

# OH Journal

The Newsletter for the Friends &amp; Neighbors of Observatory Hill

Fall 2017

## Neighborhood News

The Bonvue Street Revitalization Project is on schedule. We have sold one of our five homes and one is under contract -both at our asking prices. We welcome and look forward to meeting our new home owners. We have purchased our ninth home which has been vacant and blighted for several years. It will be good to restore that old beauty. It has exposed beams, a stained-glass window, a window seat and several leaded glass windows.

We have met with TreeVitalize and have secured more trees for a second planting in the business district and on Bonvue Street.

We have applied for another Neighborhood Needs Grant, which will allow us to install several more sets of security cameras once the paperwork has been processed.

We had our biggest and best house tour ever. We thank the many homeowners, business sponsors, volunteers and house

tour committee members who made this amazing day possible. We sold record tickets, had outstanding support from our business sponsors and broke Facebooks likes and shares and views. Thanks everyone for helping to support your neighborhood!

Our local First National Bank branch, located at 3908 Perrysville Avenue, has provided us with an ATM machine. In addition to standard ATM functionality, this Smart ATM will allow customers to deposit checks and cash without envelopes. Customers who bank at the Observatory Hill Office will also continue to enjoy access to FNB's full range of personal and commercial banking, wealth management, private banking and insurance services, along with a comprehensive suite of online and mobile banking resources. Office hours are Monday to Friday, 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM.



## 1ST ANNUAL LIGHT-UP NIGHT IN OBSERVATORY HILL

By Dorrie Smith

December 1st from 6pm – 8pm

What better way of bringing community together during the holiday season. Join Observatory Hill Inc. as we celebrate the holidays together with you in our Business district, now branded as "The 5 Corners of Observatory Hill" where Baytree, East, Mairdale Streets and Perrysville Ave come together.

The evening will be filled with holiday cheer, caroling, and much more. Who knows perhaps the Jolly Old Elf himself may visit...but only if we're nice. Bring the family, children and pets for an evening of holiday unity in Observatory Hill. Please check Observatory Hill's website for more details as we are still in the early planning stages of this event. [www.observatoryhill.net](http://www.observatoryhill.net)

### What's Inside:



Neighborhood News-1  
Light Up Night-1  
From Harris' Office-2

Library Happenings-2  
Regina Scott-3  
Mayor's Message-3

Down to Business-4  
Revitalization Project-4  
Calendar of Events-5

Blurbs-5  
Whiskey Fundraiser-6

## FROM THE OFFICE OF DARLENE HARRIS



I hope everyone has had a wonderful summer thus far! The heat in Pittsburgh has left us eager for fall, but with another year of school starting so soon, I'm not sure I can speak for all of the students in the City.

As we start to move in the direction of schoolbooks in place of spray parks, I urge everyone to be careful driving near public libraries and schools in the City. However, for the remainder of the summer, be sure to spend some time appreciating the many beautiful parks on the Northside. Last minute parties and summer gatherings are common this time of year, and for those of you looking for an outdoor area that can accommodate a larger party, I urge you to look into park pavilions. Riverview park has several rentals available in the summer, and for a different experience altogether, the Allegheny Observatory offers tours of the facility every Thursday night at 8 pm. I urge anyone who loves stargazing to reserve a spot at the Observatory on a clear evening; the sights are incredible and it's a great way to end a summer day. You can reach the Observatory for reservations at 412-321-2400 between one and five PM Monday through Friday.

Feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns at [darlene.harris@pittsburghpa.gov](mailto:darlene.harris@pittsburghpa.gov) or 412-255-2135.

Enjoy the warm weather! - Darlene M. Harris, Councilwoman, District 1



Carnegie  
Library of  
Pittsburgh

**WOODS RUN**  
1201 Woods Run Ave  
Pittsburgh, PA 15212  
412-761-3730

### The Latest News from the Library

By Marta Honores, Library Service Manager

Dear Neighbors,

Thank you for another wonderful summer of reading and fun! Come see us in September, featuring a leisurely walk on Wednesdays for people of all ages. Grab the stroller, a comfortable pair of walking shoes, and invite a friend to come along! As the leaves begin to change colors, Fall is a beautiful time to be outdoors. Can't make it on Wednesdays? The ever-popular Family Playshop makes its way back to CLP-Woods Run on Tuesday mornings in September as well!

### Wednesday Walk

Wednesdays | 9:30 – 10:30 am

Socialize and get some exercise on our 1-2 mile walk around the neighborhood. All ages and abilities are welcome (anyone under 18 must be accompanied by an adult). We suggest you bring a water bottle for the walk. We will meet at the front of the library. After the walk, please come in to the library for a healthy snack and a drink!

### Family Playshop

Tuesdays: September 5, 12, 19, 26, & October 3  
10:30 am – 11:30 am

Laugh, play, discover and explore. Parents and guardians will dive into quality play time with their children age birth to 5 years.

Over the course of this 5-week series, babies, toddlers, preschoolers and their adults will spend time together, make friends, use toys to learn about their world and talk one-on-one with child development specialists.

For a complete schedule of all events, please see our online calendar: [http://www.carnegielibrary.org/clp\\_location/woods-run/](http://www.carnegielibrary.org/clp_location/woods-run/)

We are located at:

CLP-Woods Run, 1201 Woods Run Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15212

We hope to see you soon!

Reading! Activities for all ages.





## A WORD FROM THE MAYOR

Summer is drawing to a close and what a summer it has been for Pittsburgh! As we look forward to the fall, here is some news the news that the Office of Mayor William Peduto would like to share with our friends in Observatory Hill.

In July, Mayor Peduto signed an Executive Order on Responsible Contracting. The Executive Order was designed to support the local construction industry and promote new job training opportunities in Pittsburgh. The order creates a labor-management task force that will study ways to: assist new businesses that want to invest in the city, support redevelopment in under-served neighborhoods, connect reputable contractors with local construction opportunities, and connect local residents with training necessary to find good-paying jobs in the construction industry.

One of the top priorities of Mayor Peduto's administration has been increasing the public accessibility of City of Pittsburgh information and data. The City of Pittsburgh recently implemented a series of technological upgrades to ease the process of obtaining government permits. Permits from the city's Special Events office can now be obtained online and paid for with credit cards. The City now also accepts credit cards as payment for all permits issued by the Departments of Public Works (DPW) and Permits Licenses and Inspections (PLI). In addition, the City of Pittsburgh has launched an online and user-friendly database of City properties that are available for sale. For years there were no lists of City-owned buildings and vacant properties available for purchase. The new website now allows interested buyers to view all available properties on an online map or search for them by street name or parcel number.

These new technological resources can be found via the revamped official City of Pittsburgh website, [pittsburghpa.gov](http://pittsburghpa.gov) ! The upgraded website brings a new design and increased functionality, including advanced search options and mobile compatibility. This is the first significant update to the website in almost six years and is focused on user experience and accessibility. To that end, the website will be going through a period of continued updates, so please click the "Feedback" button in the bottom left corner of the main page to help give us input on improvement!

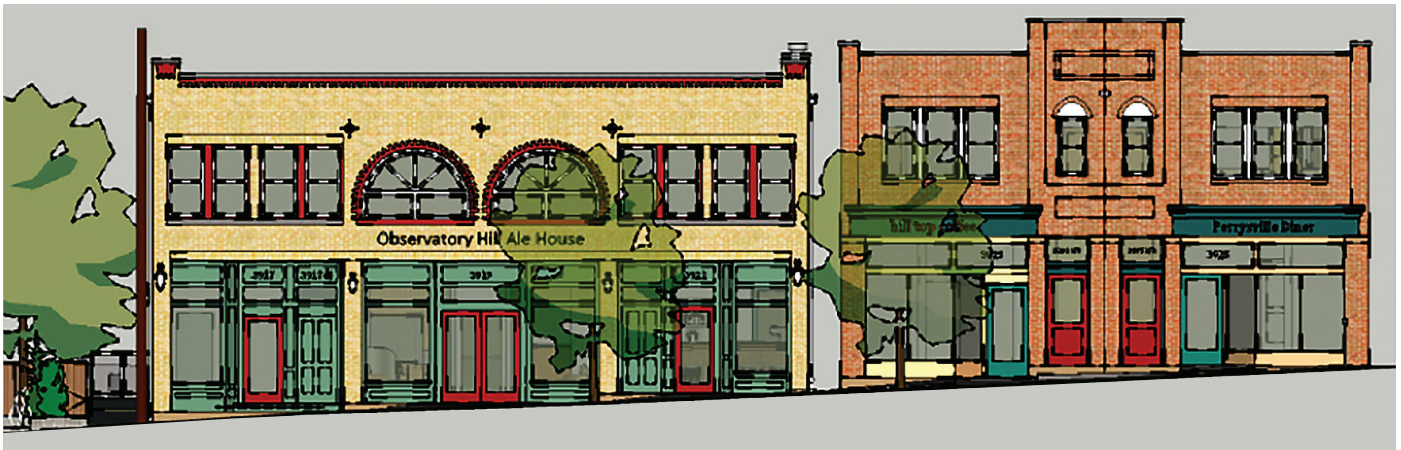


## Regina Scott Is Our Neighbor of the Year

By Dorrie Smith

Regina Scott has been a resident of Observatory Hill for over 38 years. Although retired from the Board of Education she hasn't let retirement slow her down. She now enjoys travelling and spending time with her family. In 2016, Regina participated in City of Pittsburgh Senior Games, taking home two silver medals and a bronze just to name a few. Regina is also a very active volunteer for her Observatory Hill community, always asking what she can do to assist. Here are a few reasons of why she has been chosen as Observatory Hill's Neighbor of the Year: Regina has cooked 6 out of 10 of the Observatory Hill Inc's annual Spaghetti Dinners, last year with a broken ankle which was in a boot. She is the first person many community and city residents will stop to have enjoyable conversations with at the information table for OHI's Heritage Day Festival. In addition, she has been a docent for the Observatory Hill House Tour and in earlier years has participated in neighborhood clean-ups.

Always with a smile and a "Hello" for all, she is fondly known by the OHI board and by many others as Aunt Regina. We are proud to call Regina Scott our Neighbor of the Year.



## Getting Down to Business

Observatory Hill is fortunate to have some wonderful buildings in our commercial district and we have been working on the goals of improving safety, beautifying our streetscape and attracting new businesses. To support the continued revitalization of our neighborhood, we will redevelop two commercial buildings: 3917 and 3923-3925 Perrysville Avenue and are working to acquire other key buildings in dire need of improvements. Here is a snapshot of our steady progress:

- 1) Enlisted the help of the Northside Leadership Conference to guide us, to get the word out on the types of businesses we would like to attract, to assist us in securing loans and grants and to manage our real estate projects.
- 2) 3917 and 3923-25 Perrysville Ave
  - a. Acquired these three properties with a goal to bring neighborhood serving businesses.
  - b. Hired VAF Architecture to draft designs to show us our potential.
  - c. Hired a realtor who is marketing these properties for lease.
  - d. Took out a \$20,000 loan to correct issues with the underground utilities in our sidewalks.
- e. Secured \$98,500 in grant funds from the Urban Redevelopment Authority earmarked for façade and other exterior improvements to our 3917-3923-3925 Perrysville Avenue buildings. We are working to secure matching loans from the Northside Community Development Fund. Work is expected to begin this Fall on the façades.
- 3) Received a \$10,000 grant from The Sprout Fund which went toward façade and streetscape improvements for existing businesses so they too could take part in our wave of revitalization.
- 4) Put a nearby vacant and tax delinquent house in a sale to allow for future expansion.
- 5) Installed security cameras in 2015 and have a grant in the works to install several more.
- 6) Worked with TreeVitalize to add trees to our sidewalks and neighboring businesses.
- 7) Thanks to capital budget funding from the City, we worked with the office of Darlene Harris to install new acorn lights and several new sidewalks with the money that was available.

### Wondering how you can help?

- 1) If you know of anyone looking to start a neighborhood-serving business, like a restaurant or a coffee shop or a brewery or a store, refer them to us (412.736.2489) or to Jon Huck at 412.231.4714 ext 205.
- 2) If you see things that are amiss, please call or tweet or go online to 311 and report it. Trash, weeds, etc. You can help your neighborhood by contacting 311.
- 3) If you own a business or real estate in the business district, we want to talk to you to see if there is anything we can do to help or if you are interested in getting involved in our activities.



## Revitalization Project

This revitalization project is transforming our neighborhood – just look at this before and after photo! Two homes are under contract, three homes are still available and they all are looking great! \$30,000 soft 2nd mortgage grants from the URA for qualified buyers make the deal even better. Go to [www.bonvuestreet.com](http://www.bonvuestreet.com) for more information or call Christa Ross at 724-933-6300x214 to arrange a showing.



## Board Elections Held This Fall

We are collecting applications for those interested in being on the board of OHI. This is a two-year term which involves: attending the monthly board meetings held the 3rd Wednesday of the month (no meeting is held in December); helping with the annual house tour and/or the annual Heritage Festival and also participating in one of the various committees which make up the board. Choices of committees are: House Tour, Communications and Marketing, Membership, Community Development, Neighborhood Improvements, Public Safety, Riverview Park, Northside Leadership Conference. If you are interested in being on the board and can make this time commitment, please contact us at 412.736.2489 for an application or send an email to: [ohipgh@gmail.com](mailto:ohipgh@gmail.com) and an application will be emailed to you. Deadline for submissions is October 27th.

## Fall Clean Up Day Scheduled

Join us on Saturday, October 7 as we gather to pick up trash and to clean up the business district and as many side streets as time allows. Tools and trash bags will be provided.

We will meet at 10am in the parking lot across from Schorr's Bakery on Perrysville Avenue and we will work until Noon.

## Sign Up To Stay Informed

The Park Rangers at Riverview Park are collecting email addresses. If you would like to be included in their emails to stay in the loop on the latest happenings at the park, then please let them know and you will be added to their communications. Send your email address to: [riverviewpark.pgh@gmail.com](mailto:riverviewpark.pgh@gmail.com)

## Welcome To Our Business District

We would like to welcome Robert Strovers to our commercial district. He recently purchased the old First Niagara Bank. A former resident of Brighton Heights, he is a photographer and visual artist/print maker and will be rehabbing this building for his studio and hopes to be moved in by October. While he will be selling his work out of the James Gallery located in the west end, his studio on Perrysville Avenue will offer printing to other artists and photographers, real estate and property photography services and limited framing services.



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**SEPTEMBER 20: Board Meeting** at 7pm at the Byzantine Seminary, 3605 Perrysville Ave.

**OCTOBER 7: Neighborhood Clean Up** from 10am to Noon. Meet in the parking lot across the street from Schorr's Bakery.

**OCTOBER 12: Wigle Whiskey Fundraiser** from 6:00pm 9:00pm, 1055 Spring Garden Avenue. Stop by and support OHI.

**OCTOBER 18: Board Meeting** at 7pm at the Byzantine Seminary, 3605 Perrysville Ave.

**OCTOBER 30:** Deadline to submit OHI board member application.

**NOVEMBER 15: Board Meeting** at 7pm at the Byzantine Seminary, 3605 Perrysville Ave.

**DECEMBER 1: Observatory Hill Light Up Night** from 6pm-8pm. Join us on Perrysville Avenue in our commercial district for an evening of fun, food and festivities. Bring your family, friends and neighbors.

No OHI Board meeting in December. Happy Holidays!

## WIGLE WHISKEY FUNDRAISER BENEFITS OHI

Join us on Thursday, October 12 from 6:00pm to 9:00pm for an evening of fun, food, a yummy food truck and beer vendors. Wigle Whiskey Barrelhouse is hosting a Bantam Night fundraiser and 12% of that evening's sales will be donated to OHI.

Tell your friends and help us to spread the word and make plans to join us for a fun evening out to mingle with those who love our neighborhood!

Wigle Whiskey Barrelhouse is located at 1055 Spring Garden Avenue, Pittsburgh 15212.

## THE OHI BOARD

**Dorrie Smith**  
*President*

**Leslee Schaffer**  
*Treasurer*

**Marlee Gallagher**  
*Vice President*

**Jeff Wagner**  
*Secretary*

**Walt Nalducci**  
*Northside Leadership  
Conference*

**Chris Cruz**  
*Communications &  
Marketing*

**Jasun Stanton**  
*Public Safety*

**Matthias Sundberg**  
*Business District*

**Doug Deckert**  
*Dinner Events  
Assistant Treasurer*

**Michael Payne**  
*Business District*

**Jason Wrona**

**Glenn Miller**  
*Assistant Secretary*

### OHI Board Contact Info:

Phone: 412-736-2489 Email: [ohipgh@gmail.com](mailto:ohipgh@gmail.com) Website: [www.observatoryhill.net](http://www.observatoryhill.net)

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# OHI Journal

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Pittsburgh, PA

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

Mail to: Observatory Hill Incorporated.  
P.O. Box 100247, Pittsburgh, PA 15233  
412-736-2489

Members Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

### Membership Contribution: (check one)

\_\_\_ \$5 \_\_\_ \$10 \_\_\_ \$15 \_\_\_ \$50 \_\_\_ Other  
(Business Membership)

\_\_\_ Please include me on the email list that  
provides information on local activities  
and important community notices.

\_\_\_ Do not include me on any email  
notifications.

**Make Checks Payable to: Observatory Hill Inc.**