

Newsletter of the Center City Residents' Association

Vol. 12 No. 4 Winter 2021

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## It's Academic

# Students Creating Music, Countering Violence

By Bonnie Eisenfeld



Chris Kendig

Rock to the Future's Music for All Ball at the Mandell Theater, April 2019.

In September the District Attorney's office gave a grant of \$50,000 to *Rock to the Future* <https://rocktothefuture.org/>, a nonprofit community organization, offering music programs to children and teens in grades 3 to 12. This grant was one of several the city gave this year to community organizations in the effort to reduce gun violence.

Founded and operated by Jessica Craft, Rock to the Future's program options include in-school, after-school, summer, and virtual classes and workshops, at no cost to the students. Located at safe locations in under-resourced areas, the organization provides instruments and supplies to all participants, including beginners, and some of its programs offer academic support, meals, and transportation.

"When I found out Rock to the Future was here," one student says, "I was really happy. It was honestly like my life has been saved..."

Craft is convinced that her organization helps children and teens avoid situations involving gun violence. "There is a lot of interest in our programs," she says. "Our students create original music around themes like bullying and gun violence. They collaborate, build positive relationships with peers, and learn communication and conflict-resolution skills."

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During the 2020/2021 school year, Rock to the Future served 523 students virtually, and delivered more than 200 instruments to students' homes. This school year, the organization has returned to in-person programs while also continuing virtual programs.

Since its founding in 2010, Rock to the Future has benefited thousands of young people. In past years, students in the program have performed at the Kimmel Center and other locations in the city. You can find some of their music on YouTube.

The D.A.'s grant represents about eight percent of Rock to the Future's budget. Corporations, small businesses, community partners, and foundations also provide support. Increased grants and donations will allow the organization to accept more students, to expand its locations, and to offer paid internships to high school students.

Craft's first grant in 2010 was for \$15,000, from Women for Social Innovation, formerly a Center City giving circle consisting of about 20 women. The group's mission was to help emerging social entrepreneurs start innovative programs to improve the lives of children, women, and families in the Philadelphia area.

## Town Square

# Granny Peace Brigade Promotes Peace Globally and Locally

By Bonnie Eisenfeld

Granny Peace Brigade Philadelphia, led by Gerry Schneeberg, Jean Haskell, Joan Kosloff, and Helen Evelev, celebrated Peace Day Philly and the International Day of Peace, Tuesday, September 21, by distributing questionnaires to passersby at Rittenhouse Square.

One hundred people answered two questions: What is something you would do to bring peace to the world? What is something you would do to end the gun violence and bring peace to our city?

The most frequent responses to the question about peace in the world were to meditate, pray, be kind to others, and have empathy for others. "Perhaps these comments," Haskell says, "reflect the ways in which people deal with stress about war, rather than actions to end war." One person suggested people-to-people conversations across the lines that divide them.

Making guns and firearms illegal and banning the sale of ammunition were the most frequent responses to the question about bringing peace to the city. Other responses included better schools, an end to poverty, and conversations with young people and community leaders in high-risk neighborhoods to help create solutions.

Some responses that spanned both the city and the world included: welcome refugees, stop the military complex, and respect other people and countries.

[Granny Peace Brigade Philadelphia](#), whose mission is to make a safe and peaceful world for all children and grandchildren, recently celebrated its 15th birthday. What keeps Haskell from

getting discouraged? She says she has persisted in peace activities with the group all those years because "I get very angry, sometimes outraged, at all the stupid, inhumane, cruel things that people make happen in the world—especially war, gun violence, climate change, poor-quality education, and poverty—and I don't like to sit and fume, so I decide I have to do something—and that is motivating."

She added that Grannies are "strong, supportive women who motivate each other, like each other, and have fun working together at meetings and marches. Sometimes even a lot of laughs—and that's priceless!"

Facebook: [GrannyPeaceBrigadePhiladelphia](#)



The Granny Peace Brigade celebrated Peace Day Philly and the International Day of Peace at Rittenhouse Square, along with the Philadelphia Ethical Society.

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## President's Letter

# Gearing up for Winter, Busier than Ever

By Rick Gross, CCRA President

The greening of the neighborhood continues in full force. CCRA has instituted several measures to ensure good governance of the Schuylkill River Community Garden. These include formally segregating the garden's funds from CCRA's general funds, and working more closely together to ensure the garden's continued success.

The post-Ida floods ruined the end of the garden season, but extensive soil testing revealed no long-term damage. We are all looking forward to a productive season next year. Personally, I love seeing the gardeners working in their plots and watching nature do what it does best, as the plants prosper, with a fair amount of human assistance!

The neighborhood Pennsylvania Horticultural Society Tree Tenders group is now formally under CCRA's stewardship, and you will see tree planters in CCRA t-shirts as soon as they can be ordered. We are also promoting green stormwater infrastructure to property owners through advocacy, education, and the efforts of our Zoning Committee. It's a long-term effort but will surely pay off in a greener and healthier neighborhood for all. Kudos to Susan Kahn and her hardworking task force for leading this effort.

Other initiatives this year center on bringing Philadelphia's trash-collection efforts into the modern era, and making diversity, equity and inclusion a more important focus of our activity. Both will be explored at our December board meeting. We are moving back to in-person meetings, which take place the second Tuesday of the month at the Brandywine Bex space at 2100 Market Street in Commerce Square. The meetings are open to members and you are invited to see the Board in action.

We continue to work towards restoring the vitality of our neighborhood and the city beyond. We co-authored a letter to our political leadership with the Center City Coalition to insist on a greater effort towards public safety while neighborhood businesses and restaurants rebuild post-COVID. The pandemic caused untold suffering for many people and their families. The city also suffered a devastating loss of vitality, both commercial and cultural, and is just now reemerging.

It is heartwarming to see Rittenhouse and Fidler Squares once again filled with people enjoying both the outdoors and each other. The Schuylkill River Trail is crowded with walkers, runners, bikers and dogs (leashed, we hope, except in the dog park), and flocks of geese can be seen every morning. I saw a red-tailed hawk up close along the trail recently and it was a great reminder that we share this space with a multitude of birds and animals, which have learned to live with humans returning to their habitats. Look forward to the Spring return of the Peregrine falcons that live above Rittenhouse Square as yet another marker of life as we used to know it.

Finally, we are thinking hard about the proposal to make outdoor dining ("Streeteries") a permanent fixture in the neighborhood and the city at large. Our members have been very supportive of this approach to helping the restaurant community weather the pandemic. But making these venues permanent raises other concerns. Can we mandate architectural standards to enhance the beauty of the neighborhood while accommodating the proprietors? Can we provide for safe and unhindered public access for emergency vehicles and traffic at the same time? Can we balance the loss of parking spaces against the utility and enjoyment of outdoor dining? These questions require careful thought and debate.

As legislation to make the facilities permanent is considered, I have asked Tim Kerner, a renowned architect and planner in the neighborhood, to address the



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design concerns with Councilmember Allan Domb. Council President Darrell Clarke has proposed a six-month extension of the status quo in order to try to get this right. We are in the middle of the discussion and would appreciate member input as it continues.

Almost six months into my term, I am amazed by the many issues that come across my desk (computer) every day, and the depth of involvement of our members in helping us to think about them. We are an articulate and active group of almost 1300 people. It is very rewarding to me to sit at the helm.

Regards,

*Rick Gross*

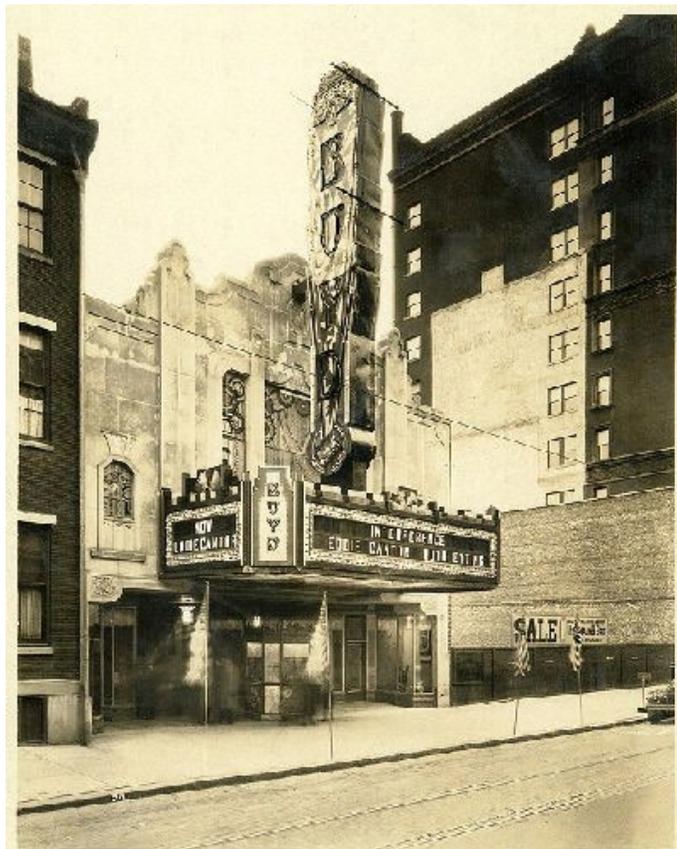
## Bricks & Mortar

# New Construction—Nothing New Here

By Bill Double

The four buildings pictured here evoke memories of development efforts in their Rittenhouse Square neighborhood dating back to 1851: The Harper (completed in 2019), 1920 Chestnut Street (1896), The Laurel (2022 projected), and The Republic (1929).

**The Harper**, a 24-story luxury apartment building, at 112 S. 19th Street, is named for James Harper, an early Rittenhouse Square developer and congressman. His four-story residence, with its distinctive white marble portico, was one of the earliest large houses on the Square, erected in 1840 at 1811 Walnut St.



*The Boyd Theatre, 1908-1910 Chestnut St., opened on Christmas day 1928 with the feature film Interference, starring Eddie Cantor. (Courtesy of Irvin R. Glazer Theater Collection, Athenaeum of Philadelphia)*

Developed by Pearl Properties, The Harper rises on a site occupied by two historic structures in succession: the Aldine Hotel and later the Boyd Theatre. Listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places, the Boyd, at 1910 Chestnut, opened in 1928, was the last survivor of the grand movie houses that once graced Center City Philadelphia.

Concert promoter Live Nation acquired the 2,400-seat Boyd (last known as the Sameric) in 2005 for \$13 million, intending to transform the movie house into an events venue. However, citing a lack of support from the city or state, Live Nation filed a “financial hardship” claim with the Philadelphia Historical Commission in 2014. The company asserted no feasible reuse for the Boyd existed.

Despite vigorous opposition from the Friends of the Boyd and fellow preservationists, the commission approved demolition of the theater. It protected only the Boyd’s Chestnut Street façade. So-called “façadectomies,” an uneasy compromise between developers and preservationists, are not uncommon in Philadelphia.

Amid much-touted plans to construct a modern multiplex on the site, Live Nation sold the theater to Pearl Properties for a reported \$4.5 million. Pearl already owned the properties between the Boyd and 19th Street, where it had planned to erect an apartment high-rise.

Acquisition of the Boyd site greatly enlarged the project’s footprint. The following year Pearl proposed an apartment tower stretching eastward to 19th and south to Sansom, subsuming the Boyd’s auditorium.

Pearl’s original plan called for a 32-story, 250-unit structure wrapped in red, white and gray panels, paralleling Chestnut Street. Neighbors voiced concerns regarding the building’s size and design. Rather than challenge the developer’s plan before city regulators, they took a novel approach. A “stakeholders” group, primarily representing nearby condo and apartment complexes, raised money to hire their own architect to propose design changes.

Led by Rick Gross (now CCRA President) and their architect Cecil Baker, the stakeholders collaborated with Pearl Properties to effect significant changes, including reducing the building’s height, changing its orientation, and relocating the ramp to its underground garage from Sansom to 20th Street.

As constructed, the Harper includes two stories of commercial space on its Sansom Street side. Pearl Properties also agreed to preserve the Boyd's Chestnut Street lobby for commercial use. This ornate appendage remains vacant, after a proposed "elegant Spanish restaurant" failed to materialize. A recent proposal would transform the space into a tech-based sports-entertainment center and restaurant.

The architectural gem known today as **1920 Chestnut Street** was erected in 1896 as an addition to a popular hotel of the era. Designed by Addison Hutton, "the Quaker architect," the 10-story Aldine Hotel western annex was the tallest building on its block when it opened. Rates for its 125 guest rooms ranged from \$3.50 to \$5 a night. Hutton's numerous local commissions include the former Philadelphia Savings Fund Society headquarters at 700 Walnut Street and the Arch Street Methodist Church at Broad and Arch.

The Aldine's main building, at 1910-1922 Chestnut, opened in 1877, but its origin can be traced back to 1851, when Dr. James Rush and his wife, Phoebe (née Ridgeway), moved into their new four-story brick mansion, complete with carriage house and stables, on the site.

An amateur architect and the seventh son of Dr. Benjamin Rush, noted physician and signer of the Declaration of Independence, James designed his own house. He earned a medical degree at the University of Pennsylvania, and practiced medicine for a time. His attention later turned to research and writing.

*The Philosophy of the Human Voice*, his classic work published in 1827, offered a scientific notation system for describing speech sounds. He also served for a time as Treasurer of the United States Mint. Mrs. Rush, a prominent socialite and fashionista of her day, hailed from a New Jersey family of "unlimited means," as the *Philadelphia Times* observed.

After the Rushes' deaths, their mansion sat vacant before being sold at auction in 1875. The buyer, Philadelphia publisher Joshua B. Lippincott, converted the mansion into a hotel. He fully renovated the structure, adding four stories while retaining the Rushes' "pleasant rear gardens." The *Philadelphia Inquirer* placed the cost of his renovation at \$500,000 (\$13 million today). Following its opening in 1877, the Aldine soon became one of the city's premier hotels.

However, a critical flaw in Lippincott's splendid makeover gradually emerged. It seems that Dr. Rush's original support walls, which had been retained, proved too weak to sustain the weight of Lippincott's additional four stories. Over time the walls began to fail, necessitating a major renovation of the hotel, according to architect Hutton, who oversaw the project.

Completed in 1895, the rebuilt hotel sported a steel frame, a new "grand dining-room" and modern lighting, elevators and fire escapes. The hotel's inventory of 164 guest rooms increased to 289 with the completion of its 10-story addition the following year.

The original Aldine Hotel building was demolished c.1927, making way for construction of the Boyd Theatre. Unlike recent efforts to preserve its successor, there is no evidence of a campaign to "Save the Aldine." Surely, a few history buffs must have mourned the hotel's demise.

Today the Aldine's erstwhile west wing, 1920 Chestnut Street, houses high-end condominiums and the restaurant Veda at street level.

**The Laurel**, a 49-story residential tower at 1911 Walnut Street, is scheduled for completion in 2022. Curiously, this site on Rittenhouse Square, one of the city's most affluent residential areas, had remained vacant for some 20 years, save for a Philadelphia Horticultural Society pop-up garden in 2012. The tortuous route to its redevelopment began in 1994 when a fire severely damaged structures, including the Eric Rittenhouse Theaters, in the 1900 block of Walnut.

Once the site was cleared, the Philadelphia Parking Authority (PPA) purchased and enlarged it by acquiring several adjacent Sansom Street properties, including the Rittenhouse Coffee Shop, the Warwick Apartments and the Oliver H. Bair Funeral Home, all designated as historically significant. However, the PPA, arguing that its project was in the public interest, won Historical Commission approval to demolish all three buildings. Residents of the apartments were given 30 days to vacate.

The PPA had big plans for the site: namely, a six-story, 500+-space parking facility, a new movie theater, a restaurant and shops. City leaders then tended to view increased parking as essential to economic growth.

Their enthusiasm for the project was not universal. "Why would anyone—particularly a public agency—do such a thing to one of the loveliest urban parks in America?" lamented the *Inquirer's* Inga Saffron.\* Critics objected to the proposed demolition of the three historic Sansom Street buildings and the volume of traffic a massive carpark would invite. They contended that the site should be used to increase the area's residential density rather than to attract commuters.

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Bill Double

Four buildings (from left to right): The Harper (completed in 2019), 1920 Chestnut Street (1896), The Laurel (2022 projected), and The Republic (1929).

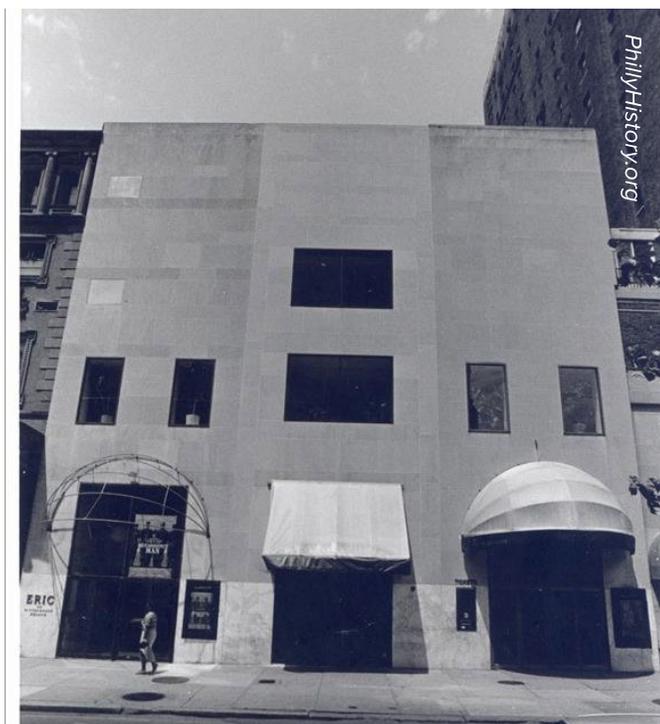
Common Pleas Court tossed a wrench into the PPA's plans in 2004. It ruled that demolition of the buildings, although approved by the Historical Commission, was "not in the public interest." Twenty-seven months later the PPA board voted to sell the site.

A sale was completed in 2007 to Castleway Properties of Ireland for \$36.7 million. However, that developer's proposal to construct a high-rise building on the site failed to materialize. In 2015 Nashville-based developer Southern Land Co. purchased the site for \$30 million. Southern Land proposed a 55-story residential building facing Walnut Street, with a two-story commercial structure along the Sansom Street side of the site.

Southern Land filed an "economic hardship" claim with the Historical Commission, asserting that preservation of the three protected Sansom Street properties was infeasible. The developer also entered into negotiations with the resident stakeholders' group described above. As a result, several modifications to the initial design were agreed upon: reducing the Laurel's height to 49 stories and size by 100 units; redesigning its three-story pedestal to harmonize with neighboring structures; reconfiguring its Walnut Street entrance; and moving its underground parking ramp from Sansom to Moravian.

Southern Land also pledged to preserve the Rittenhouse Coffee Shop and Warwick Apartments but not the funeral home. These structures would be restored to accommodate 35 units of affordable housing. Southern Land promised a \$2 million contribution to Project HOME to administer rental of these units. In return, the developer claimed a "density bonus" under city law.

Following its agreement with the stakeholders, Southern Land narrowed its "hardship" request to demolish the three Sansom Street properties, to include only the Oliver H. Bair Funeral Home. The Historical Commission approved this request. However, the commission approved the developer's subsequent request to also demolish the Rittenhouse Coffee Shop, with the proviso that its façade be reconstructed. Another façadectomy.



Eric Rittenhouse Square Theaters, 1907-1911 Walnut St.

The Laurel will contain 185 apartments and 64 condos, with prices starting at \$2.5 million, to \$25 million for a top-floor penthouse.

**The Republic**, at the southeast corner of 20th and Chestnut Streets, was constructed as the headquarters of the Aldine Trust Company. When erected in 1929, the 20-story tower was hailed as a symbol of the company's success. Aldine had prospered since its founding in 1906, absorbing two other trust companies along the way. The ground floor was reserved for banking, with professional offices above.

A special feature of the new headquarters, the *Inquirer* reported, was a lounge for its "feminine clients and their friends." The company would be relocating from 2020 Chestnut, dubbed the "mother of trust companies," which had earlier housed the Girard Trust Co. and other banks. Although the Aldine would be moving eastward, it proudly proclaimed itself a leader in the "trend westward." The Aldine assured depositors its new vault—"nearly a half million pounds of steel based on solid concrete"—was second to none in safety and efficiency.

Alas, this robust repository could not protect the bank's customers from impending disaster. The stock market crash of 1929 and the ensuing dissolution of Bankers Trust Co. triggered a devastating "run" by Aldine Trust depositors. On December 9, 1930, the bank closed, pledging to fully reimburse all depositors. It is unclear if the bank ultimately honored that pledge.

The Aldine Trust Company itself was later absorbed by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The building continued to house professional offices before being converted to apartments in 2003. Today, in addition to The Republic Apartments, it is home to Jane G's Dim Sum House.

*\*Editor's note: CCRA was founded in 1947 initially to protest the proposed demolition of Rittenhouse Square for the installation of an underground parking garage. The more things change...*



THE ALDINE HOTEL.

*The Aldine Hotel and its recently completed 10-story annex—now known as 1920 Chestnut Street—in 1896. (From the Guidebook to the principal places of interest in Philadelphia, J.B. Lippincott, 1896, HathiTrust Digital Library)*

## Spotlight On...

# Remembering Babette Josephs, Progressive Legislator, Activist, and Friend

By Bonnie Eisenfeld

After 28 years of outstanding service as our Representative in the Pennsylvania House, Babette Josephs passed away on Friday, August 27. The next day, U.S. Representative Dwight Evans (D-PA, 3rd District), posted this tribute online: "Sincerest condolences to family and friends of Rep. Babette Josephs. My former colleague was a fierce advocate for her district and those too often forgotten. She stood up and spoke out for those who could not. A liberal lion who feared no one. Rest in Power."

In the 1970s, Babette Josephs and I became friends when she was head of the local chapter of the National Women's Political Caucus, and I was head of the Women's Rights Committee of the League of Women Voters of Philadelphia. It was an exciting time for women's rights. Our two organizations, among others, helped to pass the Pennsylvania Equal Rights Amendment in 1971 and the Equal Credit Opportunity Act, a federal law, in 1974.

During *International Women's Year* in 1975, we were members of the Women's Action Alliance, a coalition of women's organizations supporting the *National Women's Agenda*. Joined by 94 women's groups and labor unions, the Agenda advocated for fair representation in government, an end to racial and cultural stereotyping, recognition of working women, recognition of homemakers as workers, women's bodily autonomy and integrity, equal credit for women, and support for women in poverty and women affected by the criminal justice system.

Women's organizations encouraged all women to attend meetings and conferences, write and call government officials and legislators, sign petitions, lobby, march, and demonstrate. And yet, we realized more was needed. At that time there were few women elected to office. Women who could afford to were not even contributing to campaigns.

Ultimately, we all realized that the path to women's rights required having more women in government. So, jointly, our two organizations ran seminars on *Women in Politics*, featuring local female elected officials, campaign managers, and fundraisers as speakers. These events were well attended, and inspired many women to run for office and to get involved in political campaigns.

Meanwhile, Ms. Josephs had enrolled in Rutgers-Camden School of Law; she earned her law degree in 1976, and became a practicing attorney specializing in women's issues. She first entered politics as our local Committeeperson. She took this job seriously: Before each election, she thoroughly researched the candidates and ballot questions, and sent out letters to her constituents detailing her recommendations and reasoning. Even after she was no longer our committeeperson, I would ask for her opinions.

In 1985, Ms. Josephs was elected to the Pennsylvania House of Representatives for the 182nd district, and had a brilliant and successful career not only representing our neighborhood but also standing up for the rights of women, children, and LGBTQ people, voting rights, abortion rights, quality public education, racial equality, energy efficiency, and services for seniors and low-income people.

In October 2012, Ms. Josephs was honored by Americans for Democratic Action, the National Organization for Women, and the American Civil Liberties Union. The longest-serving woman in the Pennsylvania House, she retired at the end of 2012, after 14 consecutive terms over 28 years. In April 2016, the Center City Residents' Association presented her with the Lenora Berson Community Service Award.

Her *Philadelphia Inquirer* obituary, published September 5, contains glowing tributes from her family and from former Governor Ed Rendell, Mayor Jim Kenney, and former U.S. Representative Bob Brady. <https://www.inquirer.com/obituaries/babette-josephs-obituary-philadelphia-politics-20210902.html>

To the Honorable Babette Josephs: Thank you for your service!  
We will miss you.



PA Representative Babette Josephs.

## Our Greene Countrie Towne

# Victory for the Environment PennEast Pipeline Canceled

By Joseph Minott, Esq.

Clean Air Council celebrated a major victory this Fall. After seven years of grassroots activism and building opposition to more fracking in Pennsylvania—the PennEast Pipeline is canceled!

PennEast Pipeline Company LLC announced it will end development of its approximately 120-mile-long, 36-inch-diameter pipeline, which was planned to transport fracked gas from Luzerne County, Pennsylvania, to Mercer County, New Jersey. The Council congratulates the community members and environmental organizations that raised awareness and fought for the environment and the health and welfare of nearby residents.

The PennEast Pipeline was slated to be built in the Poconos, through some of the most beautiful and valuable natural resources in the Delaware River Watershed. The pipeline would have crossed 88 waterways, as well as numerous wetlands, parks, and conservation easements. In Pennsylvania, it would have plowed through some of the state's most beloved conservation and recreation areas, including Hickory Run State Park, Beltzville Lake, and Weiser State Forest. The construction could have caused contamination of waterways and drinking wells, as well as decreased property values, just as the Mariner East pipelines did.

The Council invested time, community organizing, expertise, and legal resources into opposing PennEast Pipeline from its inception. The Council called on the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) and Governor Wolf to reject PennEast's application.

The Council also urged the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to hold meaningful public comment periods to ensure that affected community members would understand the impact of the proposed pipeline. The Council pushed for a public comment period that would allow sufficient time for residents and others to raise their concerns about this dangerous project.

The Council participated in a scientific study by Cadmus Group to highlight the negative costs of the PennEast and Mariner East 2 pipelines on the Delaware River Basin's ecosystems, economies, and population. The Council developed and submitted extensive technical and legal comments demonstrating to DEP the flaws in the proposed project permits. The Council attorneys sent federal agencies detailed comments explaining how the project was unneeded and harmful. Our members contributed greatly by submitting their own comments to these decision makers.

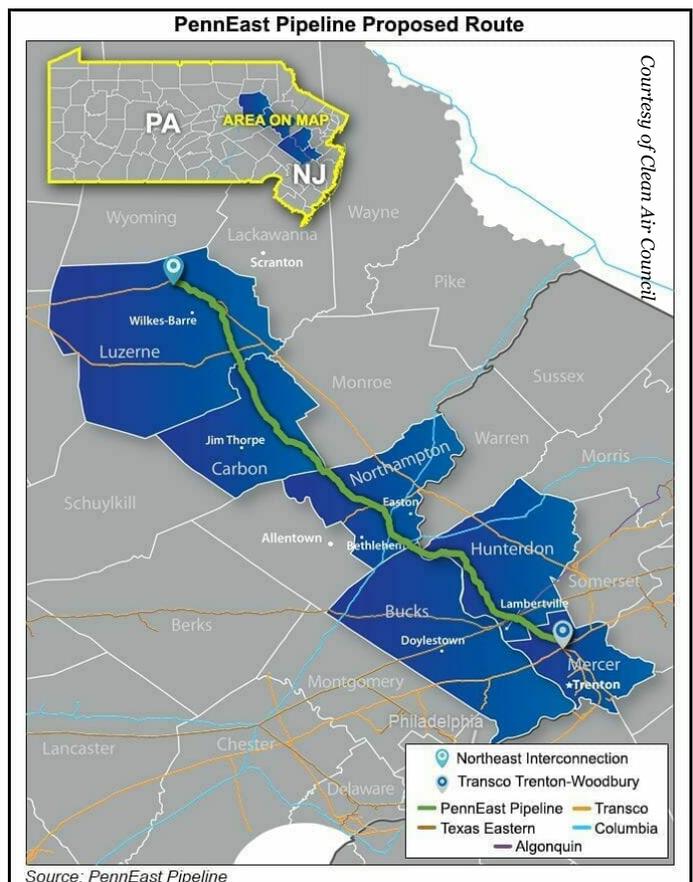
While the announcement is cause for celebration, lingering concerns remain as PennEast continues to make somewhat contradictory public statements about the possibility of moving ahead with the project in Pennsylvania only, posing an ongoing threat to conservation and recreation areas as well as streams, wetlands, and drinking water.

That is why Clean Air Council continues to work closely with our partners in Save Carbon County, New Jersey Conservation Foundation, Delaware Riverkeeper Network, Concerned Citizens Against the Pipeline, and HALT to ensure that this victory is final and permanent.

There are four additional pipeline projects we are actively fighting, and supporting communities in their opposition, but pipeline fights are costly and can take years to win. Please consider supporting these environmental battles.

<https://cleanair.org/>

Joseph Minott, Esq., is Executive Director & Chief Counsel, Clean Air Council.



PennEast Pipeline would have transported fracked gas from Luzerne County, PA, to Mercer County, NJ.

## Our Greene Countrie Towne

# Climate Heroes That Offer Hope

By Bonnie Eisenfeld

Headlines about the climate crisis are mostly negative, hopeless, and depressing. Now and then, some rays of sunshine appear behind the clouds. People are working on solutions! Civilization can be saved! Here are some positive stories reported in *The Guardian (U.K.)* and *Science Daily*.

Two companies have created and are testing carbon capture in Iceland. “The world’s largest plant designed to suck carbon dioxide out of the air and turn it into rock has started running in Iceland. The companies behind the project are Switzerland’s Climeworks and Iceland’s Carbfix.” (*The Guardian*, 9/8/21.)

Windfarm operators in China are leading an offshore windfarm boom, and installations are expected to double this year.

Media activists are targeting “greenwashing ads,” million-dollar propaganda campaigns by the fossil-fuel industry. “Oil companies are trying to act as if they’re on top of the problem, they’re dealing with it, they care, so that they can avoid the type of public pressure and ultimately political regulation that would truly force them to change at the pace that we need them to.” (*The Guardian*, 9/11/21.)

*Fossil Free Media* wants ad agencies to break ties with fossil-fuel companies, and more than 100 PR and ad agencies have signed a pledge to stop working with fossil-fuel clients.

Publishers, editors and writers at over 200 health journals worldwide simultaneously published an editorial “calling on

world leaders to take emergency action to limit global temperature increases, halt the destruction of nature, and protect health.”

International government leaders who signed the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement can be credited with the scrapping of three-quarters of plans for new coal power plants in 44 countries.

Leaders of 26 states and cities in the U.S. have filed lawsuits against oil and gas companies for environmental damage caused by floods and other disasters, claiming that fossil-fuel company executives lied and suppressed warnings from their own scientists.

Research analysts at KPMG have validated data and predictions reported in a 1972 MIT study, *The Limits to Growth*, published by Club of Rome, presenting “various outcomes for what could happen when the growth of industrial civilization collided with finite resources.” Gaya Herrington, who holds a degree in econometrics from the University of Amsterdam and a master’s in sustainability from Harvard, said the data are still correct, and there is hope. “The key finding of my study is that we still have a choice to align with a scenario that does not end in collapse. With innovation in business, along with new developments by governments and civil society, continuing to update the model provides another perspective on the challenges and opportunities we have to create a more sustainable world.”

*For balanced global climate crisis news, subscribe to The Guardian online. Free; donation requested.*

## Our Greene Countrie Towne

# CCRA Thanks Donors to Clean, Safe, and Green Appeal

*CCRA would like to thank everyone who contributed to the Clean, Safe, and Green Spring Appeal. We would like to extend our gratitude to those who contributed over \$250.*

Paul Anderson  
Irene Baker  
Laurie Bernstein & Robert Weinberg  
Lloyd Brotman  
Louis & Nina Eni  
Adrienne Frangakis & Marc Redemann  
Nancy Gilboay & Philip Harvey  
William & Joan Goldstein  
Margaret Harris & Phil Straus  
Frederick Kroon  
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Betsy & Vincent Salandria  
Eric Schaefer  
Steven & Barbara Shapiro  
Samuel & Rosanne Spear  
Richard Speizman & Faith Horowitz  
Dane & Joan Wells  
Linda Zamis & George Trotman  
Benjamin Zuckerman

# Art Is Alive in Rittenhouse Square

By Bonnie Eisenfeld

The last art exhibition I saw just before the pandemic started was a show at Twenty-Two Gallery (sadly, now closed). I remembered two paintings in that exhibition by Sharon Strine: a happy pregnant bride with groom on the subway, and a father sweetly holding his small daughter in his arms on the subway.

On a sunny Saturday in September, I strolled around the Square, looking at the artwork at the Rittenhouse Fine Arts Show, which opened after missing a year. At a booth on the southwest corner of Rittenhouse Square, I immediately recognized Strine's artwork and saw that both of those memorable paintings were on display.

We chatted for a while, and she told me that a man had just bought the painting of father and daughter on the subway, a reflection of himself and his daughter. Strine posted on

Facebook, "I'll admit I have favorites among my paintings. There are some that I just can't wait to see who they go home with. *Ride Home*, *#Fathers Matter*, has the BEST home. I'm joyful!"

I was happy to know that art in our neighborhood is now being seen and enjoyed!

Apart from her work as an artist, Sharon Strine works in New York City as a marketing communications consultant, leading the fulfillment of Taproot Foundation service grants to nonprofit organizations. Her representational, figurative paintings are displayed in galleries and juried exhibitions.

<http://www.sharonstrineart.com/artwork>



Subway Bride



Ride Home, #FathersMatter

## Town Square

*For holiday gifts...*

# Ten Organizations Helping People Survive

*By Bonnie Eisenfeld*

Here are 10 nonprofit organizations, local and global, helping people survive by meeting basic needs such as food, shelter, medical care, and more. You can help these organizations help people in need by sending a donation this holiday season.

Help refugees and immigrants: [HIAS Pennsylvania](#) and [Nationalities Service Center](#)

Help seniors, children, and families experiencing food insufficiency: [Philabundance](#)

Help people experiencing homelessness get meals, health care, housing, and other services: [Broad Street Ministry](#) and [Project Home](#)

Help prevent evictions: [Community Legal Services](#) and [Philadelphia Interfaith Hospitality Network](#)

Help provide quality health care to the poorest people around the world: [Partners in Health](#). Help provide food to disaster victims and helpers: [World Central Kitchen](#)

Help provide clean water, shelter, and health care to refugees and displaced people: [International Rescue Committee](#)

## Town Square

# Help People Experiencing Homelessness this Holiday Season Bethesda Project Seeks Support for Essential Programs in Philadelphia

*By Sarah Carter*

This holiday season, people across the area can assist individuals experiencing homelessness at Bethesda Project. With the pandemic requiring social distancing and prohibiting visitors on site, Bethesda Project is asking the public for their help building “that holiday feeling” at their 16 sites, through volunteer opportunities or donating winter and holiday essentials.

“For many of our guests and residents, the holidays can be difficult or lonely, especially as the pandemic continues,” says Volunteer and Community Life Manager Jeffrey Isaacson. While many guests and residents don’t have the means or ability to travel to see their families due to COVID, people in the local area can help make guests’ and residents’ seasons bright, and help give them a holiday to look forward to.

“People in our community really make a difference during the holidays and spread the spirit of the season – compassion, joy, and community – in small ways that make a huge impact,” says Isaacson. “Community members can help by preparing and dropping off meals, helping provide small, but meaningful, holiday gifts, like backpacks and gift cards that guests and residents use throughout the year, or even sending holiday cards to our shelters and residences.”

Community members can also assist through outdoor and/or virtual volunteer opportunities that boost guests’ and residents’ holiday spirits. These opportunities can be coordinated by large groups (such as schools, churches, or companies) or individuals.

Individuals can help make a difference for guests and residents this holiday season in several ways, including:

- Dropping off food (home-cooked or sponsored from a restaurant) throughout the season, including Christmas Day, and New Year’s Day
- Making holiday treats (cookies, candy canes, etc.) or holiday decorations. One fun remote volunteer activity is to create cookie-decorating kits for sites to decorate cookies together
- Sending holiday cards to guests and residents (this is a great group activity!)
- Hosting a virtual or in-person (outdoor) festive event with guests and residents (such as caroling, hosting an outdoor hot cocoa-and-cookies event, etc.)
- Purchasing items for guests’ and residents’ holiday gifts, such as \$25 gift cards (for retailers like Target, Walmart, Wawa, CVS, etc.), backpacks, and/or thermals/long-johns
- Individuals can also purchase items on our 2021 Amazon Holiday [Wishlist](#).

For questions or to arrange a donation drop-off, please contact [communitylife@bethesdaproject.org](mailto:communitylife@bethesdaproject.org). For more information, please visit: <https://www.bethesdaproject.org/how-to-help-during-the-holidays>

*Since 1979, Bethesda Project has been providing emergency shelter, housing, and supportive services for thousands of individuals experiencing homelessness in Philadelphia. For more information, please visit [www.bethesdaproject.org](http://www.bethesdaproject.org).*

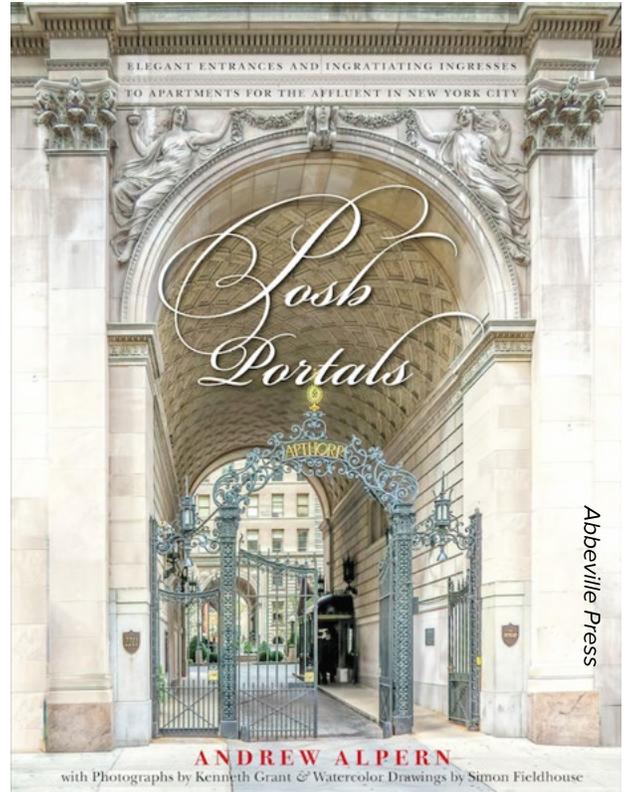
## Luxury Access: New York's Ornate Apartment Architecture

By Bonnie Eisenfeld

If you love the high-rise buildings around Rittenhouse Square, especially those built in the early 1900s, you will enjoy *Posh Portals: Elegant Entrances and Ingratiating Ingresses to Apartments for the Affluent in New York City*. Author Andrew Alpern is an architectural historian, architect, and attorney with expertise in historic apartment houses in New York.

The book covers 140 20th century New York luxury high-rise buildings, each with its own two-page spread featuring gorgeous four-color photographs by Kenneth Grant and watercolor drawings by Simon Fieldhouse, illustrating the building, its elegant entrances, and its ornamental architectural details. Be sure to notice the little amusing elements in some of the drawings. For each building, the author writes a short description including its architect, developer, style, history, and other characteristics. Maps are included at the front and back of the book.

Many of the buildings originally had unusual amenities: For example, The Paterno, 440 Riverside Drive, had a chauffeurs' lounge; One Sutton Place had an underground tennis court and a private yacht landing on the East River; 10 Grace Square had a *porte-cochere* from which one could drive in to one of the three elevator lobbies and park; and The Graham, 22 E. 89th Street, originally had a private dining room on the ground floor but no kitchens in its apartments.



Posh Portals book cover.

## Philadelphia Named One of the World's Greatest Places

By Bonnie Eisenfeld

*Time* magazine, in July, listed Philadelphia as one of the World's Greatest Places, among 100 unique destinations—including countries, regions, cities and towns—offering new and exciting experiences.

Two new culinary ventures that attracted attention are Chef Omar Tate's Honeysuckle Community Center in West

Philadelphia, comprising a supper club, grocery shop, meat market, and café library; and Chef Ange Branca's Kampar Kitchen in the Bok Building in South Philadelphia, featuring takeout meals by startup chefs specializing in a variety of ethnic cuisines. Frank Gehry's interior redesign of the Philadelphia Art Museum is cited as a new architectural attraction.

# Wake-Up Call: Climate Crisis Comes to Center City

By Bonnie Eisenfeld

On the evening of Wednesday, September 1, many of us got emergency alerts on our phones warning that Hurricane Ida was bringing tornadoes, high winds, and flooding to the Philadelphia area. Rain was already pouring down in buckets.

In my apartment lobby, one of my neighbors was trying to take her dog for a walk, but he didn't want to go out in the rain. Another neighbor was worried about tornadoes, and texted me to ask if she should shelter in the basement of our building. I told her no: KYW news radio reported that the tornadoes were not coming to Center City.

As it turned out, the Schuylkill River had overflowed its banks onto residential streets. Going down to the basement for shelter would not have been a smart move.

Pictures were posted on Twitter, including one ironic photo by KYW news anchor Denise Nakano, of flooding in front of a building at 24th and Chestnut, with a mural of the Schuylkill River on it. The *Philadelphia Inquirer* published staff writer Diane Mastrull's photo of Center City artist Ed Bronstein walking his dog near the flooded dog run at Schuylkill River Park.

Two Center City residents sent me emails describing their walks. "At 8 a.m.," Nancy Dilcher reported, "I walked on Sansom Street from 21st to 23rd Street towards the Schuylkill River. The water had reached 24th St. All cars at the parking lot between 24th and 25th St. were under water. It was shocking to see how the Schuylkill River had expanded out of its banks so quickly."

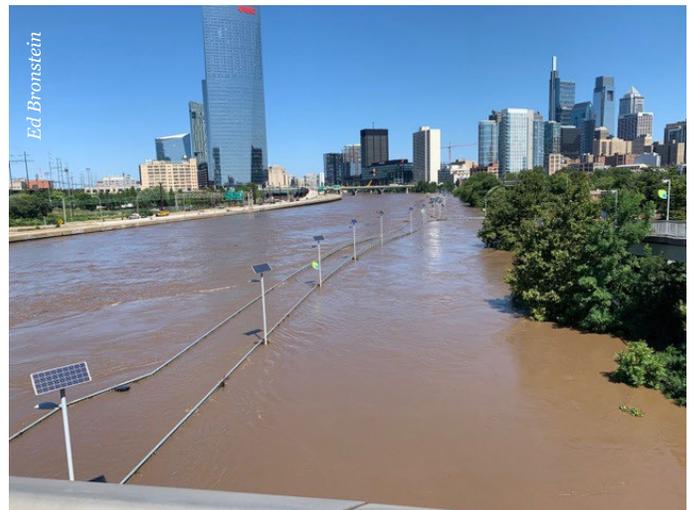
"This morning, after marveling at the canal that was once the Vine Street Expressway," Nancy Heller wrote, "I tried to walk over and see how Schuylkill River Park had fared, but of course I couldn't get anywhere near it. Thought I'd stop in at the new Giant [supermarket at 23rd and Arch], but couldn't get there either; saw that Trader Joe's parking lot was blocked off but was able to sneak in anyway... (We were out of lemons—hardly an emergency, but it felt good to do something semi-normal.) Once again, I feel very lucky, but what a weird night/day! The weather's so lovely, today, it seems almost immoral to enjoy it...."

All day, the Rittenhouse Square area was serene, sunny, and cool. I ran into tour director Ellen Kay Coleman, who had arrived at Philadelphia airport during the storm after circling for an hour—and was glad to be alive.

On Facebook, a man reported that he was trapped in his apartment because the basement was flooded and the elevators were out of service. Many dogs did not get walked.

I encountered people who thought the flood was a bizarre scenario and were shocked it could happen. It seems they haven't been keeping up with climate-crisis reporting; in an article in the *Winter 2019* issue of this publication, I offered this grim prospect: "One day you may find yourself sitting on the Broad Street beach, listening to your short-wave radio, snacking on insects, and holding a one-way ticket on the last flight to Antarctica."

In the meantime, you are advised to stock up on bottled water, canned and packaged food that doesn't require cooking, a battery-powered radio, flashlights, lamps, and other emergency equipment for sheltering in place during power outages or other emergencies. Check out Red Cross Ready: <https://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies.html>



A view of the submerged Schuylkill River Trail and Boardwalk from the South Street Bridge.

## Deluge Déjà Vu

In 1869, from October 2 to October 4, following two months of drought in the Philadelphia region, five to 10 inches of rain fell, causing the Schuylkill River to drown the Fairmount Dam under more than 11 feet of water and to flood surrounding areas. All water works on the Schuylkill, which supplied the area's drinking water, were knocked offline by the flooding. Read the details and see photos here: <https://water.phila.gov/blog/history-150-year-anniversary-schuylkill-flood>

—Bonnie Eisenfeld

## *Impasse No More* Turning a Dead End into a Destination

Text and Photos by Bill West



The French have several terms for a dead-end street. I like *impasse*, but there's *voie sans issue* or *cul de sac*—this latter implying a road that bulbs out at the end, giving enough space for a vehicle to turn around.

Dead-end streets seem to have a negative connotation in America, much like back alleys. My feeling is that little streets are what you make of them.

Philadelphia has lots of little streets. Some of them are quite beautiful, and some, like [Elfreth's Alley](#), are even tourist destinations. And then some are terrible. And some are just muddling along, with a few nice features and a certain amount of dreck that drags the whole scene down.

The 2000 block of Latimer is a “muddle” street in the process of raising its game. It's a dead end that can only be entered from 21st Street. On 20th Street, St. Patrick's Church and its ancillary buildings occupy the full block from Rittenhouse to Locust.

### **Belgian Block**

Not too long ago, a friend asked me to look at the repaving of the 2000 block of Latimer (above), which he said had been going on for nine months. The workers had carefully removed the Belgian block pavers, replaced the water main, and just now were getting around to resetting the pavers—and he was wondering how much longer it would take.



I'm glad I had a look. I'd never seen a reconstruction of a Belgian block street (above). It was a pretty elaborate thing. There was a concrete sub-pavement that joined seamlessly to the concrete curbs, forming a sort of bathtub without a drain. On the sub-pavement the workers laid a layer of sand; on this they placed the Belgian blocks, well spaced; and then they poured more sand into the seams between the pavers.

I was a bit concerned that they were creating a permeable pavement in a bathtub without a drain, but when I went back, the spaces between the pavers had been capped with grout. Pretty impermeable.

I told my friend the workers should probably be done in a week or two, if they didn't go away for an extended period, which had already happened several times. I was wrong. The workers kept showing up, but the process of laying in the pavers was very slow.

So, aside from the historic-preservation angle—we're a [World Heritage City](#), so we should probably hold on to some of our legacy fabric—why bother replacing an old Belgian block street with a new Belgian block street, when it would be quicker and easier just to slather everything in asphalt?

*Continued on p.15*

Have a look at the photograph below.



Now imagine what it would be like with asphalt pavement in place of the Belgian block. Asphalt is like a black river. It divides. Belgian block unites. See how the Belgian block and the concrete curb and sidewalk and the brick of the building and the green of the plantings are all talking to one another. (It would work even better with granite curbstones, but that's another story.)

The articulation of harmonious elements, particularly in texture and color, creates an outdoor floor and, I would argue, an outdoor room. Look at the photo at the top of this story and see if you agree with me.

Charming intimacy is easier to do with a small street than a wide street, which is one of the many reasons I like small streets.

### The North Side

The top photo shows mainly the south side of the street. You can see there's a continuous façade line, or street wall. The north side is not quite so fortunate. Many of the northside buildings front on Locust Street and present a very utilitarian backside on Latimer.

This is to be expected. After all, back doors, fire escapes for larger buildings, slots for parking cars—these are all part of life in the big city. The question is not what you do, but how you do it.

Take this building, for instance, at the top of the next column. I think it's just fine. I do wonder about what used to be where the new brick and the glass-block window now are, but really, it is what it is, it doesn't pretend to be anything else, and I think it's reasonably well done and well maintained.



I have different feelings about this rather flimsy wood-slat wall with razor wire (below) as icing on top of the cake. I really don't like razor wire. It's kind of a buzzkill when you're trying to create a warm, friendly, intimate street. And, in this case, if its purpose is to deter intruders rather than simply make everybody feel like they're in a war zone, I think it's highly ineffective. Any enterprising burglar could hop up on the adjacent cinderblock wall and scan the area for his opportunities.

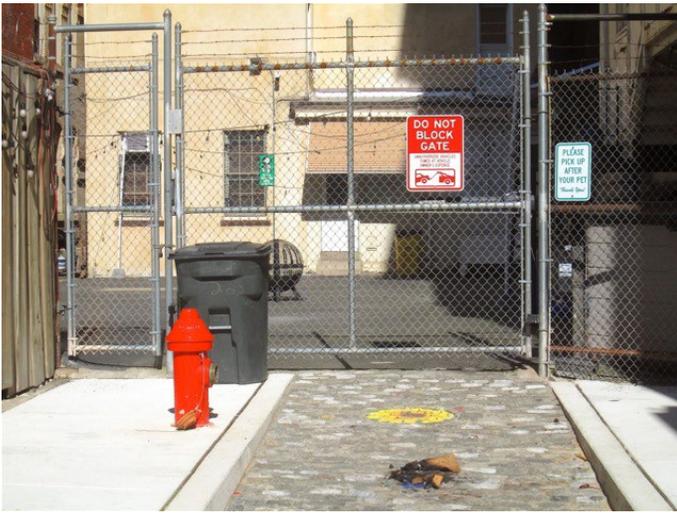


Buddy, go buy yourself a few more sensors, and hook them into your alarm system. And lose the razor wire. It's antisocial.

As for cinderblock, yes, it's ugly, but you can deal with it. My go-to suggestion is a mural. [Isaiah Zagar](#) has made a career of brightening up boring walls with his mosaics, mostly around South Street east of Broad.

Continued on p.16

### The Church Parking Lot



At the east end of the street lies a sizable parking lot serving the St. Patrick's church complex. Over the summer, I was chatting with a Latimer resident who told me that, when the street is not closed for construction, the lot is in use all day, seven days a week. And this block of Latimer is the driveway.

In other words, this lot is an important access point for the church and its ancillary buildings. It is also the focal point for the whole street—the center of the composition.

So maybe it shouldn't have quite such a poor feel. Have a look at the gate (above). Despite the rust, it's in good condition, but it would look more at home standing outside a fertilizer warehouse.

This is, after all, the same Catholic Church that gave us the Sistine Chapel. Let's upgrade the gate. And I have a good example of what I think a more ambitious gate could look like. Let's go around to the front of St. Patrick's, where we can see the wrought-iron gate in the photograph below, complete with green trefoil clover.

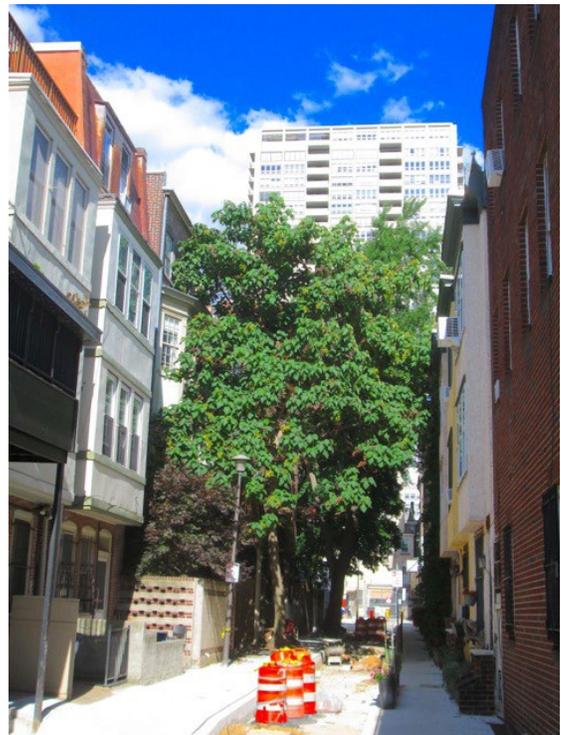


The rear face of the clergy house is also problematic. There is a large expanse of blank wall above the ground floor that I think would make a lovely home for a large mural featuring a colossal rendering of St. Patrick expelling the snakes from Ireland.

### The Value of Trees



Parts of this block get bright sunlight, and parts are very shady. The mottled shade in the picture above comes from the several trees that live at midblock. I personally think this street could do with a few more trees, although I'm not quite sure where to put them. This is, after all, a small street.



If you'd like to learn more about the ins and outs of Belgian block pavement, have a look at the [website](#) of the Philadelphia Society of Small Streets.

# Tropical Storm Ida Forces Greene Towne's Move to Temporary Quarters

By Nicole Leapheart, GTMS

It was the night before the first day of the school year, and teachers at Greene Towne Montessori School stayed late into the evening, putting the final touches on their cozy and inviting classrooms, ready to welcome the children the next day. By morning, flooding from Tropical Storm Ida had completely engulfed the school's West Campus and filled the basement of the East Campus, both located on Arch Street in Philadelphia's Logan Square neighborhood.

The West campus, between Croskey and 23rd Streets, took on significant flooding. The devastating result: all four classrooms and four office spaces were lost to more than four feet of water, and all materials, equipment, supplies and furniture must be replaced.

At the East campus, 2121 Arch, the basement was completely flooded but the classrooms were spared. The school's elevator and electrical systems and all furniture and classroom materials in basement storage were lost.

The story might have ended there, but not for Greene Towne. Thanks to the generosity of current and alumni parents, friends in the community, and especially the Montessori and other independent schools in the area, Greene Towne bounced back within a few short weeks, and reopened with donated and borrowed materials. The West campus found a temporary home at the former Hallahan High School, not far from the other campuses, just northeast of Logan Square.

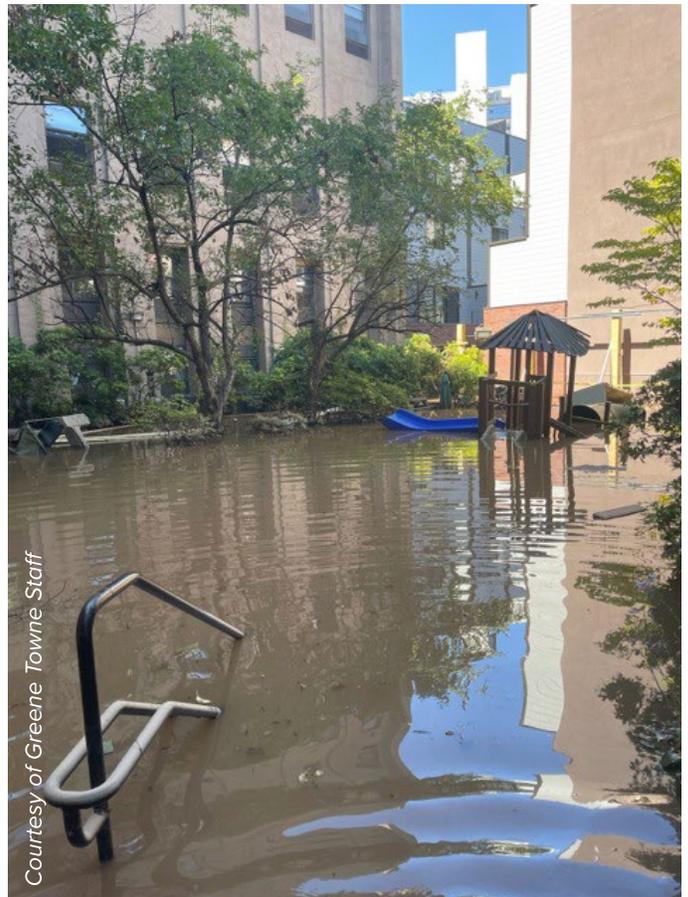
While there is much to be done, there are many reasons to be thankful. The grit and resilience of the staff is remarkable, and the support and encouragement from current and alumni parents and the greater community are heartfelt and appreciated. Since its founding by parents in the fall of 1966, Greene Towne has had a mission to serve young families and the community in Logan Square.

"The strong support we have received from our current and alumni families and the Logan Square neighborhood means so much to us," said Head of School Sarah Sweeney-Denham. Families donated funds, educational materials, and their time, as the community came together for a painting party just before the opening of school at the Hallahan site, which is now fondly known as "Greene Towne North."

Over its 55-year history Greene Towne has helped thousands of young children grow into lifelong learners and leaders. Greene Towne Montessori School serves children 18 months old through Kindergarten and is accredited by the American Montessori Society and the Pennsylvania Association of Independent Schools. To learn more, visit [www.gtms.org](http://www.gtms.org).



Navigating the new temporary home of Greene Towne.



West Courtyard the morning after tropical storm Ida.

# Simple Strategies to Protect Your Pipes—and Your Bottom Line

By Eric Lecky

Out of sight, out of mind? Not so fast.

It's easy to forget about what's behind the walls. But when there's a problem with your piping system, out of sight becomes top of mind—fast. Pipe failures can quickly get out of control, with leaks causing wall and ceiling damage, costing big money to fix. Even undetectable pinhole leaks can lead to long-term moisture and mold issues, potentially endangering the health of residents.

Proactive investment and simple maintenance can help you avoid costly disasters and liability.

## Understanding Your Piping Systems

As buildings age, the pace of failure of components accelerates. By knowing when your property was built, the estimated usable life of its major components, and what systems have been replaced, you can determine your priority projects.

According to Fannie Mae and HUD, domestic piping systems have an estimated useful life of 30 to 50 years, and drain, waste, and vent piping has an estimated useful life of 50 years. However, these timeframes may shorten due to water quality; we've seen some copper piping systems start to fail after just 10 years due to highly corrosive water. Also consider that several pipe materials—orangeburg, clay, and lead—have aged out completely and should be replaced to avoid catastrophic and high-profile failures.

The example below shows how a sample building might prioritize maintenance and replacement needs based on various factors.

ABC Tower Built in 1968 (53 Years old) - 33 Floors, 354 Units				
Building Component	Last Replaced	Current Age	Estimated Remaining Life	Priority
Plumbing	2013	8	DWV ~40 years supply was sampled, analysis showed 25 years EUL	3
Exterior Renovation – Concrete Spall and Paint	2018	3	~20 years	3
Interior Hallway Restorations	2011	10	~10 years	2
Windows and Sliding Doors	2019	2	~30 years	3
Elevators	2011	10	~10 years	2
Pool Resurfacing	2016	5	~10 years	2
Lobby	Scheduled for 2022	53	0	1

## When Is It Time to Replace Your Piping System?

Each system in your community will have a trigger point that lets you know when it's time to be replaced. In short, when annual costs to repair the system are greater than the annual costs to replace the system (by financing/refinancing and paying off the loan), it's time to replace.

Other signs you may need to replace your pipes sooner:

- Are your insurance rates going up due to an increase in claims?
- Are you tired of paying for losses, damages, or floods?
- Are you tired of shutdowns required to perform repairs?
- Do you constantly talk about these issues at board and other resident meetings?
- Are residents and owners getting frustrated? Have you seen an increase in public comments about your community's problems (social media, etc.)?

If any of these sound familiar, start thinking seriously about system replacement. Depending on what you're replacing, there are experts who can do testing and/or inspections to provide an estimated useful life.

## How—and Why—you Should Document Piping Failures

In the event of a pipe leak, here are the steps you should take:

1. Know where shut-off valves are so you can stop a leak and stop the damage.
2. Know if your building has hazardous materials (e.g., asbestos) that need to be contained during cleanup.
3. Clean up the immediate mess.
4. Determine what caused the leak.
5. If necessary, find and fix the broken pipe (e.g., an overflowing toilet may not require a pipe repair).
6. Assess damages, undertake repairs, file insurance claims, put the building back together.
7. Fill out the Leak Log to track everything.

A "Leak Log" ([download a blank Leak Log here](#)) is an easy way for building managers or owners to keep track of pipe failures, and it's an important part of properly managing your building. A Leak Log will help you: determine which leaks are a one-off occurrence and which are systemic; keep track of which systems are leaking, when, and how often; and provide documentation to assist with budgeting for repair and/or replacement throughout the life of your building.

Here's an example of a Leak Log:

Date/Time	Location	System / Pipe	Repair Cost	Contractor Info	Damages	Insurance Info	Docs, Pics & Samples

Continued on p.19

In addition to the steps above, during a pipe replacement you also should have your plumber or maintenance staff keep the extracted pieces that failed. Tag, bag and tie them to the Leak Log (when they leaked, where they came from, etc.) to track leaks and possibly reveal a pattern or a construction defect. If the same fitting breaks at the same spot in every unit in a stack, it's usually not a coincidence.

Saving the pieces also allows you to send them out for testing in the future. A metallurgist or plastics engineer can inspect sections of pipe to help determine why they failed, and can give you an accurate estimate on the remaining usable life of your system based on actual wear.

Be sure to take pictures of the pipes and the entire cavity while the wall is open. Documenting the circumstances of the leak can be extremely helpful, especially in older buildings that don't have blueprints. The images can be tied to the Leak Log and can serve as a reference for future issues, and will aid in developing a scope of work and obtaining estimates for replacement when necessary.

It is very helpful to "see" actual conditions and wall construction. Even if a property does have blueprints, clear and accurate photo documentation can help to confirm or deny what the blueprints show, can help spot repetitive issues, and can better inform future analysis of repeat problems.

[Learn more about identifying common pipe issues here.](#)

### Winter is Coming...

#### Tips to Prep Your HVAC and Plumbing Systems

In the hustle and bustle of the holiday season, don't forget that now is a great time to prepare your plumbing and heating systems for winter and avoid system failures when it's most dangerous.

- Make sure all furnaces and boilers are in good working condition. Clean units and, as with nearly any building material, proper use and maintenance can prevent early failures or even extend the life of your system.
- Fully inspect building exteriors, including the roof, walls, door and window frames. Repair or caulk any damaged, leaking or drafty spots to keep the cold out and heat in.
- Check to make sure nothing is blocking your fresh-air supply and return air vents – this can make your unit work harder.
- Review insulated systems to identify any areas with damaged or missing insulation and make necessary repairs. Both hot and cold water pipes should be insulated.
- Inspect your plumbing for leaks. A small leak in one of your pipes can cause it to burst as the water inside the pipe freezes.

### Protect Your Investment

Thinking about pipes isn't most homeowners' idea of a good time. But simple strategies such as these—and keeping careful track of leaks and repairs—can ultimately help you manage your maintenance more efficiently, better protect your residents, and maximize your investment.

#### About the Author:

*Eric Lecky ([elecky@sagewater.com](mailto:elecky@sagewater.com)) is an Executive Vice President at SageWater, North America's leading pipe replacement contractor. SageWater is headquartered in Alexandria, Virginia, with offices nationwide. Over the past 30 years, they have replaced more than 35 million feet of pipe in over 100,000 occupied residential units. Ready to get started? [Download the free Leak Log](#) to easily begin your record-keeping.*

## Out & About

# CCRA Happy Hour "Reunion" at Dwight D Hotel

On Wednesday, October 20, for the first time in two years, CCRA members gathered together at the Dwight D Hotel's charming outdoor garden for a happy hour Meet & Greet. Members, board members, and CCRA Managing Director Travis Oliver were thrilled to finally meet in person. CCRA President Rick Gross spoke briefly, welcoming the crowd and telling the members that exciting things are happening this year.

Thank you to Dwight D Hotel owner Vittoria Schultz, pictured in the second photo below with CCRA Managing Director Travis Oliver, and her hardworking staff for making this post-COVID-19 event such a success. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qkWSZdAMQOE>



## Small World Seafood The Best-kept Secret in Philadelphia (Until Now...)

By Dawn Willis

Have you been in Rittenhouse Square on Friday mornings and seen long lines of people waiting in front of the Ethical Society? Wonder what's going on? Well, it happens to be one of Philly's best-kept secrets.

This is the line for Small World Seafood—the brainchild of founder and owner Robert Amar. Small World Seafood is a four-year-old niche business that distributes to area restaurants seasonal seafood at the peak of freshness.

When the pandemic hit and businesses shut down, Amar had to change his business model. His first thought was *how can I help my neighbors get good seafood?*

On his Woodstock Street neighborhood group chat, he put out the word that he could help neighbors get seafood. At first, just 10 people ordered fish. Amar said they were not used to getting such high-quality seafood at such a great price. The very next day they started asking if he could get seafood for friends, then friends of friends. As word spread, his business grew.

In March 2020, Amar saw the initial two-week shutdown extend to September. “The supermarkets were crazy,” he says. “We were freefalling into unknowable circumstances.” He adds that when restaurants did eventually reopen, they were in survival mode—cooking what they knew would sell and not having the cushion to be creative. Amar, however, still had access to all of the niche high-end seafood.

Another reason for the success of Small World Seafood, Amar believes, is that COVID accelerated the way business was moving. “More people were starting to work remotely and order online,” he says. “Businesses, specifically restaurants that were not doing well and were going to fail, did not survive.”



Customers in line for Small World Seafood.

Now, with the supply chain causing price increases and the unavailability of all types of goods, people cannot afford to go out. “Paying a restaurant price of \$28 for a six-ounce piece of steelhead trout and only being able to stay 90 minutes is just not worth it,” Amar says. “For the same price, people can now buy several pieces of the fish, have eight friends over for dinner, and entertain as long as they want. The pandemic has given people the opportunity to learn how to cook, and they are enjoying it.”

Today, Small World Seafood has three delivery stops in Fairmount, two in Rittenhouse/Fitler Square, and one in Washington Square. Amar also maintains a pick-up stop at their facility at 444 N 4th Street, with more delivery locations planned.

So how does this work? Early in the week, newsletter subscribers receive an email from Small World Seafood announcing what will be available for pickup. Options might include branzino fillets, shrimp, crab boil, sea scallops, oysters, octopus, shrimp shumai...the list goes on. The food is fresh and delicious. There are also recipes posted on the website in case you want to be adventurous.

After placing your order and paying online, you pick up your order at the designated delivery location. Amar will be there to greet you and chat. Don't worry, the line moves rapidly. Everyone waiting in line is very friendly, chatting about their purchases, recipes, and the new seafood they have tried. Inevitably, someone will come up and ask you why you are in line!

Amar says the pandemic has put us in crazy times: “The supply chain has made things complicated. Because of this, we need to think locally and support local business. If we don't, we are at the mercy of the supply chain. Yes, it may be more work, but your food is fresher, has lower environmental impact, and you are supporting local business. It's not a bad thing; it's a good thing!”

To receive the Small World Seafood newsletter, sign up at <https://smallworldseafood.com/>



Robert Amar of Small World Seafood.

## Dining Scene

### 130 S. 18th Street The Love.

By Leo Levinson—*The Center City Foodie*

Magic. It seemed like we had just walked in...and our cocktails were served. And that was just the beginning. At The Love service is always prompt, crisp and attentive. We don't know about you, but the way to this reviewer's heart is through great service. Don't get us wrong, delicious food is very important, but frankly even a mediocre meal served with panache can make for an enjoyable experience. The Love has both—great service and great food.

Back to those cocktails...The Love provides a creative cocktail list, which includes a margarita-like non-alcoholic option called The Straight Arrow. On our most recent visit, we liked the looks of the 18th Street Manhattan, but ordered a Campari and soda, which came on the rocks with a beautiful orange twist, plus a Gin Gibson, served in a trendy coupe-shaped glass, that arrived with three large pickled onions.

The Love's menus (lunch, brunch, and dinner) have imaginative choices for carnivores, pescatarians and vegetarians. The appetizers or "Beginnings," as they are called, are interesting, appealing and reasonably sized—we've occasionally ordered just a couple of them for dinner and made it a great evening. Some favorites include the Crispy Duck Salad, Buffalo Cauliflower and Un-Beet-Able Beet & Goat Cheese Salad. Recently, with a bit of a chill in the air, we tried the Taste of Fall, a thick parsnip soup, with minuscule apple cubes, pecan bits and fall spices, which was perfect for the season.

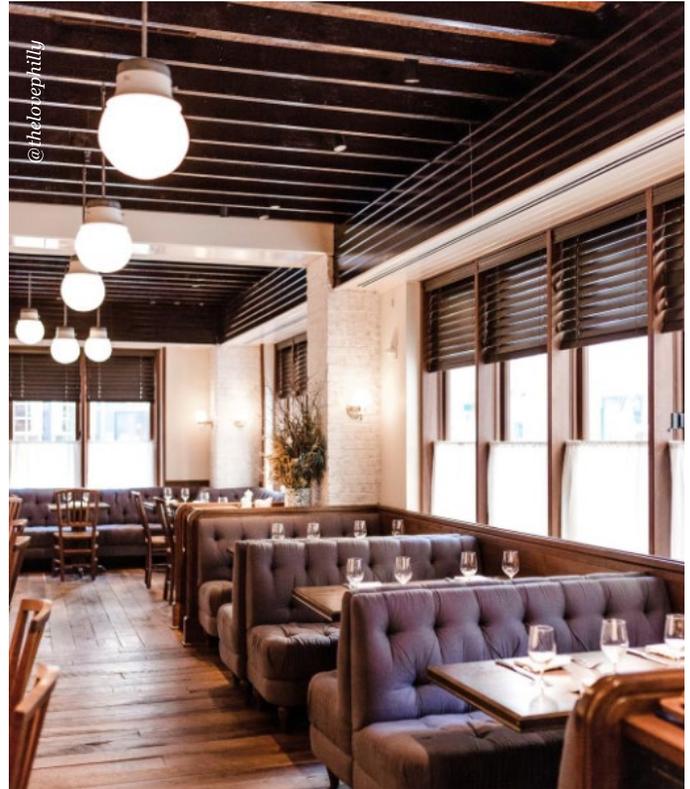
Billed as a neighborhood restaurant, The Love's main-course favorites keep neighbors coming back, for familiar dishes and seasonal updates. For us, the lure of their fried chicken—a generous portion served over its Comeback Sauce (named for a good reason)—is powerful. Buttery grits and collard greens complete the dish. The "fry" on the moist chicken is uniquely lighter than typical fried chicken and very delicious.

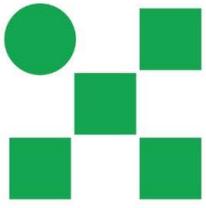
Now, if you (meaning I) can break away from ordering the chicken every time, the Cioppino is a standout, with delicious branzino, mussels and shrimp in a buttery tomato, lemon and garlic broth, served with a toasted ciabatta to sop up every last drop. We also have enjoyed the Honey Brined Pork Chop with its Aleppo pepper and ginger flavored jus, a comforting companion to the above Taste of Fall soup, as the weather gets colder.

Above all, save room for dessert, because the ice cream-based desserts are worth succumbing to their temptation. Over the summer we had one with a slice of moist lemon cake topped with chamomile ice cream and honeycomb crumble. There is a variation on that theme now on the menu, anchored by a chocolate brownie – yum!

Yes, The Love is on its game. As you may know, one of our recent themes for selecting restaurants for review is to feature those that have truly bounced back, providing patrons with an "old normal" experience in a post-pandemic world. For us, this includes three things: 1) a professional, attentive staff, 2) no shortcutting of quality ingredients, and 3) an unabridged menu. In the City, whether you're brotherly or sisterly . . . it's The Love.

*Leo Levinson, our roving food writer, is a board member of Philadelphia's premier gourmet club, The Chaine Des Rotisseurs, former chair of the Union League's Grand Cru Society wine club and accomplished amateur cook. As an active foodie, resident and public relations guru in Center City West, he'll give us the inside track, from pho to fois gras. Follow Leo on Instagram @theleolevinson*





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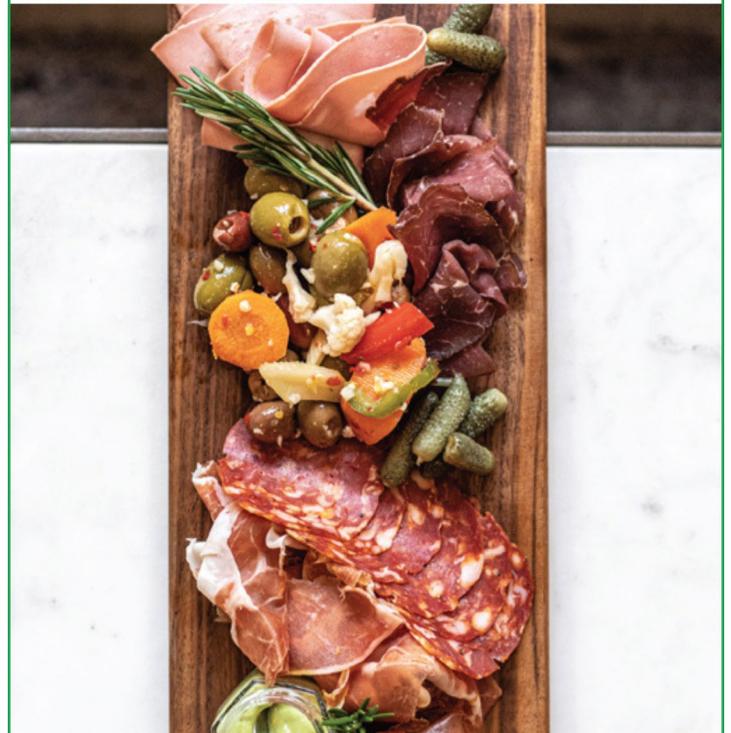
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# What's Going On

## CCRA Winter Calendar—Chilling Out (or In)

### Shine! A Holiday Concert

Lutheran Church of the Holy Communion  
2110 Chestnut Street  
Friday, December 3  
8 – 9:30 pm  
<https://www.pgmc.org/events/shine-a-holiday-concert-2021>

### Visit Philadelphia Holiday Parade

Market Street from 2nd Street to City Hall  
Saturday, December 4, 5 pm  
The city's first parade celebrating all winter holidays, including Hanukkah, Christmas, Kwanzaa, New Year's Eve, New Year's Day and Chinese New Year. The hourlong event features cold-air balloons, marching bands, floats, dancers and more.  
<https://phillyholidayexperience.com/visit-philly-holiday-parade/>

### Philly POPS Christmas

Kimmel Center - Verizon Hall  
Broad and Spruce Streets  
Saturday, December 4 to Saturday, December 18  
<https://www.kimmelculturalcampus.org/events-and-tickets/202122/philly-pops-a-philly-pops-christmas/>

### The Atlantic City Blues Brothers Christmas Show

The Adrienne Theater  
2030 Sansom Street  
Sunday, December 12, 5 pm  
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/blues-brothers-blue-blue-christmas-in-philadelphia-sun-dec-12th-only-tickets-131401590695>

### Christmas Village

Local and international merchants, food and beverages.  
Love Park and City Hall  
Through Friday, December 24  
Sunday to Thursday, 11 am – 7 pm  
Friday and Saturday, 11 am – 8 pm  
Christmas Eve, 11 am – 5pm  
<https://www.philachristmas.com/>

### Macy's Christmas

Wanamaker Building, 1300 Market Street  
**Light Show**  
The Grand Court  
December 1 – 24, 10:30 am  
December 26 – 31, 11:30 am  
**Macy's Dickens' Village**  
Animated displays depicting Charles Dickens' classic *A Christmas Carol*  
Through December 31  
Reserve tickets five days in advance  
Tickets go on sale at 5:30 am daily  
<https://www.macys.com/social/santa-land/>

### Boathouse Row Festival of Lights

Boathouse Row is lit with festive colors for Hanukkah (through Monday, December 6), Christmas (Monday, December 20 to Saturday, December 25) and Kwanzaa (Sunday, December 26 to Saturday, January 1)

### Rivers Casino New Year's Eve Fireworks on the Waterfront

Great Plaza at Penn's Landing  
Friday, December 31  
6 pm – 12:30 am  
<https://www.delawariverwaterfront.com/footer/blue-cross-riverrink-winterfest/events/river-s-casino-new-year-s-eve-fireworks-on-the-waterfront>

### Miracle on South 13th Street

Neighbors festoon the 1600 block of South 13th Street with holiday lights and over-the-top decorations.  
Through Saturday, January 1

### Mummer's Parade

Broad Street from City Hall to Washington Avenue  
Saturday, January 1, 9 am – 6 pm  
Indoor Fancy Brigade Finale competition at the Pennsylvania Convention Center. Tickets for bleacher seating at City Hall and for the Fancy Brigades available at Independence Visitor Center.  
<https://www.phlvisitorcenter.com/Mummers>

### Morris Arboretum Holiday Garden Railway

Outdoor miniature display  
100 E. Northwestern Avenue  
Through January 2  
10 am – 4 pm, plus some evenings  
[https://www.morrisarboretum.org/gardens\\_railway.shtml](https://www.morrisarboretum.org/gardens_railway.shtml)

### Suzanne Valadon: Model, Painter, Rebel

The Barnes Foundation  
2025 Benjamin Franklin Parkway  
Through Sunday, January 9  
<https://www.barnesfoundation.org/>

### LumiNature at Philadelphia Zoo

3400 W. Girard Avenue  
Winter wonderland, 500 illuminated flamingos, a 25-foot-tall flamingo holiday tree, over 200 illuminated penguins, and a 21-foot-tall colored snake, plus performance artists and holiday light show.  
Through Sunday, January 9  
Timed tickets must be purchased in advance.  
<https://philadelphiazoo.org/luminature/>

### CCRA Presents Casino Night!

Philadelphia Ethical Society  
1906 Rittenhouse Square  
Thursday, January 27, 6:30 pm  
<https://centercityresidents.org/>

### Jasper Johns: Mind/Mirror

Philadelphia Museum of Art  
Through Sunday, February 13  
Pay What You Wish admission first Sunday of the month and every Friday night  
<https://www.philamuseum.org/>

### Winter in Franklin Square

200 N. 6th Street  
Citizens presents Electrical Spectacle Light Show, free shows featuring more than 100,000 lights, food, local beers, hot beverages, outdoor fire pits and indoor heated tent. Chilly Philly Mini Golf course and Parx Liberty Carousel.  
Through Sunday, February 27  
<http://www.historicphiladelphia.org/franklin-square/winter-in-franklin-square/>

### Winter in Dilworth Park

1 South 15th Street  
Ice skating at Rothman Orthopaedics Ice Rink, Wintergarden on the Greenfield Lawn, Made in Philadelphia Holiday Market, Deck the Hall Holiday Lights  
Through February 28  
<https://www.visitphilly.com/things-to-do/attractions/the-rothman-ice-rink-at-dilworth-park/>

### Blue Cross RiverRink Winterfest

101 S. Columbus Boulevard  
Skating at the city's largest outdoor rink, warming cabins and fire-pit stations, twinkling lights and holiday tree. Carnival games and holiday markets on select dates.  
Through Saturday, March 6  
<https://www.delawariverwaterfront.com/places/blue-cross-riverrink-winterfest>

### The Stories We Wear

Penn Museum  
3260 South Street  
2,500 years of style and adornment: 250 remarkable objects  
Through June 12  
<https://www.penn.museum/on-view/galleries-exhibitions/the-stories-we-wear>

### Philadelphia Museums Now Open

<https://www.discoverphl.com/blog/philadelphia-museums-that-are-now-open/>  
Masks required.

### Philadelphia Orchestra Digital Stage and Live Performances

<https://www.philorch.org/performances/our-season/events-and-tickets/?genre=Digital+Stage>  
<https://www.philorch.org/performances/our-season/welcome-to-the-Fall-2021-Season/>



# Center City Residents' Association

1900 Market Street, 8th Floor  
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215-546-6719  
centercity@centercityresidents.org  
www.centercityresidents.org

## LOOKING AHEAD

### *What You've All Been Waiting for...*

CCRA Casino Night  
Thursday, January 27  
(See below for details)

### *CCRA Winter Appeal*

Our Clean, Safe, and Green Winter Campaign has begun. Please consider donating and help keep our sidewalks clean. For more information, visit our [website](#).

CENTER CITY RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION PRESENTS:



CASINO  
NIGHT

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<p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em;">Thursday Jan. 27, 2022</p> <p style="font-size: 1.2em;">6:30 pm</p>	<p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em;">Philadelphia Ethical Society</p> <p>1906 Rittenhouse Sq., Phila., PA 19103</p>
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