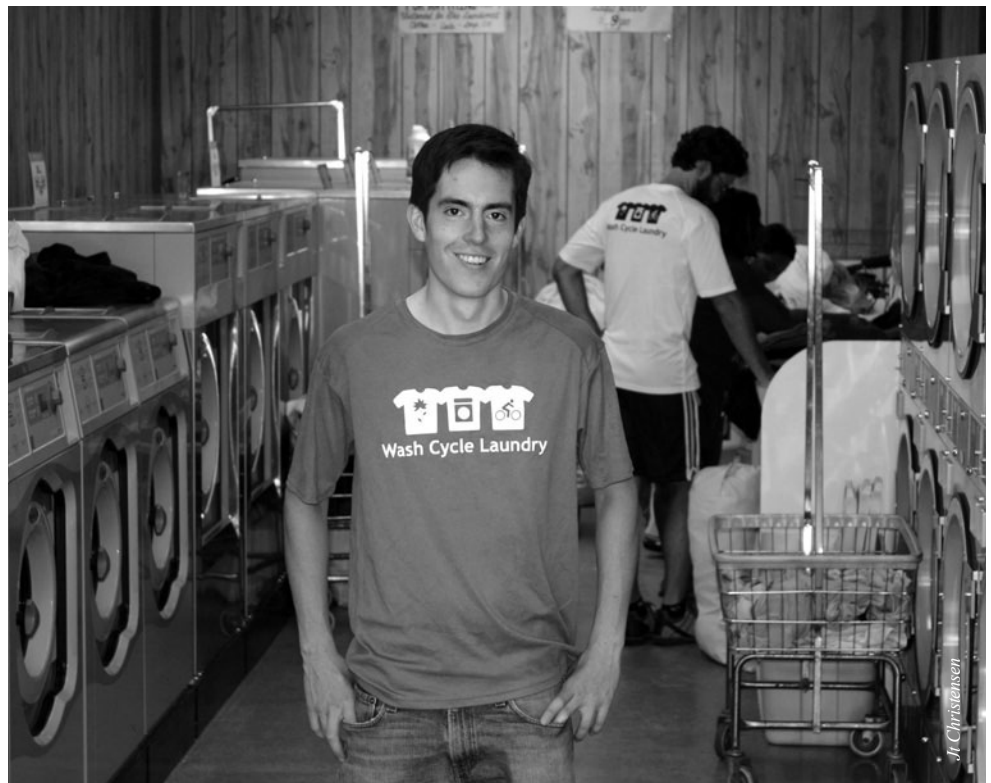
By Fran Levi

Cycling through Center City and the surrounding neighborhoods is a man on a bike pulling three large blue recycling bins containing up to 150 pounds of laundry. He is picking up dirty laundry from private residences and businesses and taking it to 1611 South Street where it will be washed with biodegradable detergents in energy- and water-efficient machines.

Wash Cycle Laundry is the brainchild of 28-year-old Gabriel Mandujano, a University of Pennsylvania graduate. After graduation, Mandujano worked for The Enterprise Center Community Development Corporation (TEC-CDC) located in West Philadelphia. TEC-CDC strives to revitalize neighborhoods through civic participation and investment. From there he moved to the Center for Sustainable Transportation—an organization that endeavors to increase public transportation in an environmentally friendly way—through which he worked in Mexico for a year developing plans to increase public transportation.

Upon returning to Philadelphia, Mandujano decided to start a business. Owning a laundry is not something most Penn graduates think of as their career, but for Mandujano such an enterprise would satisfy his desire to create something “environmentally and socially beneficial but also profitable.” In October 2010, Mandujano launched Wash Cycle Laundry in a laundry on 46th Street in West Philadelphia. To publicize his business, in December, he hauled a washer on his bike trailer to Rittenhouse Square and handed out flyers to passersby. Walker Gilmore received one of the flyers and was intrigued. He recently purchased the laundry at 1611 South Street and was determined to make it a “green” business. The two men talked about their goals, and by January Mandujano moved his fledgling business into Gilmore’s laundry.

Gilmore purchased front-loading washers that pulse forward and backward. “These washers reduce the power needed to dry the clothes because they are able to wring out so much water. This is better for the environment,” says Mandujano. Customers can bring their own clothes to Gilmore’s laundry and use the coin-operated washers and dryers, but Mandujano and his



Gabriel Mandujano, a Penn graduate and shirt folding expert, proves that it is possible to start a business that is "environmentally and socially beneficial but also profitable."

employees also offer a separate service that takes his environmental enterprise a step further—pick-up and delivery! Three cyclists pedal bikes fixed with trailers to get the dirty laundry and return it the following day, clean and folded. Turnaround time for this service is 24 hours.

At the laundry, Mandujano’s employees load the washing machines with dirty clothes and “green” detergent. Using an iPad, they send a text message to the washer with any special directions and start the wash cycle. The water temperature is always cold because it requires less energy than heating water. When the laundry is dry, it is folded. Shirts are folded using a plastic pad, which evenly folds shirts by flapping one section over the other. To demonstrate how quickly a shirt can be folded by hand, Mandujano pinched a section of the inside of a shirt, pulled and presto, the shirt was perfectly folded in a few seconds. When asked how he became a shirt-folding expert, he replied, “I watched a Japanese You Tube video.”

Furthering his goal to start a business that provides social benefit, Mandujano hired three graduates of the job development program at the Philadelphia Workforce

Development Corporation. The only goal that remains for Mandujano and Wash Cycle Laundry is to make money! Visit www.washcyclelaundry.com for more information.



Wash Cycle Laundry employee Geraldine Hansberry uses an iPad to send text messages to the energy efficient washing machines at 1611 South Street.

SAVE THE DATE:
CCRA'S 53RD ANNUAL FALL HOUSE TOUR
Sunday, October 23rd
1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m., rain or shine.

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Friends Groups Hold Fund Raisers in Support of Neighborhood Parks



The Friends of Schuylkill River Park (FSRP) held the second Eat Drink and Be Green fundraiser on June 4 in the park. Susan Halpern, FSRP secretary, (left) and Lynne Hopper, president, (center) welcomed Mayor Michael Nutter to the event.



Eat Drink and Be Green attendees enjoyed live music, good food and conversation under a tent in Schuylkill River Park.



Arielle Gotliem and Derek Freres are the co-chairs of the the Young Friends of Rittenhouse Square which is affiliated with the Friends of Rittenhouse Square. The group involves younger people in the care and improvement of Rittenhouse Square. Their annual fundraising event took place on June 16 at Smith and Wollensky prior to dancing at the Ball on the Square.



The Friends of Rittenhouse Square held the 28th annual Ball on the Square on June 16. The goal of the event was to raise \$100,000 for capital improvements to the popular park.