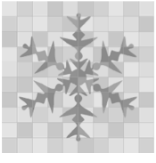


# SPRING HILL \* CITYVIEW TIMES

## COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER



Vol. 8 No. 56

January-February 2008



### Spring Hill Civic League Mission Statement

With the continuing goal of community strength and enrichment, and encouraging the participation of all community residents and business leaders, the Spring Hill Civic League accepts as its defining mission the responsibility to serve its neighborhood by assisting in the achievement of its many common goals.

### Board of Directors

President: Donna Allison  
Vice President: Dianne Burns  
Secretary: Vacant  
Treasurer: Ben Soltesz  
Directors: Stephen Brady  
Joan Russell  
Eileen Back

### Newsletter Articles

Please submit articles for the March/April edition by February 15<sup>th</sup> to:  
Joan Russell  
2115 Rockledge Street  
Pittsburgh, PA 15212-3533  
412-322-9945  
[joanrussell@aol.com](mailto:joanrussell@aol.com)

### Mail Delivery

For a yearly subscription, send \$8.00 to:  
*Spring Hill/Cityview Times* at  
c/o 1149 Admiral Street  
Pittsburgh, PA 15212

### FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT...

Happy New Year! This is an appropriate time to thank those who volunteered their time for the community, reflect on what was accomplished through their hard work, and to look forward to what we can accomplish in 2008.

2007 was a great year! **THANK YOU** to the community block workers and other volunteers from the community, the staff of Brady's Funeral Home, the staff of ESB Bank – Spring Hill Branch, and the Spring Hill Civic League (SHCL) Board of Directors for their time and effort on the following:

- The community garden at Homer and Walz
- Community clean up
- Community meetings
- Local meeting representation such as the NorthSide Leadership Conference
- *Spring Hill CityView Times Community Newsletter*
- Rockledge Street lot maintenance
- Homer Street firehouse maintenance
- The Memorial Day commemoration
- Family Halloween parade
- Holiday Christmas tree lighting
- Securing funding through grants and membership drives

Planning for 2008 is underway and Spring Hill Civic League needs your support. You can be part of the SHCL in many ways:

- Become a member or renew your membership in 2008 – Don't wait for a block worker to ask. Look for the membership form at the back of this issue and send in your dues.
- Volunteer – Again, don't wait to be asked. Choose what area you can help with or let a board member know if you have other ideas.
- Be a volunteer coordinator – This can be done at home on the telephone and through email and would help tremendously.
- Become a block worker – There may not be one in your area or maybe, just maybe your long time block worker needs a break. You could even share duties and be a back up for another block worker.

(Continued on page 2)

### UPCOMING EVENTS FOR 2008

**General Meetings** are scheduled at the Spring Hill Elementary School auditorium at 7:00 p.m. on the following dates:

Monday, March 3<sup>rd</sup>  
Monday, May 5<sup>th</sup>  
Monday, September 8<sup>th</sup>  
Monday, October 6<sup>th</sup>  
Monday, November 3<sup>rd</sup>

You can read the newsletter online by going to [www.shcl.org](http://www.shcl.org)

**FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT...**

(Continued from page 1)

- Pick up trash – Take an hour and do it on your own or volunteer on a community trash day. We can complain about trash but ultimately someone has to pick it up. Can you help?
- Attend Spring Hill Civic League community meetings – All dates are advertised in the newsletter.
- Communicate your concerns – It is imperative that we convey information that will clean up any negative activity in our neighborhood. Please keep in touch with board members, Councilwoman Darlene Harris' office (412-255-2135 or [Darlene.Harris@city.pittsburgh.pa.us](mailto:Darlene.Harris@city.pittsburgh.pa.us)), Commander McNeilly and Officer Hodges at the Zone One Police Station (412-323-7201, [Catherine.McNeilly@city.pittsburgh.pa.us](mailto:Catherine.McNeilly@city.pittsburgh.pa.us), [Forrest.Hodges@city.pittsburgh.pa.us](mailto:Forrest.Hodges@city.pittsburgh.pa.us)) regarding all your concerns.
- Share your ideas for the community – If there are new ventures you think the SHCL Board should focus on then share them with us. If you have any suggestions for improvement let us know.
- Last but not least, be a good neighbor – Whether you own or rent, you are part of a community that works hard as a group to make Spring Hill a great place to live. Welcome new neighbors and keep in touch with all those around you. If you already do, keep it up, and if

you don't, the New Year is a great time to start!

Blessings,

Donna Allison  
President  
Spring Hill Civic League



**Block Workers Party!**

Do you know how special *Your* Block Worker is? These wonderful people deliver this newsletter to your door 6 times a year. They help collect your membership dues and help make sure the neighborhood children get a Halloween Parade.

The SHCL Board would like to thank all the block workers who helped this year with an appreciation meeting/party in late January/early February. All block workers should watch the mail in the next few weeks for their special invitation.

***Thank you for all Your Help!***

**Happy Healthy New Year!**  
Want to be Healthy this Year?  
Learn how to manage your weight the Fun Easy Way.  
[www.cinchplan.com/dburns](http://www.cinchplan.com/dburns)

**Moms** – want healthy kids?  
Want to be a Stay-at-Home Mom?  
[www.projectmahma.com/dburns](http://www.projectmahma.com/dburns)

*Check it Out!*

**HOLY WISDOM FOOD BANK**

This vital ministry serves many in our community who are having hard times. The food bank is **not government-funded** and depends upon donations and volunteers within Holy Wisdom parish and our community. This means that the donations you make go directly to your neighbor, not anywhere else in the city.

The proceeds from our 50/50 raffle at each SHCL meeting are donated to the Food Bank. This year we have once again donated \$100.00 as did ESB Bank. Thank you to all who give year round. An additional \$6.00 was donated at the Christmas tree lighting.

Wish List for the New Year:

- Paper bags
- Canvas bags
- Toilet paper
- Paper towels
- Bar soap
- Shampoo
- Small boxes of pet food

Checks or gift cards can be sent year round to: Holy Wisdom Food Pantry, 1025 Haslage Street, Pgh PA 15212. The food bank at Holy Wisdom (St. Ambrose School) is held every third Tuesday of the month, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 Noon. To register for the food bank or to volunteer, call 412-231-1116.

**SNOW REMOVAL**

Snow removal, general contracting.

412-231-2009

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY**



Happy 3<sup>rd</sup> Birthday to Anthony Dulski who celebrates a January birthday.

**GET WELL WISHES**

Get Well Wishes to Leanne Rosenberger who is recovering from spinal fusion surgery... to Evelyn College of Rhine Street who is recovering from hospital influenza... and to Celine Scott of Leister Street who is recuperating after a surgery.



**OUR DEEPEST SYMPATHY**

To the family and friends of Frank J. Traupman of Spring Hill, father of Frank and Misty Traupman. He passed away on October 21<sup>st</sup>... to the family and friends of Ester (Hrabal) Steadley of Cleveland, Ohio, formerly of Spring Hill, former wife of Phillip Tancek. She passed away October 21<sup>st</sup> ... to the family and friends of Richard Francis O'Toole of Rockledge Street, beloved husband of Mary (Burger) O'Toole, on his November 11<sup>th</sup> passing... to the family and friends of James J. Herrmann Sr. of Green Tree formerly of Spring Hill, who

departed this life on November 11<sup>th</sup>. He was preceded in death by his wife Helen. He worked as a photographer for United Press International and in retirement did freelance work for the Pittsburgh Catholic and The Almanac... to the family and friends of Cyrilla (Helfrich) Mangold of Spring Hill, wife of Edward Mangold, who passed away on November 13<sup>th</sup>... to the family and friends of Karolina "Lena" Kropf of Spring Hill, wife of the late Frank Kropf, on her November 14<sup>th</sup> passing... to the family and friends of Eileen Marie Weber of Rescue Street, sister of Ronald Weber, on her passing on December 2<sup>nd</sup>. Eileen was employed by Duquesne University, sang in the Teutonia Maennerchor German Singing Society Ladies Chorus, and was a former Spring Hill Civic League Board member... and to the family and friends of Shirley M. (Bauer) Vey of Spring Hill, wife of the late Howard "Hus" Vey, Sr., on her December 18<sup>th</sup> passing.

*Our thoughts and prayers are with you during this time of mourning.*

**WELCOME NEW NEIGHBORS**

*If you would like to welcome a neighbor on your street, submit the announcement to [joanrussell@aol.com](mailto:joanrussell@aol.com).*

**New neighbors**, if you would like to be informed of meetings and other community information via e-mail, please contact Ben Soltesz at [bensoltesz@gmail.com](mailto:bensoltesz@gmail.com). We look forward to hearing from you!

**SHCL NEEDS YOU!**



Do you have a few hours next year to help Your Community? SHCL is looking for volunteers. If you can help with any of the following areas, or if you have a talent you think the community can use, please contact us. Our needs are:

- BlockWorkers:** Deliver the newsletter 6 times per year.
  - Secretary:** Attend 6 to 8 meetings each year and take minutes.
  - Garden Steward:** Organize delivery of plants and garden parties.
  - Planters/Weeders:** Plant the community garden and keep it looking good all summer long.
  - Party Coordinator:** Help organize community events.
  - Halloween Coordinator:** Keep the Halloween parade alive.
  - Halloween Angels:** Volunteer for 2 hours to help Your kids have fun.
  - Christmas Angels:** Help keep the Santa truck and the Christmas event alive.
  - Men/Women with Tools:** Chain saws, clippers, etc, for occasional clean-ups, help keep our properties maintained.
- If you can help, please contact Dianne Burns at 412-231-7718 or [dianne.burns@verizon.net](mailto:dianne.burns@verizon.net).

## MOSAICS ON YETTA AND HASLAGE

Two new mosaics will appear this year on Yetta Avenue thanks to the efforts of artist Linda Wallen and the kids at the Manchester Craftsman's Guild. Last summer Linda's daughter, artist Casey Droege, was instrumental in furthering the art of mosaics on Spring Hill by asking her students to create a mural with the help of Amanda Wolf and three other teaching artists at the Guild. The students and their instructors installed a mosaic mural at 1214 Yetta in one week. They then started another mural in the driveway of 920 Haslage.

Teaching artists Amanda Wolf and Justin Mazzei visited Spring Hill again in December to measure two walls for mosaics to be produced this spring and summer. The high school students will interview the residents and find out what kind of imagery they would like. The students will then do some research and some preparatory drawings. The residents will have a chance to offer their feedback and interact at the design stage. Ms. Wolf will guide the kids in creating their own tiles in the ceramics department at the Craftsman's Guild.

Most of the mosaics thus far are done in the *Pique-assiette* style, including the mosaics at 1208 and 1212 Yetta. *Pique-assiette* means "steal plate" in French. Mosaics done in this style are done with plates and other found materials which are broken and reassembled according to their color and texture. The new murals in 2008 will be a combination of methods leading away from *Pique-assiette*. Ms. Wallen is hoping the number of mosaic murals in the community will eventually make Spring Hill noteworthy for its art and artists.



**PRIME STAGE THEATRE  
PRESENTS**



***Of Mice and Men*  
at the New Hazlett Theater**

**February 23<sup>rd</sup> – March 2<sup>nd</sup>**

Prime Stage Theatre invites families to experience live theatre with its 11th exciting season of plays. The 2007-08 season has something for everyone. The second production will be the classic John Steinbeck tale, *Of Mice and Men*, weekends from February 23 through March 2, 2008. The production will be directed by Richard Keitel, head of graduate studies and associate professor with the Point Park University Conservatory.

*Of Mice and Men* deals with the profound sense of loneliness and isolation experienced by nearly all of the characters and their attempts to make connections with others. The theme is suitable for mature middle school students and older; parental discretion is advised.

Prime Stage is known for its Chat Sessions and we invite you to participate this year. After each performance we invite the audience to stay an extra 15 minutes to ask questions with members of the cast, directors, and technicians about the production, book, or theatre. This season a new program will be introduced, "Getting to know Prime Stage Better," an informal gathering offered to ticket

holders who want to know more about Prime Stage and the productions. "Getting to know Prime Stage Better" will happen at 7:00 p.m. prior to our Friday evening performances.

*Friday and Saturday performances are 8 p.m.; Sunday performances are at 2:30 p.m. Tickets \$20/Adults; \$15/Seniors(65 and over); \$10/College students; \$10/Youth 18 and younger are available through ProArts at 412-394-3353 or at [www.proarts.org](http://www.proarts.org) or [www.primestage.com](http://www.primestage.com). Prime Stage Theatre's productions are held at the New Hazlett Theater, 6 Allegheny Square on Pittsburgh's North Side.*

Browse the Prime Stage website ([www.primestage.com](http://www.primestage.com)) and learn about the many opportunities to enjoy theatre, volunteer, and support Prime Stage. Mark your calendars and plan to make theatre a family affair with Prime Stage Theatre's exciting season.

budgeting, saving, and investing, and avoiding unnecessary, expensive financial opportunities such as predatory loans.

To help residents of the Pittsburgh area do just that, the Financial Education Consortium of Southwestern Pennsylvania, a collaboration of financial service educators, will hold the second annual Financial Education Fair on Saturday, March 1, 2008.

The Financial Education Fair, a free event, will open with morning refreshments and remarks from event chair, Ms. Esther Bush, President and CEO of the Urban League of Pittsburgh. The Fair will include seminars on important financial topics, free tax preparation (pre-registration required), 1-on-1 financial counseling, and information tables representing over 30 agencies that offer programs and information on financial topics.

The event will be held on the top-floor of the new Power Center at Duquesne University, at the corner of Forbes Avenue and Chatham Square. The Fair will run from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Saturday, March 1, 2008 – participants may come for just one seminar or stay the whole day. Attendance is free. The Power Center is accessible to public transportation and free parking is available for the first 100 attendees.

For more information visit our website: [www.YouControlYourMoney.org](http://www.YouControlYourMoney.org) To register for your free tax preparation, contact Emily Keebler at 412-281-1100 x106 or [ekeebler@nhswpa.org](mailto:ekeebler@nhswpa.org).

**FINANCIAL EDUCATION  
FAIR**

**March 1<sup>st</sup>**



In America in 2008 it is more important than ever to know how to manage your money. The dollar is losing value, gas prices seem to be ever-increasing, and the foreclosure rate is rising, causing many Americans to lose the largest asset they will ever own – their home. The best way to combat these negative tendencies is to educate ourselves about



## HIS PLACE NEEDS YOUR HELP

Dear Friends,

Please take the time to read this letter that was very difficult for me to write. Then please pray about what you can do to help.

### "Go Tell it on The Mountain"

It really isn't a mountain but it does sit up high off of Interstate 279, tucked into a back corner of the North Side where it wouldn't be noticed unless you were purposely looking for it. It is the gated community of North View Heights - gated for the opposite reason most communities are. Over the years there has been so much trouble with drugs and shootings that cars are checked very carefully as they enter one of the worst neighborhoods of Pittsburgh.

It is from this "mountain" that many of our children are coming this year. Saturday night we had 28 from just one section.

It was from this "mountain" that several of the children went with us to the live nativity and said they had *never heard the Christmas story before.*

And it will be at this "mountain" that we will be expanding our efforts that are already going on at Spring Hill, off Charles Street, Mexican War Streets, Kirkbride and Manchester, to teach the children, to make friends with the parents, and to try to make a difference with the love of Christ. That is, as long as we are able to keep our doors open.

I've put off writing this letter - have hated to have to "beg" for money - have trusted in God's faithful provision (and he has been faithful) but the time has come to tell you of the situation which is this. If our donor base does not grow, if our funding does not increase, we will have to close the doors of His Place.

We are operating on a very low budget. We have brought penny pinching to a new high. The buildings thermostats are kept very low. There haven't been raises for years. All interns and associates have to raise their own very minimal support or even do without. Even with this our treasurer informed us that we were operating at a \$20,000 deficit.

The reasons for this are as follows:

1. His Place has been in operation for 35 years. Faithful supporters have gone on now and others have not yet taken their place.
2. Our programming has increased. Our building is bigger and the costs have grown as well.

And just yesterday we learned that we will have to tear out the old chimney that has collapsed into itself and put in a new furnace.

His Place has been an incredible, loving arm of Christ into this inner city community for a long time and now we have to reach out to you for your help. Please pray for the situation.

Please make a generous donation. Some reading this may have the capacity to help in a big way. There may be

someone who could write a check to completely cover the cost of the furnace work, someone who could sign up to generously support the work on a monthly basis, someone who would take on the support of our intern and associate.

If you've ever watched any footage of mountain climbers you know how arduous the task is. That there are times when you take two steps forward only to have to back track and try a new approach. You know that there are dangers and obstacles. Our task is different of course, but there are very real dangers, obstacles, and serious situations to overcome.

Most importantly our outcome is different. Instead of climbing a mountain for the thrill or adventure of it, we are climbing to save lives - to bring hope and a new peace to those who are living in a world that is so much less than God has planned for them.

Please join with us in this odyssey and help us to continue the journey.

With much gratitude,  
Debe Weiss  
Director, His Place Contact Center  
412-716-1355  
[www.hisplacecc.org](http://www.hisplacecc.org)

*His Place is the urban outreach project of the Independent Christian Churches and Churches of Christ of the Greater Pittsburgh region. Since the early 1970s, "His Place" Contact Center has been providing a positive alternative to life on the streets of the inner-city.*

## DRESS FOR WINTER OUTDOOR ACTIVITY

Susan Butcher leads her team of 15 dogs on day five of the Iditarod dogsled race. Temperatures are near 0 degrees Fahrenheit as they travel along the Yukon River. The wind makes it feel like 20 below. Frostbite is a constant concern. Crazy? Maybe. Can you survive the Alaska winter extremes? If you dress right you can.



Fortunately we rarely have these extremes in the Pittsburgh area. But how do you dress for activity or exercise in the cold? Do you need a heavy parka? What about a hat (which could mess up your hair)? How cold is too cold?

Physical activity in the cold is usually fine, as long as you dress for it. The exceptions are for some people who have heart or lung disease and a few other rare conditions. Often the recommendation for these individuals is to avoid extended time outdoors if the temperature is below freezing. Some physicians may use 40° F as the guideline. If you have an illness, discuss this guideline with your physician.

If it is cold, cover exposed skin. Do you lose most of your heat through your head? No, you lose heat from exposed skin. If your head is not covered it is exposed skin (our hair rarely insulates as well as a hat). Our toes, fingers, and ears are particularly vulnerable to cold, as the small blood vessels there contract if not insulated sufficiently by clothing to prevent body heat loss. Wear heavy socks, boots, gloves, and a hat that covers the ears. Tight boots or shoes limit circulation making cold feet more likely.

Is a heavy parka the best? Maybe for extreme cold, but several layers of clothing are usually best. Air is trapped between the layers of clothing improving insulation. If you are getting too warm (for example when shoveling the sidewalk), zip the outside layer open. Avoid cotton next to the skin when possible. Cotton soaks up sweat, leaving a damp layer next to the skin. Synthetic materials are preferred with modern Thermamax and UnderArmor, or older

Polypropylene being great choices for cool weather underwear. Polypropylene and polyester materials, being older, are often fairly cheap. Synthetic materials do not absorb sweat; they wick moisture to the second layer of clothing keeping your skin dry.

So when is it too cold for outdoor physical activity? When you are not dressed appropriately it may be too cold, but that is easy to correct.

*Northside STRIDE is a community based walking program that promotes physical activity and overall wellness. The walking program is an initiative of the Northside Health Improvement Partnership. For more information about Northside STRIDE, please contact Stephani Greenleaf at 412-330-2535.*

*The Northside Health Improvement Partnership (NSHIP) is a collaborative effort of community and not-for-profit health related organizations. The mission of the NSHIP is to improve the health of all Northside residents.*

## STOPPING BY WOODS ON A SNOWY EVENING

by Robert Frost

Whose woods these are I think I know.  
His house is in the village, though;  
He will not see me stopping here  
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer  
To stop without a farmhouse near  
Between the woods and frozen lake  
The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake  
To ask if there is some mistake.  
The only other sound's the sweep  
Of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark, and deep,  
But I have promises to keep,  
And miles to go before I sleep,  
And miles to go before I sleep.



## CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTING

Our scheduled December 2<sup>nd</sup> Christmas Tree Lighting was delayed for one week as the forecast of freezing rain threatened Santa's sleigh and reindeer. The weather still wasn't cooperating on December 9<sup>th</sup> but the show went on as the Santa Truck drove an abbreviated route throughout the community. Nine volunteers rode on the truck with Santa, braving the cold and rain, and arrived on time for the 7:00 p.m. lighting ceremony.

Close to 40 neighbors attended the ceremony at the Rockledge Street lot for the lighting of the manger and Christmas trees. Master of Ceremonies, Spring Hill Civic League President Donna Allison, hosted the evening, Pastor Ann Smith from Grace Lutheran in Troy Hill led us in prayer, and Susan Lippert led us in song for a number of carols. Special guest and Spring Hill neighbor District One Councilwoman Darlene Harris wished everyone a happy holiday and testified to the strong ties that bind our neighborhood together.

Lisa Eberz, representing ESB Bank, and Donna Allison, representing our neighborhood, presented checks to Marlene Stecklein of Holy Wisdom Food Pantry and Jerry Harris of Tri-Hill Valley Meals on Wheels. The Spring Hill office of ESB Bank partnered with the community again this year in a matching-funds effort for these ministries. Each ministry received a total of \$200.

After the ceremony, cookies donated by Lou and Dorothy Flore, hot chocolate donated by Steve Brady, and candy canes from Eileen Back were enjoyed by all. The children all lined up to visit Santa and candy-filled canes were distributed to each child.

Many thanks to all of the volunteers that helped make this event a success. They included Mary Herman and daughters Kelly and Kaylie, Jim Hurray, Sue Lippert, Adam, Austin and Andrew Ledergerber, Dianne Burns, Donna Allison, Ben Soltesz, Eileen Back, and Steve Brady and his staff of Kristin Szuch, LeeAnn Sherman and Fred Weber.

A special "Thank You" to Brady's Memorial Home, ESB Bank, and the office of Darlene Harris, who all partnered with the Civic League to make this evening very special for the community.



Photographs by Jim Hurray





## REIKI

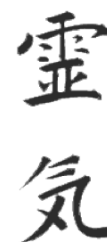
### What Is Reiki and What Are Its' Benefits?

Since ancient times, many cultures have known that an unseen energy flows through all living things and is connected directly to the quality of health. The existence of this "life force energy" has been verified by recent scientific experiments and medical doctors are considering the role it plays in the functioning of the immune system and the healing process. Reiki is healing energy in its truest sense. When the Reiki practitioner channels this life energy through their hands to the recipients, it activates the body's natural ability to heal itself. The energy goes to the deepest levels of the person's being, where illnesses have their origin. It works wherever the recipient needs it most, releasing blocked energies, cleaning the body of toxins, and working to create a state of balance. It reinforces the recipient's ability to take responsibility for their life, and helps them to make the necessary changes in attitude and lifestyle to promote a happier and healthier life.

Reiki can do the following:



- Aids better sleep
- Helps boost the immune system
- Increases energy levels
- Builds self-confidence
- Reduces stress
- Helps in the grieving process
- Benefits chronic and acute medical conditions
- Improves physical health
- Encourages deep relaxation
- Helps overcome anxiety/panic attacks
- Cleanses the body of toxins



Reiki can be used simultaneously with other conventional therapies without adverse effects. It can be used in the following conditions: while using medication, while undergoing chemotherapy for cancer, while you have a cast on, while you are hospitalized, while you are pregnant, and with other forms of healing that are complimentary.

### Who Am I?

I am Deborah Lorenz, a Level II Reiki (ray-key) practitioner. I live here in Spring Hill and will be obtaining my Master Level at the end of May in England with William Rand, founder of the International Center for Reiki. I am a weekly volunteer at Allegheny General Hospital giving treatments to patients. Although there are patients throughout the hospital who request Reiki, there are many patients in the Cancer Center that receive it on a regular basis while in for their chemo treatments. I volunteer with the Place-For-Reiki on Steuben Street assisting in giving Reiki treatments at their once monthly "Healing Circle for Children with Special Needs and their Families." Bonnie Hassan at the Place-for-Reiki is having some wonderful success working with autistic children and I'm proud to be part of it. I participate in various healing circles in the city working with clients, am a member of the Distance Healing Network working with clients online, and in my private practice treat individuals upon request.

### Contact Me

If you would like to learn more about Reiki, check out my website at [Areikihealer.com](http://Areikihealer.com). You can email me at [reikihealer@comcast.net](mailto:reikihealer@comcast.net) or call me at 412-708-9267 with questions, to set up a treatment for yourself, or to purchase a gift certificate. If you would like to learn more about the Circle for Children with Special Needs, you can link to it through my website or call Bonnie Hassan directly at 412-920-2911.

## BAKED POTATO SOUP

### Ingredients

- 4-5 baking potatoes
- 2 cups water
- 1 quart milk
- 1/2 cup celery
- 1/4 cup butter
- 1/2 cup sour cream
- 1/3 cup bacon, cooked and crumbled
- 1/3 cup green onions, chopped
- 2 cups sharp cheddar cheese, shredded
- 1 Tbs. fresh parsley or dill, chopped
- Salt and pepper to taste

### Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350F. Place potatoes in the oven and cook for about 1 hour.
2. Meanwhile, heat water in a large saucepan, add chopped celery to the water, and simmer until celery is tender.
3. When potatoes are fully cooked, slice down the center, scoop out pulp of each potato, and add to celery and water. Add milk, butter, sour cream, bacon, green onions, 1 cup of the cheddar cheese, parsley or dill, and salt and pepper.
4. Allow mixture to simmer over low-medium heat until it thickens. Serve hot with cheddar cheese sprinkled on top. You may also add chives (from the top of the green onions), bacon pieces, and sour cream.

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## IRON CITY BREWING TOURS

Jerry Lorenz of Spring Hill is the Tour Director for the “new” Iron City Brewing Company. Jerry would be more than happy to take you, your friends, and/or family on a tour explaining the brewing process, topping it off with a free beer sampling in the the Brewery’s historical Ober Brau Haus. It is said that the honorable Abe Lincoln enjoyed a cold brew there!

In addition, if you are a non-profit organization or group, you may rent the Ober Brau Haus at a very reasonable rate for your event! The rate includes their delicious cold brews!

If you would like to take a tour or rent the Ober Brau Haus contact Jerry at 412-760-7621 or email him at [JLironcity@comcast.net](mailto:JLironcity@comcast.net).

## UNLOCK YOUR CAR WITH YOUR CELL PHONE!

Have you ever locked your keys in the car? Does your car have remote keyless entry? This may come in handy someday.

If you lock your keys in the car and the spare keys are at home, call someone at home on their cell phone from your cell phone. Hold your cell phone about a foot from your car door and have the person at your home press the unlock button, holding it near the mobile phone on their end. Your car will unlock. Distance is no object. You could be hundreds of miles away, and if you can reach someone who has the other remote for your car, you can unlock the doors (or the trunk)!

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## NEW WEBSITE TO HELP AREA RESIDENTS TAKE CONTROL OF THEIR FINANCES

Many people are overwhelmed by holiday expenses, but you don’t have to be. There are lots of organizations in the area that offer credit and budget counseling which can help you to manage your finances. Learn more about local programs like these and many others at [www.YouControlYourMoney.org](http://www.YouControlYourMoney.org), the new website of the Financial Education Consortium of Southwestern Pennsylvania.

This Western Pennsylvania focused website offers information on everything from major financial troubles, such as “I’m Facing Foreclosure”, to ways to prevent financial problems, such as “I Want to Teach My Kids About Money.” In addition to topical information, the Consortium’s website includes announcements of upcoming financial education events and links to additional online resources.

*The Financial Education Consortium of Southwestern Pennsylvania is a coalition of organizations committed to the coordination and advancement of financial literacy efforts in southwestern Pennsylvania. Participation in the Consortium is free and voluntary, and membership includes financial institutions, nonprofit organizations, and government agencies. The Consortium was created in 2003 by the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland’s Pittsburgh office and is currently administered by Neighborhood Housing Services, Inc.*



**COUNCILWOMAN  
DARLENE HARRIS**

As the New Year arrives my wish for the residents of the North Side is great happiness, good health, and prosperity in 2008. I look forward to my continued service as your elected City Council person for the next 4 years. I am excited by our joint accomplishments as well as the possibilities and challenges that lie ahead and will result in a better North Side. We must always keep in mind that government is a collaborative process and nothing can happen unless we work together. Please accept my warmest wishes for a wonderful New Year.

*As your elected City Council person I remain accessible to you. Please feel free to contact the office at 412-255-2135. You can also communicate with me via email at:*  
[darlene.harris@city.pittsburgh.pa.us](mailto:darlene.harris@city.pittsburgh.pa.us).

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**MAYOR  
LUKE RAVENSTAHL**

Dear Neighbors,

First and foremost, thank you for giving me the opportunity to continue to lead our great City. Thank you for believing in me and for believing in what we can and will accomplish.

We have already achieved a great deal together, but we can do more. Through our Neighborhood Forums, we have listened to your feedback, and we now know what you most desire for your communities. We

have made your requests our priority. As I work to build a more fiscally responsible government, we will find ways of doing more with less. We must be as efficient and effective as possible.

Experts unanimously approved my Fiscal Year 2008 Budget and updated Five-Year Financial Forecast, declaring it "healthy." My budget and plan for 2008 call for putting resources back into the neighborhoods, and into services for our residents.

My commitment to public safety is reflected in next year's capital budget by committing more City resources to keeping our neighborhoods clean and safe.

We are turning the tide on neglect by eliminating the inherited backlog of vacant structures. To do this, we have doubled the budget for demolitions next year. The abandoned vehicle legislation that passed in October has enabled us to remove more than 220 of these eyesores.

Recently, one of our cameras helped to catch an arsonist in Polish Hill. What an amazing return on our community investment! This reinforces the importance of the camera surveillance initiative proposed in my 2008 budget.

We will continue to invest in the Redd Up and Green Up programs. As we increase demolitions of hazardous structures, we must think long-term and implement strategies to turn vacant lots into lively places for the community. Through our pilot program we transformed approximately 40 blighted empty lots into green

spaces. We are engaging in conversations that we hope will lead to the funding that will allow us to expand Green Up Pittsburgh's success.

In addition to implementing initiatives to curb blight, we continue to make strides in ensuring that City government is operating transparently, effectively, and efficiently. The City of Pittsburgh has partnered with community groups to bring in The Reinvestment Fund to conduct a citywide Market Value Analysis. This data-driven analysis of our communities will help our leaders rebuild neighborhoods through an effective, transparent, and market-based process.

We recently made City legislation available to all internet users. By launching "In Site", we created the means to connect you, our taxpayer, with the legislation that goes before Council and ultimately affects you and your family. To access this information, as well as any other useful City information, please log on to [www.city.pittsburgh.pa.us](http://www.city.pittsburgh.pa.us).

In addition, if you would like more information regarding our Neighborhood and Public Safety Initiatives, or would like to have someone from my administration attend one of your meetings to answer questions and to provide the information, please call 412-255-2566.

I encourage you to enjoy all that our City has to offer and look forward to working with you in the New Year!



## STATE REPRESENTATIVE DON WALKO REPORTS

### Help with Heating Bills Available

With energy prices rising for many Allegheny County residents, I want to let everyone know that the state House has been taking action on energy and that help with heating bills is available for many residents. In this column I'll also provide tips on saving energy and money.

First, here's some information on the heating-bills program. The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) is now taking applications on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Families don't have to be on cash assistance to qualify for LIHEAP. Consumers can receive assistance even if they have not missed a payment on a heating bill. Also, no lien is placed on the home of people who receive LIHEAP benefits.

Eligibility is based on household income and family size. For example, a family of four can qualify for LIHEAP if their household income is \$30,975 or less.

LIHEAP offers two types of grants. Cash grants of up to \$300 are available to help families pay regular monthly heating bills. The amount of the grant depends on income, household size, type of heating fuel, and region of the state. Crisis grants of up to \$300 are also available to pay for heating emergencies such as a broken furnace or fuel shortage.

For more information contact my office or the county assistance office at 412-565-2151 or 412-565-2146. The LIHEAP crisis line is 1-800-851-3838.

### Action in Harrisburg

In Harrisburg, I voted for two energy bills that passed the House recently. Both would help Pennsylvanians save money and increase our energy independence. One bill would create sales-tax holidays to save consumers money on buying new, more efficient ENERGY STAR-rated appliances like refrigerators and air conditioners. The other bill the House passed would remove the sales tax on energy-saving compact fluorescent light bulbs. There are many other bills pending in the Special Session on Energy, and I hope to have more progress to report in a future column.

### Tips to Save You Energy and Money

Last but not least, here are some tips on how you can save energy and money now:

#### Heating Tips

- \* Buy a programmable thermostat. A programmable thermostat can help by adjusting the temperature according to your schedule.
- \* Clean or replace filters on furnaces once a month or as needed.
- \* Heat only the rooms that you are using. Close the door and vents to unused rooms.
- \* Cool it with the hot water: for every degree you turn your water heater down, you could

save \$4 a year. For most users, 115 degrees is comfortable.

\* Unless your water heater's storage tank already has a high R-value of insulation (at least R-24), adding insulation to it can reduce stand-by heat losses by 25 to 45 percent. This will save you around 4 to 9 percent in water heating costs. If you don't know your water heater tank's R-value, touch it. A tank that's warm to the touch usually needs additional insulation.

#### Weatherization Tips

- \* Caulk and weatherstrip doors and windows that leak air.
- \* Install storm windows and use a heavy-duty, clear plastic sheet on a frame or tape clear plastic film to the inside of your window frames during cold winter months to control temperature efficiency.
- \* Look for holes in your roof and all heating pipes and vents.

More energy conservation information is available at [www.staywarm.com](http://www.staywarm.com) or [www.energypa.org](http://www.energypa.org).

If you have questions on energy or any other state-related issue or subject, please call my office at 412-321-5523.

### UNITED WAY GIVING

The Spring Hill Civic League has been a United Way's Contributor's Choice for the past several years. Your generosity has helped to fund community activities and defrays routine overhead expenses. **A grateful Thank You** to all who support the community through the United Way. The civic league's Contributor's Choice code number is 207.