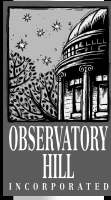


# OHI Journal



The Newsletter for the Friends & Neighbors of Observatory Hill

April 2003

## The 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Observatory Hill House Tour

By Barbara Glynn

This year, Observatory Hill, Inc.'s Annual House Tour has expanded to include an observatory and three churches. We are pleased to tell patrons, after their many years of asking, that the Allegheny Observatory in Riverview Park will be open for guided tours. If you have never had the opportunity to visit the observatory for an astronomy lecture or to use the telescopes, this is your chance to see the wonderful, turn-of-the-century interior and hear some fascinating stories about the historic firsts and discoveries that originated here.

Don't pass up the chance to see the interiors of Mount Zion Lutheran Church, the oldest parish in Observatory Hill; Incarnation Church with a recently completed restoration; and Riverview United Presbyterian Church, our very kind neighbor, and the first stop on the tour.

The common quality shared by the houses on this year's tour is the homeowners' commitment to preservation. Each home displays a loving concern for detail and the unique solutions to those "old house" problems. Come and be inspired by their hard work and accomplishments.

Proceeds from our yearly house tours are returned to our neighborhood through the OHI Housing Initiative. Two homes currently being rehabbed in our program will be open for viewing. We welcome you to stop by and inspect the progress.



### Observatory Hill House Tour Sunday, May 18, 2003 1 p.m. to 6 p.m.

- Cost of tickets is \$12 in advance and \$15 on the day of the event.
- Groups of ten or more will receive a \$2 discount if tickets are purchased in advance.
- The House Tour begins at Riverview United Presbyterian Church. Shuttle service will be available along the tour route. A guidebook with map will be provided.
- Please call 412-231-2887 for more information or to make reservations.



# An Interwoven History

By Howard Bischoff

The Riverview United Presbyterian Church, located at 3305 Perrysville Avenue, recently celebrated its 25th Anniversary. Although it has been known as Riverview United since 1977, the church's physical structure dates back 75 years to its days as the Watson Presbyterian Church.

Watson Presbyterian Church was built in 1898. The building was moved in 1916 to Riverview Park, where it is now recognized as the Chapel Shelter. The original building had to be moved to accommodate a larger structure for a larger congregation. Eighth United Presbyterian Church and North United Presbyterian Church, whose church structures were respectively decimated by fire and sold, merged with Watson to form the congregation now known as Riverview United Presbyterian Church. Watson's original structure has since been earmarked for renovation by the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy.

Riverview United Presbyterian Church records include reflections submitted by members of the earlier Watson Presbyterian Church. These recollections were compiled for the 75th Anniversary Celebration of the church and incorporated into a booklet entitled *I Remember . . . The History of Watson Presbyterian Church*.

Mrs. George W. Wilkinson wrote: "It began in 1890, as the Watson Mission. The Chapel to house the mission was completed in 1891. The present structure was erected and dedicated in 1898. Frank H. Smart wrote about the move of the Chapel: "I lived on Riverview Avenue and remember seeing the Chapel being moved down Riverview Avenue on rollers and pulled by horses."

According to the records of the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy, which maintains grounds and provides historical, geographical and ecological information on the parks within the City of Pittsburgh, "The building featured dormers and a steeple in a simple frame style. In the 1950s, the steeple and dormers were removed, and a concrete porch was added." The Conservancy's goal is to restore the Chapel to its original design.

The Watson name comes from Samuel Watson, who owned most of the land that is now Riverview Park and sold it to Allegheny City in 1894. Allegheny City, which comprised most of what is now known as the North Side, was annexed to the City of Pittsburgh in 1907. The original Watson home, Watson Cabin, also benefits from this legacy, although it has been damaged by arson.

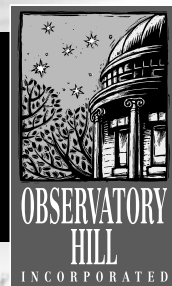
According to a family history of Frances Watson Brahm, "My aunt, Laura Atwood Watson donated an additional parcel of land and the funds to locate Watson Presbyterian Church." Another intriguing recollection of Watson Presbyterian Church was submitted by William Holmes: "I remember when the monkeys escaped from the Riverview Park Zoo, climbed into the steeple and rang the church bell." The zoo became the Wissahickon Nature Center, which was also destroyed by arson and numerous animals indigenous to Riverview Park were lost.

The historical connection between these two well-known Observatory Hill landmarks – Riverview United Presbyterian Church and Riverview Park's Chapel Shelter –demonstrates the tradition of community involvement by residents of this area over more than a century, a tradition that continues to the present day.

In 1898, Watson Presbyterian stood at the corner of Perrysville and Riverview avenues, the future site of Riverview United Presbyterian.



Riverview United Presbyterian Church



Chapel Shelter

Thanks to the assistance of Erin Clymer, Assistant Director of Public Education and Programs for the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy, and Joan Leicher, the Clerk of Sessions of the Riverview United Presbyterian Church who helped to piece together this interesting history.

## State Rep. Don Walko Reports from Harrisburg

### Medicare Demonstration Project: A New Way To Expand Prescription Coverage

The Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has proposed a program that could present an opportunity for Pennsylvania to expand our PACE and PACENET programs. CMS conducts Medicare demonstration projects to test innovations that have the potential to improve the economy and efficiency of the Medicare program.

The Medicare Waiver Demonstration Project will recognize savings in Medicare covered hospital costs resulting from our PACE and PACENET programs. Under the project those savings in Medicare costs would be re-directed toward the expansion of our prescription drug programs. The bottom line: the Medicare Demonstration Project would allow Pennsylvania to use Medicare funds toward the expansion of PACE and PACENET eligibility.

PACE utilization in 1997, for example, saved the Medicare program \$73 million. My research indicates that, with the Medicare Demonstration Project, Pennsylvania could expand enrollment in our pharmaceutical assistance programs by at least 150,000.

### Seizing the Opportunity

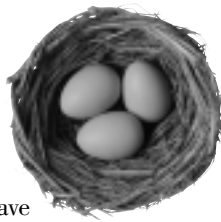
I have introduced legislation, House Resolution 46, that would make sure Pennsylvania applies for the Medicare Waiver Demonstration Project. The legislation directs the Department of Aging to seize the opportunity presented to us to shift Medicare savings to expand prescription drug coverage in our Commonwealth. Governor Rendell has indicated support for my plan.

*If you have any questions about the above or any other state-related matter, please call one of my district offices.*



**Don Walko**  
Pennsylvania State Rep.  
North Side Office  
3880 Perrysville Avenue  
Observatory Hill  
Pittsburgh, PA 15214  
Phone: 412-321-5523  
Lawrenceville Office  
204 37th Street  
Pittsburgh, PA 15201  
Phone: 412-621-2818  
(Hours by appointment)

## Earth Day / Community Day April 26, 2003



Riverview Park Alliance and Observatory Hill, Inc. have again joined hands for the second annual Riverview Park Earth Day/Community Day event on Saturday, April 26th, 2003. This year, Snyders' Point will be one of the focal points for those committed to benefiting our neighborhood and improving Riverview Park.

Riverview Park's Foreman, Bob Lacki, and his industrious crew removed thorny bramble bushes to enable volunteers, who will give unselfishly of their energies and time, a "somewhat" easier task to clear a vista.

- Those who are interested in cleaning just their own immediate neighborhoods should report by 8:00 a.m. For those interested in working only in Riverview Park, come by 9:00 a.m. for your assignments.
- All are to meet at the Activities Building at the top or Riverview Park.
- A Walk-a-Thon to raise revenues for Riverview Park Alliance will begin at 10:00 a.m. Participants who register by April 17th will receive a free T-shirt. Pre-registration will enable us to order the proper amount of food as we break in the afternoon for the "fun" portion of the day's event.
- Most of the children last year left with an appreciation gift for their contribution to the beautification of our neighborhoods. The big hit of last year's event was visible on the smiling faces of the children as they rode horses, courtesy of Chiyou Corral.
- To register, leave a detailed message of the specific number in your group and the best time to reach you. Let us build on last year's success to ensure even better times ahead. We had so much generously contributed last year – from goods to services – it was a wonderful motivator for this year's event.

Will Fordenbacher  
Riverview Park Alliance, Inc.  
845 Marshall Avenue,  
Pgh., PA 15212-3023  
412-321-3626  
E-mail: rpainc@juno.com

Barbara Pace  
Observatory Hill, Inc.  
412-231-2887

## "More here than you know."

### First ever North Side festival coming July 26!

Mark your calendar! This year our community is creating a first ever North Side-wide festival: Celebration in the Park. It launches a series of annual 'signature events' that feature the best of the North Side and more.

Bring the family! Celebration in the Park will spotlight the diverse resources, talents and institutions of the North Side, including food, fashion, music, arts and crafts, historic tours, amusement park rides, a parade and more.

Celebration in the Park is a collaborative effort by a wide variety of groups working together to promote a positive image of the North Side while raising funds for the restoration of Allegheny Commons Park.

*Want to be a part of making this a success for the entire North Side? Call Renee Tappe at the Northside Leadership Conference: 412-231-4714 x26.*



## Allegheny Observatory and Riverview Park Tour

By Barbara Pace

Mary Ann Eubanks, Education Coordinator at the Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation, with the assistance of the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy staff, will conduct a bus/walking tour of the Allegheny Observatory and Riverview Park on Friday, April 25, 2003, 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

For a nominal fee of \$15.00 for members and \$20.00 for non-members, you will have the opportunity to explore one of the more pristine parks in our city. Utilized by those interested in the equestrian life style as well as hikers, bikers and dog-walkers alike, Riverview Park offers a green oasis to the Northside neighborhoods.

The Allegheny Observatory is one of the leading observatories in measuring the distances and mass of stars, as well as studying stars for possible planets. One of the 4th largest refracting telescopes in the world will also be featured on the tour.

*For reservations, contact Mary Ann Eubanks: Email: [marylu@phlf.org](mailto:marylu@phlf.org) Phone: 412-471-5808, ext. 527.*



## Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy: Foliage and Fauna at Riverview Park

By Abbey Pauley

### Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy Launches Deer Fencing Study

This spring, the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy (PPC) will be working with Riverview Park Foreman, Bob Lacki, to install deer enclosure fencing in the Mairdale section of the park in an effort to study whether native plant populations can be protected. The enclosures are designed to gauge the deer's perception and discourage them from jumping the fence.

The PPC and the City of Pittsburgh are testing whether the fencing will protect sections of the park that are planted with native species from which deer browse. The effort will also help identify what native vegetation could co-exist with a healthy deer population.

### PPC Works to Control Norway Maple

The brush piles and cut trees now seen in the Mairdale section of Riverview Park are part of a soil stabilization and forest restoration study by the PPC. Logs from non-native trees are being placed cross-slope to prevent soil erosion. Also, brush is being piled to provide wildlife habitat and protect native tree seedlings that have been planted at the site.

The study is an effort to test the effectiveness of using non-native tree species as a "nurse" crop for native plants. The native seedlings, which will grow at the same time as the non-native and invasive sprouts from the stumps, will help provide soil stability. Once the natives are established, the non-natives will be removed.

### PPC and Scouts to Plant Trees in Riverview

The PPC is working with the Riverview Park Alliance and Cub Scout Pack 327 to plant a live Christmas tree that has belonged to the Brighton Heights Lutheran Church. Plans call for the Norwegian pine to be planted near the Watson Cabin. "This is a great ecological initiative by these youngsters," said Phil Gruszka, Director of Management/Maintenance Policies for the PPC. "We're so pleased the Scouts are planning on doing a planting every year."

Anyone interested in conducting similar plantings should contact the PPC, which can recommend species and provide information on how to care for the Christmas trees while in your home, acclimating them to the cold, choosing an appropriate location and proper planting.



## OHI Housing Initiative and URA Workshop

By Lynn Schraf

### Housing Initiative Update

The work is now well underway. The homes on Marshall Avenue have been fully gutted and framed, and the dry walling is almost complete. The bricks on 103 Marshall have been cleaned and pointed, and 133 Marshall is close behind. The homes on Perrysville Avenue have been gutted and are in the process of being framed. Groundbreaking of the new homes on Perrysville should be underway.

The OHI Housing Committee is reviewing and selecting interior finishes such as kitchen schemes, including color and cabinetry. It is a wonderful thing to see blight eliminated and our neighborhood's beautiful houses transformed into future homes.

*For more information on purchasing the homes on Marshall and Perrysville avenues, contact Leanne Onorato at the Northside Leadership Conference – 412-231-4714.*

### URA Home Ownership Workshop

Please join us Saturday, May 31, 2003 from 1:00 – 4:00 p.m. to join the Urban Redevelopment Authority, banks and other providers to help you buy or fix up your Observatory Hill home!

The workshop will be held in OHI's newly renovated home for sale at 103 Marshall Avenue. The URA offers financial assistance with a variety of programs that are available to help you buy a home or fix up your home in our neighborhood. Come and peek into your neighborhood community group's development, and come away with more!

# Councilwoman Burns Legislative Report

## Public Safety Update

The changes in the Community Oriented Policing program took effect on January 1, 2003. There are no longer Community Oriented Police officers assigned to any of the neighborhoods. Instead, there are six Community Problem Solving Officers assigned to the Zone 1 Police Station who report to Commander Kelly. These officers work the entire North Side area and are assigned to address specific problems.

Community residents are advised to call 911 for immediate police assistance. Additionally, the Zone 1 PM supervisors have been given pager numbers, which can be called if there is a specific ongoing problem that needs attention. The PM supervisor will then assign this problem to the appropriate sector vehicle. The following are the PM Sergeants with their neighborhood assignments and pager numbers:

### Sgt. Jurich

Brighton Heights, Marshall-Shadeland,  
Observatory Hill, Perry Hilltop and  
Summer Hill

*Off Days: Tuesday and Wednesday*

**Phone: 412-560-5463**

### Sgt. Malloy

East Allegheny, Fineview, Northview  
Heights, Spring Garden and Spring Hill

*Off Days: Sunday and Monday*

**Phone: 412-560-5496**



**Barbara Burns**  
Observatory Hill's City  
Council Representative  
Office Phone: 412-255-2135

## Help Resolve Neighborhood Conflicts

By Barbara Pace

District Justice Bob Ravenstahl, representative of the 26th and 27th wards, presented some suggestions regarding nuisance complaints in your neighborhood. When a police call is made to 911, whether it be a domestic complaint, crime in action, harassment, etc., Justice Ravenstahl advises you to request a written report – and be sure to note the specific CCR number assigned to your report.

The CCR number will enable you to retrieve a copy of the report, which can be obtained from the Records Room, Downtown, 3rd Floor of the Municipal Courts Building, 660 First Avenue, phone: 412-255-2920.

If you need assistance in resolving your difficulties, a representative from the District Attorney's office is available on Wednesdays at 1:00 p.m. at Justice Ravenstahl's office located at 3874 Perrysville Avenue on a first come/first served service basis.

*Any questions, contact the District Justice at 412-321-0116.*

## Make Yourself More Marketable

By Raenell Hill

The Northside Leadership Conference and Community College of Allegheny County are offering a Workskills/ Lifeskills Training Program. Come and learn how to balance your work life with your personal life, what it takes to succeed, or marketable computer skills. You will learn different techniques from Speaking with Confidence to Managing Life Outside Work. Students participating in this program will receive a Certificate upon completion.

Add these classes to your resume and show a potential employer that you are looking for continuous growth. Many employers accept these courses as Continuous Education Units (CEU) but please verify with your employer.

*For more information or to join, contact Raenell Hill at 412-231-4714 x 14 or visit:  
415 East Ohio Street, Suite 300, Pittsburgh, PA 15212*

*Funding made possible by The Pittsburgh Partnership for Neighborhood Development.*

# Calendar

## April

### Family Swim Nights

Thursdays, 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.  
Perry Traditional Swimming Pool

### OHI Board Meeting

Wednesday, April 16  
7:00 p.m.

### Allegheny Observatory and Riverview Park Tour

Friday, April 25  
6:30 p.m.

### Riverview Park's Earth Day/Community Day

Saturday, April 26

## May

### Family Swim Nights

Discontinued Until Next  
School Season

### Observatory Hill, Inc. Annual House Tour

Sunday, May 18  
1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

### OHI Board Meeting

Wednesday, May 21  
7:00 p.m.

### URA Home Ownership Workshop

Saturday, May 31  
1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
103 Marshall Avenue

## June

### Family Movie Nights Music In The Parks

Saturdays

## July

### Celebration in the Park

July 26



## Annual Registration Form for Membership to Observatory Hill, Inc.

Mail to: Observatory Hill, Inc.  
P.O. Box 7651, Pittsburgh, PA 15214  
**412-231-2887**

Member's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Date Paid \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

Interests \_\_\_\_\_

Annual Membership Dues (check one)

☐ Community Member - \$5.00/household (adults over 18)

☐ Business Member - \$50.00

Make Checks Payable to: Observatory Hill, Inc.

## About OHI

Observatory Hill, Inc., serves our neighborhood as a member of the Northside Leadership Conference. Call one of the Officers if you'd like more information or to get involved in your community. There are open board meetings the third Wednesday of every month at the Byzantine Seminary at 3605 Perrysville Avenue at 7:00 p.m. All are welcome to listen and participate!

## The OHI Board

**Susan Rooney**  
*President*  
412-323-0899

**Scott Pipitone**  
*Vice President*  
412-321-7155

**Barbara Glynn**  
*Secretary*  
412-322-5580  
Bdglynn@icubed.com

**Dave Gilbreath**  
*Treasurer*  
412-321-5043  
davegilbreath@mercuryprinting.com

**Moses Carper**  
412-583-5290

**Brian Chapman**  
412-322-9206  
bchapman@mail.magee.edu

**Malcolm Hardy**  
412-231-6224  
mhardieredblue@hotmail.com

**Skip McCrea**  
412-231-3750  
fmcrcal@pghoe.net

**Quynh McGuire**  
412-321-5595  
qtmcguire@yahoo.com

**Barbara Pace**  
412-231-4379

**Brian Pinter**  
412-323-8868  
Bpinter@County.Allegheny.PA.US

**Lynn Schraf**  
412-321-5043  
lschraf@earthlink.net

**Richard Sestric**  
412-231-8134  
sestric@telerama.com

## Committees

### Entertainment

Brian Pinter\*  
Quynh McGuire  
Susan Rooney

### House Tour

Entire Board

Mark Masterson  
Glenn Miller  
Peg Perlic  
Lorraine Schwartz  
Julia Vidic

### Housing Initiative

Lynn Schraf\*  
Denise Colbert  
Dave Gilbreath  
Barbara Glynn  
Quynh McGuire  
Barbara Pace  
Stacey Regan  
Mark Reisman  
Susan Rooney

### Membership

Rich Sestric\*  
Barbara Glynn  
Glynn Miller  
Barbara Pace  
Susan Rooney

### Newsletter

Barbara Pace\*  
Moses Carper  
Denise Colbert  
Dave Gilbreath  
Skip and Jason McCrea  
Scott Pipitone  
Susan Rooney  
Lynn Schraf  
Rich Sestric

### Nominating

Entire Board

### Neighborhood & Business Development

Scott Pipitone\*  
Dave Gilbreath  
Barbara Glynn  
Richard Sestric

### North Side Leadership Conference (NSLC)

Scott Pipitone\*  
Barbara Glynn  
Richard Sestric

### Parks

Moses Carper\*  
Brian Chapman  
Barbara Glynn  
Skip McCrea  
Barbara Pace  
Rich Sestric

### Public Safety

Susan Rooney\*  
\*Chairperson)

### Observatory Hill Journal Credits

Editor: Scott Pipitone Design

Design and Layout: Scott Pipitone, courtesy Scott Pipitone Design - 412-321-0879

Printing: Dave Gilbreath, courtesy Mercury Printing - 412-241-1189

April 2003



P. O. Box 7651

Pittsburgh, PA 15214-0651

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