



Spruce Hill Community Association

Spring 2008

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

www.sprucehillca.org

215-349-7825

Half a Century of May Fairs!

Spring is almost here, and with its arrival, we're getting ready for the annual May Fair. This year's fair is particularly special since it will mark our 50th year. We hope to celebrate in a manner befitting that milestone.

The fair will take place Saturday, May 10th, from 11a.m. to 4p.m., as always in Clark Park at 43rd and Baltimore.

This is a time to enjoy great music, food, and special activities for the children. It's also an opportunity to shop for crafts, baked goods, and Mother's Day gifts.

Please remember that the May Fair is our largest fund-raising event. Proceeds from the fair are used in our continuing efforts toward neighborhood betterment in the form of Block Improvement

grants, organized clean-ups, public safety initiatives, zoning reviews, and other important activities.

You may have already received a request in the mail to support the May Fair. Please be as generous as you can -- and plan to attend a truly memorable community celebration!

Ed Halligan
SHCA President

Calling All Crafters!

Are you a crafter, someone who designs and makes fine products by hand? Do you know someone like that? Any crafter wanting to sell their fabric, clay, wood, glass or other products should consider becoming a vendor at the SHCA May Fair. More than a thousand people attend and they want to buy unique items that can't be found at a store. To sign up as a vendor, contact Mark Wagenveld at 215-386-8438, or email him at ma.wa@verizon.net.

Share Your Memories!

Were you at the very first Spruce Hill Community Association May Fair on May 10, 1958? How about the fifth fair on May 13, 1962, or the tenth on May 11, 1968? We would like to showcase your recollections of those early celebrations. Also, if you have photographs, flyers, or memorabilia from those early fairs, we'd love to share them. Please call Marie McCullough at 215-222-3640. Or email her at repointer@gmail.com.

Views on Pine Street Hotel Aired at Zoning Meeting

The Spruce Hill Zoning Committee held a public meeting on February 13th at the Spruce Hill Christian School to discuss the proposed "extended stay" hotel project at 40th and Pine Street. Nearly 100 attendees had an opportunity to hear a presentation by the developers and their architects, and to comment and ask questions.

Many issues were raised, including whether the site is appropriate for a development on the scale proposed for the hotel, concern over traffic and parking, and the general impact on quality of life in the surrounding neighborhood. The committee has received much material, pro and con, regarding the proposed development;

e-mails on the project continue to arrive. Clearly, this is an issue that has engaged the community and stirred passion on all sides.

As announced at the meeting on the 13th, discussions are underway between attorneys for the development team and a group of opponents. The committee will not take any action that might preempt the outcome of those talks.

Once the results of those discussions are released, the committee will begin its deliberations, giving full con-



sideration to all points of view submitted over the past few weeks and months.

The decision of the zoning committee will then be referred to the Spruce Hill board for ratification. The board's decision will become the official position of the association, which will then be given to the city's Zoning Board of Adjustment.

It is a safe bet that some people will disagree with the final board decision, no matter what it is. They will have an opportunity to present their objections to the Zoning Board. We will keep you posted.

Barry Grossbach, Chair
Spruce Hill Zoning Committee

Community Calendar



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. The pre-order deadline is April 16. Walk-in shoppers are also welcome.

When: Fri, May 2, 4-6 pm. Sat, May 3, 10 am-3 p.m.

Where: Church, 42nd and Spruce Sts.

Bonus sale: Locust Walk, May 2, 11 a.m.-3p.m.

Info: www.parentinfocenter.org

ooo

UCD Block Cleanups 2008

What: Spruce up Spruce Hill

When: April 12, May 3, June 21, Oct. 25, Dec. 6.

Supplies: Contact Rich Guffanti [richguffanti@yahoo.com] at least one week before the cleanup. He will arrange for trash bags and other supplies to be delivered Fri. night or Sat. morning and will notify the UCD to pick up the trash. Or, contact UCD directly: 215 243 0555 or ucd@ucityphila.org.

ooo

New Plays

What: Short (2-10 minutes) new plays performed by Philadelphia Dramatists Center

When: Sun. May 11

Cost: FREE!

Info: Bill Burrison 215-386-0644

ooo

Self-Help Classes

Sponsor: Partnership CDC

Where: 4020 Market St.

What: Job Club every Monday; Career exploration (meet employers!) every Wednesday; Computer classes (resume-writing and online searches) every Friday.

Info: Valerie Coles 215-662-1612 x 12
www.thepartnershipcdc.org

continued on page 4

Women: Want Self-Defense Workshops?

If enough members of the Spruce Hill community express interest, the University Of Pennsylvania Division Of Public Safety will conduct defense workshops at the SHCA center, 257 S. 45th Street. The workshops — **which are available only to women** — would be free of charge and would be held on a Saturday morning yet to be scheduled.

The two types of workshops are:

❖ The **Rape Aggression Defense System (RAD)** is a program of realistic self-defense tactics and techniques. RAD is a comprehensive course which begins with awareness, prevention, risk reduction and avoidance, and progresses to the basics of hands-on defense training. RAD is not a martial arts program. The course is taught by a certified RAD instructor, and a workbook/reference manual is provided. Based on solid research, RAD is designed to provide an outline of a physical defense program, a reference for continuous personal growth, and the knowledge a woman needs to make an educated decision about



whether to resist an attacker. The workshop is one session lasting six to seven hours.

❖ The **CARE** workshop is about two hours long. It includes information about how to be alert, about escort services that are available, and other safety/security programs and devices that women can obtain in the neighborhood.

Although these programs are being offered only to women, men interested in RAD should contact the Penn Division of Public Safety directly. Any woman interested in either of the above programs should contact SHCA member Rose Halligan at 215-222-2997.

Help in the Fight Against Nuisances

Are you having problems with a drug house, a bar selling to minors, or a suspected prostitution ring?

Call the Public Nuisance Task Force (PNTF) Unit. Since 1992, it has been helping Philadelphia residents and community groups combat drug and alcohol-related nuisances.

PNTF is part of the Narcotics Division of the District Attorney's Office. Upon receiving a complaint, the PNTF prosecutor assigned to that region of Philadelphia will begin, where appropriate, by sending an official letter warning the owner that if the property is being used in violation of the Controlled Substances Act, the Liquor Code or

other laws or ordinances, it potentially can be seized, sealed, and/or forfeited. The property also may be referred to another law enforcement or administrative agency that can conduct an appropriate investigation.

Some nuisances are outside PNTF's jurisdiction, including neighborhood disputes, loud noise, abandoned vehicles, abandoned houses and vacant lots. However, PNTF will refer such complaints to the appropriate city agency.

To report a drug or alcohol-related nuisance or for further information, contact PNTF through the 24-hour hotline: **215-686-5858**. Any caller may remain anonymous.

West Philly Schools in Flux

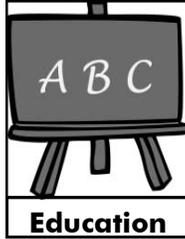
The Education Committee thanks you for your generous contributions toward the creation of a Wilson Elementary School playground.

The committee continues to be part of the planning group for the new West Philadelphia High School. We're now pressing the school district to design the building to accommodate the three small "schools within the school" — business, urban studies, and arts — that we believe will best serve students. The fourth small school, automotive, will also be part of West Philly High but will operate in a separate location.

Unfortunately, several West Philadelphia schools are now in flux. University City High is scheduled to be closed for renovations, while the Middle Years Alternative/ Parkway West High School building is the site for the new West Philadelphia High. So far, the question of where these dislocated children will go is unsettled — and unsettling to their parents.

We hope some of you will consider joining our committee.

Mary Goldman
Education Committee



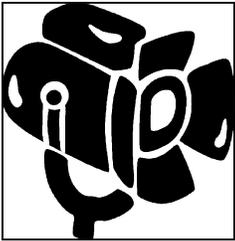
C'mon, Be a Block Rep!

Are you interested in building a stronger neighborhood, block by block? SHCA is hoping to strengthen the Block Representative Network this spring and summer by reconnecting with current block reps and finding new ones for blocks that aren't already connected to the network.

Being a block rep does not require a lot of time or work — mostly just a willingness to get to know your neighbors.

We'll be having a Network brunch later this month (April) at Abbraccio, 47th & Warrington. This will be a strategy session to gather information from existing reps, answer questions from prospective reps, and brainstorm about ways to support our neighbors through the network.

Please let us know if you can come so we'll have enough food! Contact Cindy Roberts at cf.roberts@verizon.net or leave a message at the Spruce Hill Center, 215-349-7825.



Spotlight On... West Philly Tool Library

As the West Philly Tool Library approaches its six-month anniversary, membership is growing and borrowing is booming. But like any non-profit, all-volunteer organization, this great community service needs more subscribers and helpers.

If you haven't yet heard of the tool library, it may be the answer to your DIY prayers. For only \$20 a year, you can borrow as many tools as you need for a week at a time. The library has over 250 tools, including circular saws, cordless drills, hoes, rakes, shovels, pruners, and painting supplies. Among the most in-demand tools, says co-founder Stacey Hendricks, are extension ladders. Five ladders in lengths up to 40 feet are available.

"It's a perfect example of why the tool library makes sense," said Hendricks, who lives in Cedar Park. "Extension ladders are expensive, used infrequently, inconvenient to rent, and tough to store."

The library — set up with support from local organizations, businesses and Councilwoman Blackwell — has 60 members so far. Tools are being returned on time, and none have been stolen, Hendricks happily reports.

Even if you're not handy, the library's founders would be glad to train you to help run the center. That would enable them to add a weeknight to the library's current Saturday morning hours.

Another way you can help: Donate unneeded tools. Tools that are too old or battered to be loaned may be sold at a fund-raiser for the library.

Location: 4620 Woodland Avenue

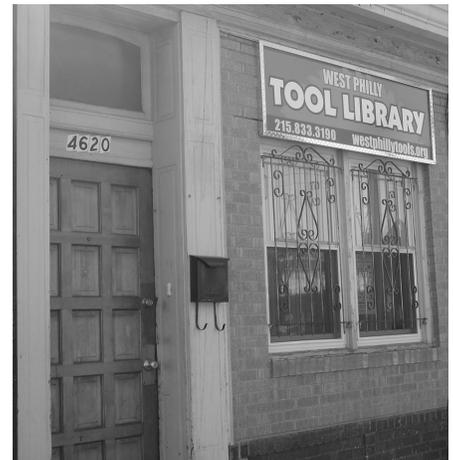
Hours: Saturdays, 9 a.m. to noon

Membership: \$20/year; \$200 lifetime.

Loans: One week, with one week extension. Late fee is \$5/per tool per week.

Info: Call 215-833-3190 or see westphillytools.org.

In each issue of SHCA news, we'll spotlight a new, unknown or under-appreciated enterprise in Spruce Hill. Send your suggestions to reporter@gmail.com, or snail-mail to SHCA, 257 S. 45th St., Phila. PA 19104.



Community Calendar



Farmer's Market

Where: Clark Park, 43rd St. and Baltimore Ave.
When: Saturdays, 10 am to 2 pm, May through Thanksgiving; Saturdays, 10 am to 1 pm all other weeks. Thursdays, 3 pm to 7 pm, June through Thanksgiving
Info : 215-243-0555

000

Bartram's Garden Events

What: Lecture on native plants by Bartram Curator Joel Fry and garden walk led by Bartram Head Gardener, Todd Greenberg. Free. RSVP requested.

When: Sat. April 19, 10 a.m. - noon

What: Native Plant Sale (hardy plants, shrubs, vines, trees)

When: Sat. May 3, 10 a.m -3 p.m.

What: Kitchen & Flower Garden Walk with assistant gardener Nancy Wygant

When: Sun, June 15, 2-4 p.m.

Where: 54th St. and Lindbergh Blvd.

Phone: 215-729-5281

Website: www.bartramsgarden.org

000

Gallery Exhibit

What: Particular Memories Amid the Vast Emptiness of Forgetting, an art installation by artist Melinda Steffy

When: Opening reception April 18, 6-8 p.m.
Exhibit ends June 15.

Where: Sam Quinn Gallery, 4501 Spruce St.

Info: sam@samquinn.com or 267-408-5769

000

Homeowner Workshops

What: Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia's how-to program for owners of older and historic homes.

When: Environmentally friendly landscape care, April 22

Energy Efficiency, April 29, 7 pm

Historic preservation and green design, May 6, 7 pm

Architectural salvage and recycling, May 13, 7 pm

Where: Cliveden, 6401 Germantown Ave. (enter carriage house through gate at Cliveden and Morton Sts.)

Info: Patrick Hauck, 215-546-1146 x4 or patrick@preservationalliance.com



Tropical Sunsets
A fundraising event to benefit Clark Park

Thursday, May 8, 2008

43rd Street & Kingsessing Mall

5:30 to 8:00PM

Cocktails, Hors d'oeuvres, Entertainment

For the past eight years, proceeds from the Party for the Park have vastly improved the quality of Clark Park, our children's lives and our neighborhood. Proceeds pay for supplemental park maintenance: mowing grass, edging walkways, weeding, fertilizing, mulching trees, emptying trash cans, and seasonal clean-ups.

Purchase Tickets online by May 1

Patron (2 tickets): \$250, Individual: \$75, FOCP Member: \$60

<http://www.clarkpark.info>

Rebates on Rents and Property Taxes

Many Pennsylvania senior citizens and disabled residents are eligible for Property Tax/ Rent Rebates of up to \$650 – but they don't apply because they're unaware that they qualify.

You may be eligible if you are over age 64; a widow or widower over age 49; or a disabled person over age 17. Some nursing home and boarding home residents are eligible. People who were denied Social Security Disability benefits are not eligible.

The rebate program's income limit is \$35,000 (excluding half of Social Security income) for homeowners.

The claim form must be filed by June 30. Get the booklet with an application and instructions from the Property Tax/ Rent Rebate Claim Information Hotline, 1-888-222-9190. Or go to www.revenue.state.pa.us

Add a Tree Canopy to Your Block

Would you like trees on your block? Are you willing to organize volunteers in your neighborhood?

If so, TreeVitalize 2008 may be able to help you by supplying trees and limited services to prepare planting locations. TreeVitalize invites applications from groups that are willing to plant at least 10 trees, and up to 100. Funding is limited, so applying doesn't guarantee you'll be selected. Completed applications and signed property owner tree request forms are due May 1, 2008 at the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, 100 N. 20th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103.

For information, call Michael Leff at 215-988-8795 or see: www.pennsylvaniahorticulturalsociety.org

A Half-Baked Story from Licenses & Inspections

Although city government can be impersonal and bureaucratic, one department that never fails to offer courteous, conscientious service is Licenses & Inspections.

That got your attention, didn't it?

To check information for this column, I called L&I about complaints that Mark

Young has brought against Evan's Var-

**From
the
Editor**



sity Pizza. Mark is an SHCA board member and lives in the apartment building he owns adjacent to Varsity's shop at 4311 Locust Street.

Mark and some other residents have waged a mostly unsuccessful campaign to get Varsity to be a nicer neighbor. Trash and noise are problems, especially in the warm weather. Varsity has that winning college-town combination of fast food, beer, and *really* late hours. The place is open until 2 a.m. on weeknights and 3 a.m. on weekends.

But the biggest problem involves the bakery. Varsity's cheesecakes, strawberry shortcakes, carrot cakes, and so forth are on the menus of eateries throughout the area. The loading and delivering of those goodies goes on noisily all day and night, according to Mark. And since Varsity doesn't have a parking lot, its 20-foot-long bakery delivery trucks and van (not to mention a car and motor scooters for delivering pizzas) double-park in front of the shop.

This is illegal and tends to turn traffic into hazardous, honking gridlock -- as you know if you regularly drive down the narrow block to get to the CVS, laundromat, coffee shop or elementary school. Nonetheless, Mark has found the police unsympathetic. You can guess why.

Over the past five months, Mark has kept a detailed computer chronicle of his phone conversations with L&I -- dates, names, gist of each discussion. In January, an L&I supervisor told him

that if Varsity had a round-the-clock bakery operation, it was not approved, and Varsity would have to obtain an "extended use" zoning variance. The supervisor said she would send an inspector to investigate and file a report, which would take a week or two.

One month later, after considerable pestering, Mark finally got a return call from a different L&I official. She said the inspector had gone to Varsity "and didn't find that they were operating a bakery."

My calls to L&I -- it took six over the course of two weeks to reach a sentient being -- deepened the mystery. The clerk looked up the file and said it did not mention a bakery. No complaint, no investigation, no nothing.

Here's the kicker: In late February, I asked Varsity owner Angelo DiMato

about the double parking.

"It's only for two or three minutes, no more than that," DiMato said as I looked out the window at a truck that had been double-parked for at least 10 minutes.

Making no secret of the bakery, he said he's relocating it to a more suitable site "on 57th St." He wouldn't be specific, but said it would happen "by the end of the month."

I guess the timetable has slipped, because when this went to press, it still hadn't happened.

In any case, Mark was happy to hear from me about the hopefully impending move of the bakery.

"Wait a minute," he said with a soupcon of sarcasm. "What bakery?"

Marie McCullough
Editor, SHCA News



Varsity Pizza's trucks and van double-parked on Locust at 43rd Street

Open Your Home to a Patient's Family

Living so close to major medical centers, we tend to take that accessibility for granted. But out-of-town patients and their families know the difficulty and expense of finding a place to stay. (Many people can't afford an "extended stay" hotel such as the one proposed for Pine Street!)

That's where Hosts for Hospitals comes in. HFH, with an office at 4719 Pine St., is a nonprofit program that provides free or minimal cost lodging at private volunteer "host" homes.

The program carefully screens both hosts and guests. And hosts are not asked to provide meals, transportation -- or even socialize unless they want to.

So if your grown kids have moved out and you've got too many empty rooms, here's your chance to do good without doing too much.

For more information, call executive director Michael Aichenbaum, 215-472-3803 or email hfhospitals@aol.com. The website is www.hostsforhospitals.org.





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



Spruce Hill Community Association News

Clip N' Mail Clip N' Mail

To join the Spruce Hill Email list, send an email to SHCA-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Check the mailing label for your membership expiration date.

Membership (2 year membership--deduct \$5)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual/ Family \$20 | <input type="checkbox"/> Senior/ Student \$10 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business \$35 | <input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor \$50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Patron \$100 | <input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime \$300 |



Make checks payable to SHCA and mail to:
SHCA, 257 S.45th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104