

OH Journal

The Newsletter for the Friends & Neighbors of Observatory Hill

November 2005



Help Make Observatory Hill Even Better

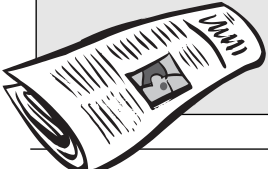
TIM TUINSTRA

As you will see in this issue of the Observatory Hill Journal, our neighborhood enjoys the commitment of dozens of our fellow residents. They volunteer to provide our young people with opportunity, keep the business district attractive, promote Riverview Park, improve housing conditions, keep neighborhood and school informed about each other, and preserve community assets like the Post Office.

Yes, an amazing array of service occurs every week of the year in our neighborhood. Observatory Hill Inc. is proud to be involved in each of these projects and so much more. Still, imagine the improvements that could be made with just a little input from you. True, life is busier and more challenging than ever. Making ends meet has not gotten easier. But this is just as true for those already involved in our community. Since we're all in it together, let's pitch in and make this community an even better place to live.

It really doesn't need to be all-consuming. Even a few hours a month helping to pick up litter along the sidewalk would make quite a difference. So would helping to restore facilities in our park. Or add your eyes and ears to your street's block watch.

Fill out the form on the back of this newsletter and send it in. The \$5 annual dues will help you to join your neighbors in serving your own community. Join them in making this an even better place for you, your family, and those yet to come.

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Pennsylvania Law Regarding Living Wills

State Representative Don Walko

Recently my office has been contacted by a great many constituents regarding Pennsylvania's Living Will Law. The demand was so great that I thought I should address this issue.

In 1992, Pennsylvania enacted a "Living Will" law that lets a person prescribe when life-sustaining treatment should be administered by a health-care provider if the person becomes incapacitated. The legislation extends to terminally ill and/or permanently unconscious adults the right to decide beforehand about the acceptable types of medical care that should be provided.

In deciding whether to make a living will declaration, you will probably want to consult with one or more of the following: your family, doctor, clergy, and/or attorney.

At my district office we have sample living will forms that are based on the suggested sample contained in Pennsylvania law. I also have a staff person available to notarize your paperwork.

If my office can be of further assistance on this or any other issue pertaining to state government, please don't hesitate to write or call my district office at 412-321-5523.



Don Walko
Pennsylvania State Rep.

Northside Office
3880 Perrysville Avenue
Observatory Hill
Pittsburgh, PA 15204
Phone: 412-321-5523

Lawrenceville Office
204 37th Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15201
Phone: 412-621-2818
(Hours by appointment)

Neighborhood Profile: Allegheny Observatory

TIM TUINSTRA

Our neighborhood is named for the Allegheny Observatory in Riverview Park. This world-class facility is owned and operated by the University of Pittsburgh. Read on for some fascinating tidbits about this institution central to our part of the city.



- The Thaw Refractor telescope, under the largest dome, is the third largest refractor in the United States. It is the Observatory's primary research instrument and is used mainly to study the distance to nearby stars.
- First director Samuel Langley guided the facility's growth and research in what was then the city of Allegheny, now Pittsburgh's North Side, between 1867 and 1891. Langley went on to head the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C.
- The Observatory began as a private society of 32 Allegheny City citizens and friends in 1859. They turned it over to the Western University of Pennsylvania (now the University of Pittsburgh) in 1867, which has used it for research ever since.
- In Langley's time, the Observatory funded its staff and research by calculating time using a special telescope, then selling the correct time to railroads and others via telegraph.
- 110,000+ photographic plates of night sky taken over decades through the Thaw telescope are in the Observatory, making it one of the world's largest photographic collections.
- Free tours are provided from 8–10 p.m. on Thursday nights between May 1 and the third week of August, and on Friday nights from April 1–November 1. They start with a short slide or film presentation followed with a walking tour and finish on clear nights with a viewing of the night sky through the Fitz-Clark telescope. Call 412-321-2400 Monday–Friday between 10 a.m.–4 p.m.
- Be sure to visit www.pitt.edu/~aobsvtry for more information. Items for this article were taken from that site.

Main Street Partnership Cleans Business District

TIM TUINSTRA

Once again, businesses and officials along Perrysville Avenue partnered with Observatory Hill Inc. to bring in a team to clean the business corridor along the neighborhood's shopping district. Together they raised \$1,000 toward a matching grant secured through the Northside Leadership Council.

Throughout this summer, workers from a North Side-based street cleaning firm cleaned litter and debris on weeks when city crews were not scheduled in our neighborhood. Feedback was largely positive as Observatory Hill experienced less litter than most neighborhoods this summer.

Special thanks are due to those who partnered with OHI on this project: Heard Funeral Home, Markl Supply Co., National City Bank, Parkvale Savings & Loan, Dr. Michael Patterson, Pipitone Group, and State Representative Don Walko.

Depending upon the availability of matching funds next year, Observatory Hill Inc. will again try to put together this creative partnership.



Community Center Might Be Around The Corner

MELISSA MATHIS

Observatory Hill youth may soon have a new community center to enjoy. Michele Lemaster, executive director of Observatory Hill Early Learning & Child Development, has offered to partner with Observatory Hill Inc. to turn part of her facility on Bonvue Street into a center for youth activities and programs.

Recognizing the importance of meeting the needs of each child socially, intellectually, emotionally, and physically, Lemaster has been serving this community for over 10 years. Michele has received awards from Junior Achievement and CTAC for her work with children and the community. Recently, Michele has come aboard with OHI as Chair for the newly created Youth Committee.

Located at 101 Bonvue Street, the Center currently offers childcare from ages 6 weeks to 12 years. OHELCD provides children with opportunities to grow, develop, experiment, learn, and express themselves in a



caring, nurturing atmosphere, so they may better prepare for the future's challenges. The Center is Keystone Stars certified and partners with the Pittsburgh Public Schools to provide a Wrap-Around Head Start program.

Michele does not plan to stop there. She sees the broader need of the community's youth. There are currently plans for an after school program, a summer day camp in collaboration with OHI Parks chair Moses Carper at Riverview Park, and a youth recreation and community center that will give children of all ages the outlet they desire and need. We need to get youth off the streets by providing structure and direction, as these programs will provide.

Working with OHI is a major step for Michele and the Center. With OHI's backing, involvement, and support, the work with this community's youth will come to a completely new level. Here in Observatory Hill, we may be able to give our children the advantages that many suburban neighborhoods currently offer their children.

Area Schools Plan Active '05-'06 Academic Year

BARBARA STANTON

The 2005–2006 school year is well underway at our three area schools. Each held several fall activities and are planning for the holidays.

Chatham Elementary School students hosted their annual Open House on Monday, October 17. Parents were able to come to school throughout the day and see the students in action during a typical day. After school parent-teacher conferences were held and an after school tutorial program was held from 4–5 p.m. To bring the fall season to a peak, a Harvest Festival—complete with fall foods and traditions—is planned in November. A winter program is being scheduled to help usher in the Holiday season.

Incarnation Academy held its annual Open House on Sunday, November 5 from noon–4 p.m. The Open House provided parents with the chance to meet teachers and experience activities and learning taking place at school firsthand. A Halloween party was held in October and A Night at the Races event is planned for November.

A Holiday performance is also being planned, but at press time no details were available.

At **Perry Traditional Academy**, fall sports are always a highlight. Going into October, the Commodore football team sported a 4–1 overall record and was 4–0 in their Conference. Boys and Girls Soccer were also played.

Pittsburgh Public Schools and Pittsburgh Council on Higher Education co-sponsored mini-college fairs throughout October at each of the high schools. Perry hosted its mini-fair on Saturday, October 7. Representatives from Carlow College, Carnegie Mellon University, Community College of Allegheny County, Chatham College, Duquesne University, LaRoche College, Point Park College, Robert Morris University, and the University of Pittsburgh provided students and parents with information on scholarships, financial assistance, campus life, and application processes.



Clean Pittsburgh Commission

REPORT FROM CITY COUNCILMAN LUKE RAVENSTAHL

Sidewalks strewn with litter and city lots covered with debris continue to be a challenge to the quality of life on the North Side and throughout the City of Pittsburgh. Residents deserve to live in an attractive and sanitary environment, and many citizens and community groups have coordinated clean-ups and made an effort to promote recycling. I believe it is important for our neighborhoods, community groups, and city departments to have the resources necessary to continue and improve their efforts, which is why I recently co-sponsored legislation establishing the Clean Pittsburgh Commission and the Clean Pittsburgh Trust Fund.

The Clean Pittsburgh Commission is a 15-member panel designed to educate and assist community groups and city departments with neighborhood clean-ups, maintain a database of resource information, and work with city departments to coordinate recycling initiatives. The Clean Pittsburgh Trust Fund was created to financially support Clean Pittsburgh projects and programs.

The fine for littering in the City of Pittsburgh will be raised from \$15 to \$25, with the extra \$10 going into the Clean Pittsburgh Trust Fund. The city also receives performance grants from the state based on the amount of recycling it generates. The money raised that exceeds the city's projections will be deposited into the Clean Pittsburgh Trust Fund.

I am confident that this legislation will enable the Clean Pittsburgh Commission to further assist Pittsburgh's communities in clean-up and recycling efforts to keep our residential and business districts attractive and promote recycling.

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns regarding any city-related matter, please feel free to call my office at 412-255-2135.



Luke Ravenstahl
Observatory Hill's City
Council Representative

City County Building
Suite 510/Floor 5
414 Grant Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15219
Phone: 412-255-2135
Fax: 412-255-2129
Email: luke.ravenstahl@city.pittsburgh.pa.us



OHI's park volunteers (many pictured here) work on many projects at Riverview Park. This year alone, they operated a day camp, sold juice and snacks before Cinema in the Park movies, and encouraged neighbors to increase use of the park. The parks committee chair, Moses Carper, guided these efforts.



In a previous issue, Peg wrote about a man who brought a pony through the neighborhoods. Children were thrilled to have photos taken astride the pony, as seen in this photo of Susan Rooney, OHI President.

Memories

PEG PERLIK

Do you remember...

- ... when Perry High won football games and fans celebrated by decorating with toilet paper?
 - ... World War II Ration books for shoes, cigarettes, butter, sugar, coffee, etc.?
 - ... the story about a B-52 landing and sinking in the Monongahela River?
 - ... Jazz lounges in downtown Pittsburgh?
 - ... State Acts at the Stanley Theater? (Dick Powell sang there.)
 - ... Operas at the Nixon Theater on Sixth Street downtown?
 - ... Civic Light Opera at Pitt Stadium in Oakland?
 - ... Robert Morris Business School in the William Penn Hotel?
- These are from one of our fellow readers:**
- ... the Gulf station at Perrysville and East?
 - ... the North End Bar?
 - ... the Clearing?
 - ... Kuhn's Market at Perrysville and Vinceton?
 - ... the 5 & 10 on Perrysville?



Please continue to send in your ideas and memories!

Contact me at tht30@yahoo.com or write to:

OHI Journal
Attn: Peg Perlik
P.O. Box 7651
Pittsburgh PA 15214

Perrysville Avenue Housing Development Update


KIM GRAZIANI



Observatory Hill Inc. has a new contractor and a new project manager moving forward with full speed to complete the last three houses of the Observatory Summit Homes Development. In May 2005, OHI received notice from Angel Contracting stating that they were not able to

complete the project due to financial reasons. The new contractor is George Gallagher of Gallagher & Sons who has been in the general contracting and plumbing business for over 20 years. As Director of Residential Development at the Northside Leadership Conference, I have joined the development team as the new project manager.

The last three houses to be completed are located at 3004, 3008, and 3012 Perrysville Avenue. These units are over 90% complete with the majority of the work pertaining to exterior items, specifically the reconstruction of the water and sewer lines. All work is scheduled to be completed by the end of the year, including exterior work.



Spread the word to your neighbors and friends that all three of these units are on the market. They are brand new single-family homes with 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, open floor plans, one car integral garage, walk-in closets, and rear deck selling for \$162,500 with a potential deferment up to \$32,500.

Also part of the Observatory Summit Homes Development is a beautifully restored single-family unit located at 3000 Perrysville Avenue. This unit has 3 bedrooms; 1.5 bathrooms; original hardwood floors in the open living room, dining room, and kitchen; decorative fireplace; sun room with ceramic tile; integral two-car garage and is selling for \$150,000 with a potential deferment of up to \$30,000.

For more information on these units please contact me at 412-330-3557.



Volunteers, OHI Join To Save Neighborhood Post Office

JANE SESTRIC

This summer, residents learned of plans to close the Observatory Hill Post Office on Perrysville Avenue across from Perry Traditional Academy. Many residents and businesses use the facility, and if it closed they would be required to use facilities on the lower North Side or in West View.

Observatory Hill Inc. spearheaded a campaign to keep the facility open. The goals included reserving and/or expanding service, keeping the facility's Perrysville Avenue storefront open, and maintaining the neighborhood's identity.

As this issue went to press, the outcome was not known. While you might now know the final decision, we thought it important to tell about the effort to save our Post Office. Included in this article are the names and addresses for our U.S. senators and representative. If the matter remains open, you are strongly encouraged to write them at once.

OHI sponsored September 14th and October 12th meetings at Mt. Zion Church to share information and coordinate the effort, including enlistment of surrounding neighborhoods using the facility. OHI and volunteers kept tabs on usage in order to counteract inaccurate underestimations of the neighborhood's use of that Post Office. Such inadequate information was partly to blame for the planned closure.

Block watch captains and others alerted neighbors to the closure plans and provided information on the preservation effort. Volunteers circulated petitions to keep the Post Office operating.

Interested people were given the following contact information for our U.S. senators, U.S. representative, and the postmaster. The OHI board sent a formal letter to those officials opposing the closure.

Rep. Michael Doyle
225 Ross St. 5th Floor
Pittsburgh, PA 15219
rep.doyle@mail.house.gov

Mr. Richard Sekinger
Postmaster
1001 California Avenue
Rm. 2012
Pittsburgh, PA 15290

Senator Rick Santorum
Landmarks Building
Suite 250
One Station Square
Pittsburgh, PA 15219
<http://santorum.senate.gov/public/>

Senator Arlen Specter
425 Sixth Avenue, Suite 1450
Pittsburgh, PA 15219
<http://specter.senate.gov/>

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

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Quynh McGuire
Susan Rooney

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Mark Masterson
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Stacey Regan
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Moses Carper
Denise Colbert
Dave Gilbreath
Skip and Jason McCrea
Barbara Pace
Scott Pipitone
Susan Rooney
Lynn Schraf
Rich Sestric

Nominating

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Mike Everhart
Walt Nalducci
Tim Tuinstra

Northside Leadership Conference (NSLC)

Mike Everhart
Walt Nalducci

Parks

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

Public Safety

Susan Rooney*
*Chairperson

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