



Spruce Hill Community Association

Spring 2007

257 S. 45th St., Phila. PA 19104

www.sprucehillca.org

215-349-

Come to the 49th Annual May Fair

May Fair is almost here!

Please join the Spruce Hill Community Association on **Saturday, May 12, from 11am to 4pm** for our neighborhood fair in Clark Park on Baltimore Avenue.

You'll enjoy great food, music, fun and games for the kids, terrific crafts and much more. The May Fair is SHCA's major fundraiser. It supports our work to strengthen our neighborhoods.

If you'd like to volunteer your time, talents or books for this important event, call the Spruce Hill Center, 215-349-7825, or contact May Fair chairs directly via e-mail:

Set Up / Break Down – Set up tables and chairs for vendors. (Many veteran volunteers are creaking into middle-age, so we could use some young blood!) Set up is 8-10am (come for the donuts, stay for the fair); break down is 4-6pm. Contact Ed Halligan [Edward.Halligan@courts.phila.gov]



President's Cor-

Information Booth – Meet your neighbors, tell them about SHCA, and answer questions in the main tent. Plus, you can pick the raffle winners and sell our nifty SHCA caps and coffee mugs! Contact Judy Powers [judypowers@att.net]

Book sale – Hard covers and paperbacks are welcome, especially quality children's books. Bring tomes to the Spruce Hill Center from 10am to 2pm on Sat., May 5, or Tues., Wed. or Thurs. night, May 8, 9, 10, from 6-8pm. To help with sales at the fair, contact Ben Jacobs [bcjacobs@gmail.com]

Bake Sale – Homemade goodies. If you want to bake, work at the bake sale table, or both (bake your cake and eat it too!) contact Rose Halligan [rosehalligan@aol.com]

Vendors – Would you like to spread the word about your nonprofit community organization, or sell your special product? Contact Mark Wagenveld about renting a table at the fair [ma.wa@verizon.net] General questions? Call Ed Halligan, 215-222-2997.

Cindy Roberts,
SHCA President

April Really is the Cruellest Month

Let's hope the weather improves for the May Fair. This shot was taken on the morning of April 16th by Kyle Cassidy (see page 4), intrepid photog and UC pundit, immediately following the Nor'easter devastation. This view is looking east on the 4500 block of Walnut.

Rumor has it this tree fell (as did the one in the background) because the roots had been cut to prevent the sidewalk from upheaving.

If this is your car, our heartfelt condo-



KYLE CASSIDY - APRIL 16, 2007



PIC Plant Sale

What: The Parent-Infant Center's annual Spring plant sale is a wonderful way to beautify your home while supporting the PIC scholarship fund. Annuals, perennials, bedding plants, herbs and vegetables, and hanging baskets for Mother's Day. Although the pre-order deadline has past, walk-in shoppers are welcome.

When: Fri, May 4, 3-6 pm. Sat, May 5, 10 am-3 p.m.

Where: PIC, 42nd and Spruce Sts.

Bonus sale: Locust Walk, May 4, 11 a.m.-3p.m.

Info: www.parentinfocenter.org
ooo

Tour UC Historic Mansions

What: UCHA's spring house tour

When: May 20, 1-5 p.m.

Where: Start at Restaurant School, 4207 Walnut St.

Cost: Advanced sale, \$30 from friendsof-independence.org; UCHS members, \$20, uchs.net; day-of \$35
ooo

Jazz and Blues

What: Music by Jim Dragoni & Friends

When: Every Friday night, 8 p.m.

Where: Metropolitan Bakery, 4013 Walnut St. \$5 per person.
ooo

Spring Tree Walk

What: Fairmount Park district manager Lori Hayes guides a tour of the diversity of trees surrounding the Horticulture Center.

When: Wed. May 2, 6-7:30 pm

Where: Horticultural Center of Fairmount Park, Belmont Avenue and North Horticultural Drive.

Information: Marilyn Reynolds at 215-988-8872.
ooo

Chanticleer in Spring

What: An enchanting evening at 32-acre Chanticleer Gardens

When: Thurs, May 17, 4:30-9 pm

Where: Buses leave 100 N. 20th Street at 4:30 pm, returning to Philadelphia by 9:00 pm. Bring a light supper; snacks and refreshments will be supplied.

Registration: By May 10. The fee is \$5. Contact Marilyn Reynolds at 215-988-8872.

Zoning Board Rejects Liquor Store

To SHCA's disappointment, the zoning board has denied the state's application for a variance to operate a "premium" liquor store at the former Rite Aid store near 43rd and Walnut Sts.

SHCA waited until the last minute to come out in support of the variance, hoping our Muslim neighbors from the nearby

mosque across Walnut Street would agree to talks that would produce an

agreement. The mosque is concerned about the sale of alcohol. In the end, no talks took place, even though Marty Cabry from Councilwoman Blackwell's office made daily attempts to reach mosque representatives.

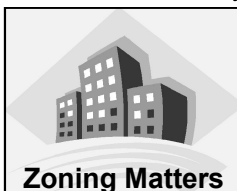
As SHCA pointed out, the mosque is in a mixed commercial-residential area, in a building built as a grand movie theater. It is directly across 43rd Street from a

beer distributor and pizza parlor that sells take-out beer. Both uses were known to the mosque when it moved to the current site.

In our letter, SHCA noted that the neighborhood is a "mix of students, homeowners, renters, races, ethnic and religious groups, political persuasions, businesses and cuisines that read like a mini-UN menu." We said we take pride in such diversity and consider it one of our greatest strengths as an urban neighborhood.

We also mentioned that UCD and Penn Police have committed to help monitor the area, and Daniel DeRitis, owner of the property, has promised to work with us on how the store will operate and look. Both commitments were in writing, and submitted to the zoning board. One final notable note—Councilwoman Blackwell also came out in support of the proposed liquor store.

Barry Grossbach, Chair
Spruce Hill Zoning Committee



Business Improvement District Inches Forward

The much-debated University City Business Improvement District has moved a step closer to happening.

A proposal for the BID, including a governance structure, has been submitted to Councilwoman Blackwell. She indicated she wants to hold a public meeting before introducing BID legislation to City Council. (We're waiting to hear where and when.)

If you've managed to miss or ignore the BID controversy, here's some background: The UCD was established in 1997 to improve the quality of life in a 2.2-square mile area of West Philadelphia by supplementing city services. The non-profit UCD provides enhanced public safety, cleaning, lighting, marketing and economic development.

To date, the UCD has been managed by a 25-member board of di-

rectors representing prominent education, health care and business institutions. These institutions have voluntarily funded UCD – and will continue to do so -- but can no longer underwrite all the growing needs of the district.

To make funding more stable and equitable, the proposed BID will be funded by an assessment on all commercial properties, as well as residential investment properties that have four or more units.

One of the sticking points in negotiations involved the governance structure. Under the latest proposal, assesses would elect a committee that would have the power to appropriate and spend money raised by the BID.

For more information, check out the BID Frequently Asked Questions:

www.ucphila.org/bid/faq.html

Apply Now for Your Block Grant

Your block can be prettier – and SHCA can help.

In cooperation with University City Green, SHCA offers grants up to \$500 for a single block, or \$1,200 for cooperating adjacent blocks, to improve the streetscape. Add or renew trees, gardens, curbs and sidewalks.

Blocks must match the grant amount through volunteer sweat equity, in-kind materials or cash.

June 18th is the deadline for the next round of grants. For more information, an application, and lots of resources about beautifying University City, visit UC Green at www.ucgreen.org.

Among recent grant winners was the 200 block of South 43rd St. Led by Melissa and John Barrett, residents created tree pits, then planted 14 trees.



Before



After

Let There Be Lighting

Baltimore Avenue will be better, brighter and hopefully more inviting to pedestrians, thanks to an \$850,000 lighting improvement project.

University City District will be installing street lighting from 45th to 50th Streets. The lights will have 14-foot-high pedestrian poles spaced about 80 feet apart. The pedestrian lights will replace the overhead street lights and will meet the city's lighting standards for sidewalks and roadways. The goal is to get more people to stroll along Baltimore Avenue, patronizing its many businesses.

The project is a result of several surveys that indicated improved pedestrian lighting is a very high priority for the community. An inventory of existing

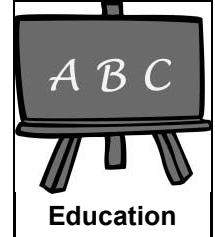
lighting showed many large gaps, leaving dark areas on the corridor.

In a survey, businesses on Baltimore Avenue gave improved lighting the highest possible score as an initiative that would improve the overall health of Baltimore Avenue. They said better lighting would be an effective way to increase business. In a survey of area residents, meanwhile, 89% said that improved sidewalk lighting was either important or very important.

The lighting project received grants from the William Penn Foundation, the Neighborhood Transformation Initiative, and PennDOT. The planning phase will last through the summer, with construction expected to begin in the fall and take about three weeks.

Thanks for Support of Schools

The education committee would like to thank Spruce Hill for your contributions to our annual fundraising campaign.



Your generous support will enable us to continue our programs, notably our efforts to help Wilson Elementary School build a playground. It is the only local school that lacks any sort of playground. Installing a playground will cost an estimated \$100,000.

We welcome any help from community members in this campaign. We are in need of grant-writers, community liaisons, envelope stuffers – you name it!

If you would like to volunteer for this effort, please contact us directly.

Angela McIver
mciver@verizon.net

Mary Goldman
marygoldman@verizon.net

Do you have a handful of hours to make your block a better place?

If your answer is no, shame on you. If your answer is yes, then consider becoming a block captain. Block captains lead block cleanups (no set number per year). More important, they know and communicate with their neighbors.

For find out more, contact SHCA block reps organizer Scott Reynolds: scottrey1124@gmail.com

From the Editor



Do you live in West Philly or University City?

If you subscribe to the University City Listserv (univcity@list.purple.com), you'll know that them's fightin' words. I'm not on the listserv, but my husband Dan is, and he forwarded me the latest tempestuous email debate over this rather silly question.

It seems that somebody has plastered our neighborhood with stickers that declare:

THIS IS WEST PHILLY.

"University City" is a marketing scheme.

The debate is not about names. It's about class, wealth, safety, politics, and most of all, perceptions of urban neighborhoods.

Wrote 46th Street resident Kyle Cassidy: "My parents refuse to go to West Philadelphia. Having watched local news, they realize that West Philly is a drug-infested cesspool. They may, however, visit me in University City. If someone wants to market my neighborhood as having 37.2% fewer shootings than West Philadelphia, having 67.4% more restaurants than West Philadelphia, 18% more parks, I'm happy enough for the distinction."

So this goofy, passionate debate got me thinking: If you say you live in Spruce Hill, what does that signify?

For anybody outside our neighborhood, Spruce Hill signifies nothing. There is no hill, not many spruces, and the boundaries are arbitrary.

But I believe that for those of us who know we live in Spruce Hill, the name is about being good citizens. It's about civic pride, activism, and improvement.

Personally, I live in West Philly, University City and, most of all, Spruce Hill.

Marie McCullough
Editor, SHCA Newsletter
mmccullough@phillynews.com

8th Annual
Clark Park Fundraiser

Celebrate the Treasure

Please Join
The Friends of Clark Park
with support from University City District

Thursday, May 10, 2007
43rd Street & Kingsessing Mall
5:30 to 8:00pm

Cocktails, Hors d'oeuvres, Entertainment, Live Auction (6:30pm)

Purchase tickets by May 1 at www.PartyTicketsOnline.com or call 215-243-0555

Proceeds pay for supplemental park maintenance: mowing grass, edging walkways, weeding, fertilizing, mulching trees, emptying trash cans, and seasonal clean-ups.

2007 Party for the Park Supporters



Blank Rome LLP, Diversified Search, Drexel University, Tom Lussenhop, Spruce Hill Community Association, Uniform Gear, Unique Advantage, Woodland Building Supply

Apologies to Ben Franklin, but in this world, nothing is certain but death, taxes -- and trash. Fortunately, we have good news about the latter problem.

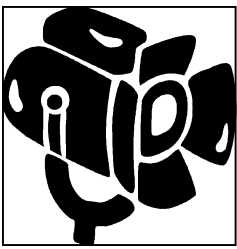
Single stream picks up steam: Beginning last month, you can put plastic containers and flattened cardboard along with cans, glass and mixed paper in the same recycling bin. The only things that can't go are foil and plastic wrap.

Although recycling pickup continues to be every other week (check recycling-pays.phila.gov or call 215-685-7329 for your day), you can put out more than one container, each up to 25 gallons.

You can label an ordinary trash can for recycling or, if you want another of the city's large blue bins, call UCD: 215-243-0555.

Hide in plain sight: UCD and large residential properties are trying to develop trash-concealment schemes. SHCA member Steve McCoubrey is working to find an approach to hiding trash that could be implemented on the 3900 block of Pine Street, where most properties are managed by University City Associates on behalf of the University of Pennsylvania. University City Associates says it is willing to try a new strategy. Hopefully, the 3900 block will serve as a model for other blocks with large numbers of residential investment properties.

recycling
PAYS.
phila.gov



Spotlight On... Café Pier One

In each issue of SHCA news, we spotlight a relatively new, unknown, or under-appreciated endeavor in Spruce Hill. Send your suggestions to: mmccullough@phillynews.com.

Pamala Williams and her husband Brahima Diaby opened **Café Pier One** last June to offer delicious, healthful food in a welcoming, intercultural atmosphere. The cozy space has eye-catching tables, hand-painted with West African symbols. The menu includes breakfast specials (where else can you find Eggs Benedict

on a Thursday morning?), imaginative sandwiches (try the grilled chicken and gorgonzola or, for vegetarians, the portabella mushroom), salads, and deserts. For another treat, try the specialty juices, including sorrel, ginger, and horchotta. These have been such a hit that the café will be selling them at this year's May Fair.

Ms. Williams, a former social worker and longtime Spruce Hill resident, is still committed to helping others. The café sells baked goods on behalf of non-profits with causes ranging from autism to battered women. And yes, Café Pier One does catering.

Where: 4505 Baltimore Ave.

Hours: Tues-Fri, 7:30 a.m. – 8 p.m.; Sat. 8:30 a.m.- 8 p.m.; Sun. 10 a.m.-6 p.m. (Closed Monday).

Phone: 215-382-2037

Learning About the Issues that Shape Philly's Future

Philadelphia is a good city, but it could be a great one.

Toward that goal, the William Penn Foundation has funded two new initiatives. Both are designed to get citizens – that means *you* — involved in defining critical issues that face Philadelphia, and working for change:

- The Economy League of Greater Philadelphia, a non-profit, nonpartisan civic research organization, has created a new website that can help you understand the challenges facing the city and its next mayor — IssuesPhiladelphia.org. The site explains the city's Byzantine budgeting process and taxing system, demystifies city reports, hearings, legislation, and surveys, and explains how you can make your voice heard. It also describes how other cities and states have made improvements to their governments – practices that Philly could

emulate.

- The Next Great City initiative, www.nextgreatcity.com, evolved in 2005 when a coalition of community, labor, religious and health organizations joined forces to address the environmental and public health issues that are harming Philadelphia's economy and quality of life. If you'd like copies of the Next Great City brochures, contact Christine at 215-545-9692. The site also explains the upcoming zoning referendum on the May 15th ballot: www.zoningmatters.org



Issues Philadelphia.org



**Spruce Hill Community Association
257 South 45th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19104**



Spruce Hill Community Association News

Spruce Hill Community Association is a volunteer organization of neighbors working together to preserve, protect and improve the area from Market Street to Woodland Avenue, and from 38th to 46th Streets.

**For more information,
Call: 215-349-7825
Visit: www.sprucehillca.org**