We are the community...we are one voice!

Polish Hill Voice

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The Polish Hill Civic Association Celebrates Fortieth Anniversary

Nineteen sixty-nine was a year to fill the history books, with events and changes that would set things in motion for decades and lifetimes to follow. Our country and many of our family members were involved in the Vietnam War. The whole world watched as the first steps were taken on the moon. PBS was established. The first ATM machine appeared in the US. Gas was 35 cents a gallon, new car prices averaged $3200 and the average income was $8,550. In amongst all of these amazing events, something happened that needs to also be remembered: our community found its voice.

The residents of Polish Hill should take particular note of one history-making day when residents banded together in the true spirit of community. On September 15th 1969, the Polish Hill Civic Association was duly registered in the office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth. “We the people” is a phrase that has the power to inspire. Our residents, from different ethnic backgrounds and ages, formed a union and gathered to have their voices heard. We are very fortunate to have a record of this first gathering. We would like to share with all some excerpts from one of the earliest official meetings of the Polish Hill Civic Association.

Monday October 6th 1969 7:55pm

“A regular meeting of the PHCA was called to order in the Church hall. Due to the absence of President Eugene Rudzki, the Vice President Charles Doloughty opened the meeting. Mr. Doloughty informed the members that the PHCA is now a chartered organization. He further stated that it is of the utmost importance that different committees be formed so the organization may operate most effectively. It will be the duty of this organization to find out about the various existing and newly enacted grants, loans, and projects which would apply to and benefit this neighborhood and its residents. Mr. Doloughty mentions a bill that if enacted would assist persons in need of aid to repair their homes.

Mr. Doloughty further informed the members that Port Authority has contacted us in an effort to schedule a meeting at which better service on Polish Hill will be discussed.

The meeting was then turned over to Father John Jendzura who gave the members the particulars of our new charter. Father John announced that the total cost of the Charter was $169.98 and the PHCA has a current account balance of $683.00 Mr Don Bucholtz, the Financial Secretary, made a motion that Attorney McNaNamy should be compensated as a token of appreciation for the fine job he did in the service of Father John and the community group. Mr. John Chapski prepared a short memento for this solemn occasion and had all the officers present sign it. The official PHCA seal was affixed and this token was passed out to all members present.

Father John called attention to the fact that to date all members of the organization need a way to be sufficiently informed about PHCA activities in the neighborhood. Mrs. Josephine Lawniczak suggested that flyers or newsletters be prepared for the membership once a month or once every three months. Mrs. Ann Davis made a motion that at the time when all committees are appointed that a news letter be published. The motion was accepted and passed by the membership.

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Best Wishes
from Senator Jim Ferlo

“The 40 year history of the PHCA records an enviable track record of accomplishment led by a spirited and diverse group of community leaders and volunteers who worked effectively and creatively, in good times and bad, to make Polish Hill one of Pittsburgh’s most livable neighborhoods. Polish Hill should be proud of this legacy and confident about continuing this progress well into the future. Gratulacje!”

Resident’s Message

This summer has brought Polish Hill new residents, and new volunteers for the PHCA. We would like to welcome our new residents and hope that they choose to call Polish Hill their home for many years to come. Seeing new residents moving in should make all of our residents a little proud. Of all the places in Pittsburgh that they could have chosen to live, Polish Hill is their choice. Just like the grandparents or great-grandparents of some of our residents, we have new families, settlers and immigrants from a new era, calling Polish Hill home. Dumpsters and scaffolding abound in the neighborhood this summer. These are good signs that Polish Hill residents are improving their existing homes and renovating older properties to become new examples of what is possible in our neighborhood.

The successful return of Alfred’s Deli and Tai+Lee Architects to Polish Hill heralds the rejuvenation of our business district. Work is continuing on the Jubilee Kitchen building, which will house Urban Gypsy, a unique consignment and art store. A coffee shop and record store are in the works for the corner of Dobson and Hancock. The former Mostowy’s Hardware building is currently under renovation. The owner is willing to remodel to suit; want to bring a business to Polish Hill?

In these challenging economic times, we can be grateful for so much new growth in our neighborhood. Because of the size of our community, everyone on Polish Hill can be a neighbor. All of our residents have so much to offer; take a moment to introduce yourself to your new neighbors. I must admit, I know as many dogs as people from just stopping to say hello. We all have something we can learn from each other; life experiences we can share for everyone’s benefit.

We have been fortunate to have one of the safest neighborhoods in Pittsburgh. Unfortunately, a few burglaries and an armed robbery resulted in a higher crime rate in recent months. Although shaken by these incidents, thankfully, no residents were harmed. We want our neighborhood to remain one of the safest places to live. If you notice something that looks suspicious please take the time to call 911. The homeowners and tenants of Polish Hill have worked hard for what they have. I would ask all of our residents to continue the tradition of being good neighbors to one another. Our residents come from all walks of life; we all might look a little different from each other but we all hold Polish Hill dear. This diversity is what makes Polish Hill a thriving community.

I have had the opportunity to work with so many of our residents on volunteer projects. In the moments when I see our new and existing residents meet one another, talk, and share their neighborhood experiences, I have to stop for a moment and take it in. I find myself saying, “This is why I live here”. So Polish Hill residents, I say to one and all, no matter how the faces of Polish Hill change or how the homes and businesses are renovated remember, our little village is a great place to live. Polish Hill - not just a place, it’s a state of mind.

Terry Doloughty

Continued from page 1

Mr. Doloughty states that he was asked to hold a dance at West Penn for the youth of Polish Hill on 10/24/69. There are no activities for youth at present. The admission will be by ticket only. Mr. Bucholtz is in charge of obtaining the tickets. Father John and Mr. Doloughty will be submitting an application to West Penn for the use of the facility. Free Coke and pizza will be served.

Mr Bucholtz stated that with the procurement of the charter grounds must now be laid for a general election in the not too distant future. Mrs. Ann Davis made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:15pm."

And that’s the way it was, dateline 10/6/69. Talented, passionate, and driven members taking those first steps to helping create the Polish Hill Civic Association. We owe them a lot and hope in the next forty years of our group’s existence that we can honor them and inspire the continued growth and prosperity of our neighborhood as it continues to evolve.

Join us on Saturday, September 19, from 1-6pm, at 3060 Breton Street for a covered dish celebration. More details to be announced.

Best Wishes
from Senator Jim Ferlo

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Weatherization and Preservation
By Senator Jim Ferlo

In a recent New York Times op-ed, the president of the National Trust for Historic Preservation did an excellent job of highlighting and explaining the connection between preservation and weatherization. I serve as the State Senate designee to the Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission as an ardent supporter of preservation and retaining our history. Congressman Mike Doyle and I have fostered the development of the Pittsburgh Green Innovators, a collaboration of 29 community, government, corporate, philanthropic, education and labor groups aiming to develop a trained “green-collar” work force and stimulate growth in the economy through sustainable development. We now have new opportunities to bring these worlds together—the release of stimulus funds from the Obama administration to state weatherization efforts can help us to save money, create jobs, and bring sustainability principles into our neighborhoods.

I would like to bring this connection home and tell you about Keystone HELP (Home Energy Loan Program), a Pennsylvania program to help you weatherize your home and reduce your energy usage. Most Pennsylvania homeowners who meet the program’s eligibility guidelines can get a low cost loan or a rebate for energy-saving eligible improvements installed by a Keystone HELP Approved Contractor. You can improve the energy efficiency of your home with special financing and rebates for ENERGY STAR® rated and high efficiency heating, air conditioning, air sealing, insulation, windows, doors, geothermal and “whole house” improvements using Home Performance with ENERGY STAR®.

The neighborhoods of Pittsburgh showcase such diversity in architecture and hundreds of years of history, and weatherization helps us to revitalize our neighborhoods so that we can enjoy them for decades to come.

You can connect to Keystone Help by visiting my website at www.senatorferlo.com, and see what other services my office provides. As always, if I can help you with this or any other state-related manners, please call my office at 412-621-3006.

Polish Hill Portraits
Photos by Mark Knobil

The Sinickis: Ray, Julie, Walt, Dorothy and Carol

Matt Clifford and Alyssa Mayfield

Susan Lofaro of Flavian St.
One Brick at a Time
By Leah Durand

The first major decision for the bread oven has been settled! Pending official authorization from the Board of Directors, we will be putting the bread oven on PHCA property, in the back of the lot against the garage. Thanks to Catherine McConnell and Terry Doloughty for realizing the perfect place for the oven was in our own backyard.

Now that the location has just about been finalized, we can move forward with the nitty-gritty details of getting the oven built. There is much work to do in regards to coming up with a budget, fundraising the monies to construct the oven, sussing out the details of how the fire tending crew will work, and building the oven! We already have quite the team of residents who are interested in the project and have committed their time and unique skill sets to seeing the project through to completion.

We are determined to use as many reclaimed materials as possible so if you have any spare bricks lying around we could sure use them! If you are interested in helping out with the project or want to know more of the details, come on out to the membership meeting on Tuesday, August 4th or stop by the PHCA offices. We’d be happy to tell you all about it!

Harmar Gardens

Another community garden was started on Polish Hill this summer. Jon Growall gave permission for the large grassy area Blue Dog Realty owns to be used for the location of a new garden. A group of Polish Hill residents from all corners of our neighborhood lent a hand in the creation of this new garden. This is a great example of how things work on Polish Hill: when someone is doing good work, neighbors pitch in to help.

The soil has been cleared of weeds, debris and some gigantic stones. A generous amount of mushroom manure will insure that our plants remain strong and healthy for many years to come. In five short weeks, these volunteers have transformed a lawn into a garden with flower beds, herb gardens and perennial plants that can serve as a green bank to continue the process of greening the open spaces of Polish Hill. With the addition of a composter and four rain barrels, the garden crew has taken great steps to insure the sustainability of this project.

We have new residents and natives both working on and enjoying this green site. Our thanks are extended to Brian Seklecki, Kevin Seklecki, Paul Bowden, Miriam Parsons, Oliver “The Pulaski” Gibbon, Maurice Spencer, Braiden Alan, Casey Biederman, Myra Falisz, Josiah Parkinson and of course Truckski. We also have to give a tip of the garden hat to the Student Conservation Association. With Miriam and Oliver’s help, the SCA contributed funds for some of the supplies to make the garden possible. With artistic assistance of Myra Falisz, Miriam also organized the rain barrel decorating event and the creative painting of the stepping stones in the new four corners garden during the Art What You Got festival. Take a nice summer day or evening and walk over to the Harmar Garden, maybe it will inspire you to start a garden on your street.

Frank the Mosquito

Last night I dreamed I was a telephone. I could dial myself by opening my mouth and blinking my eyes. While I was lying there dialing myself, a bird swooped down and caught me up in his claws. We flew all over the city looking at the houses. Finally the bird got tired and dropped me in the park. A man came by and picked me up. He started poking me in the eyes and talking into my mouth. He asked for Frank, which is really weird since I have a pet mosquito named Frank.
Permaculture at West Penn

According to Wikipedia, permaculture is an approach to designing human settlements and perennial agricultural systems that mimic the relationships found in natural ecologies. It was first developed by Australians Bill Mollison, David Holmgren and their associates during the 1970s in a series of publications. The word permaculture is a combination of permanent agriculture, as well as permanent culture. As another definition has it, “Permaculture is an ecological, holistic and sustainable design system and philosophy for human living space.

Isaac Weigmann has assembled a Permaculture Working Group, made up of individuals and groups exploring urban farming in the various neighborhoods of Pittsburgh. The group meets on a regular basis to discuss techniques and share experiences with their projects.

Recently, the Permaculture Working Group met at West Penn Park for a walking tour. Jeff Jaeger (owner of Octopus Organic Gardening) tried to keep track of the plants that were identified as edible, medicinal and useful during the walk through the woods at Polish Hill’s West Penn park. The list he assembled includes 30 different varieties of trees, vines, shrubs and herbaceous perennials. Among the identified plants were crab apple, blackberry, honeysuckle, sumac, wild cherry, catalpa, wild black cherry, burdock, knotweed, dandelion, wild carrot, wild rose, watercress, coltsfoot, serviceberry, elderberry, oaks, sugar maples, hawthorns, pokeweed, grapes, mulberry, yellow dock, black locust, prickly lettuce, mullein, bouncing bette, wood sorrel, ironweed, and many more.

There are a lot of gardeners here in Polish Hill, many of whom have a working knowledge of growing issues specific to the neighborhood. If you are interested in finding out more about permaculture, the next meeting will be Wednesday, August 5 at 6:45 pm at West Penn Rec Center. Jeff Jaeger of Octopus Organic Gardening will share projects for an orchard and a decommissioned swimming pool to get us thinking. More information is available at www.pittsburghgardenexperiment.org.
I'll never forget when we bought our house on Melwood Avenue. I think that we had seen just about every available old house in the city when we stumbled upon our gem. We lived in Point Breeze for many years. My husband and I decided to take a short cut home. It was our favorite shortcut, too. Up 28th street, up Brereton, down Dobson, across Herron, through Melwood out to Baum. However, this time was different, way different. A red-bricked two and a half-story beauty stopped us in our tracks. We saw the “For Sale” sign. “Call!” my husband demanded as he handed me the cell phone and simultaneously steered the car as if someone may steal it away from us overnight. Fast forward. The realtor took us on a tour of the house. She was a great salesperson, she really was. What she did not know was that she really didn’t have to work that hard. We were already sold on it. When I asked her how old the house was, she replied that it had been built in 1889. I smiled. “Wrong!” I said in my head. I, after all, was an old house fanatic, a history buff and mystery lover. I knew that homes built in the late 1880s had stained glass, oak floors and larger doorways. This house was devoid of those things. No, this house may have fooled others, but not me. This house was at least 20 or 30 years older.

It was not long before we closed on our house. We began taking up old carpet and scraping off layers of wallpaper and paint. Each layer of wallpaper was like uncovering a time capsule; the Brady Bunch era; the Eisenhower Administration; the art deco period; Queen Victoria’s wedding. Exploring the neighborhood, I quickly memorized the street names. At night as I tried to clear my mind of my frazzled, corporate day, I’d lay awake and wonder. I wondered why this was Polish Hill, yet the streets were not aptly named. The Mexican War Streets have Spanish names, like Rialto, Palto Alto and Buena Vista. Troy Hill has Dutch names like Goettman, Itin and Rhine. The only street name that came close in our neighborhood was Pulaski Way. That’s it. One tiny narrow street. I had to find out why. So I bought a notebook, took a few days off from work and camped out at the Recorder of the Deeds office and the library.

Looking back, I was glad that I was working out on a regular basis. Those ancient books were heavy. Relentlessly, I searched backwards, hitting historic pay dirt on my first day. The very first deed to my house lay before my eyes in all of its romantic, scrolled handwritten glory. Some people had the Declaration of Independence, for me it was the deed to the plot on Springfield Farm. Springfield Farm? Was I looking in the wrong book? Then I began to see names like Denny, Ross, Schenley, Harmar, Brereton. Those were Pittsburgh founding names. Names that began in old Fort Duquesne. My now dusty, blistered fingers touched the date of the Deed. 1861. I did a little dance. I was right. My home was a pre-Civil War belle. The crude drawings of chickens and other farm animals that we could not make out, on the original horsehair plaster of our walls now made sense. They were probably drawn by one of the Ward children or grandchildren, one of the earliest inhabitants of our home. The Wards came from Ireland. Johnston Ward had been a carpenter, and a fine one at that. Our house is sturdy as a ship. He signed many a doorway or windowsill in our home. Johnston’s oldest son lived in Lawrenceville where he too was a carpenter. Irish, English, Scottish and German settlers settled our neighborhood. The land had been bestowed upon Captain Denny after the Revolutionary War. Street names like Hancock and Revere Way began to make sense, as in John Hancock and Paul Revere. And thank Josiah Harmar, whose son married a daughter of the prominent Denny Family, for Harmar Street. And what about Melwood? Well prior to being Melwood, it was Fleetwood and before that it was Meyran. But isn’t there Meyran Avenue in Oakland I thought? It couldn’t have come all the way over here, could it? I dug deeper. Meyran Street had been named for a jeweler, Charles Meyran, born in Germany. He was a business partner of Louis Reineman and Reinhold Seidle. They were all jewelers who were also prominent landowners and bank owners among other thriving businesses. Mr. Seidle’s family had once owned a tavern in our neighborhood. My neighbor Annie, who lived to age 99 years, family had bought a business from Mr. Seidle. They ran a confectioner’s and candy store in the early 1900s on Meyran Street. Mr. Meyran owned Germania Savings Bank and the Manufacturers Gas Company. You will also take note that from Meyran, we have Gold’s Way and Jewel Street, nods to Mr. Meyran’s main profession. Dobson Street was originally Dickson. Finland had once been Fair Mount. Haydn was once a part of Brereton. Ridgway was once Ridge and part Monroe Street. Paulowna was formerly Preble Avenue. Ajax Way, formerly Henderson.

Before it was Polish Hill, it was Springfield, with a section called Millwood, which I’m sure, is what begot Melwood Avenue. As my older neighbors spoke, I listened with

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Knotweed, our only unwelcome resident

Knotweed is a bane for gardeners all over Polish Hill. But there is hope for those who cultivate Polish Hill gardens! Scientists in the United Kingdom have identified an insect that keeps knotweed under control in its native home of Japan and think it could do the same in Britain.

Japanese knotweed was first introduced in the United States and in the U.K. as an ornamental plant in 1825.

The team’s chosen insect is a small psyllid called Aphalara itadori that feeds on the sap of the superweed, stunting its growth. Currently, there is a team working in the U.K. on introducing the insect to the large invasive growths experienced in the U.K. There are teams working on the same concept here in the United States, where knotweed presents a problem in 39 of 50 states.

So, to all of our Polish Hill gardeners, take hope! Your savior may come in a tiny package, but it sounds like it is in the works.

Where in the world is Polish Hill?

It’s a common question that everybody living in Polish Hill hears. Generally, the answer is "Above the Strip District" or “Across the Herron Avenue Bridge.”

But really, the Polish Hill neighborhood is bounded by Liberty Ave, the 28th Street bridge, the Bloomfield Bridge and Ajax St. There are quite a few businesses on Liberty Avenue that are included in Polish Hill’s borders. FED EX, The Gage Co, Alarmex Distributors, Johnstone Supply, and Grainger can all call Polish Hill home.

The Liberty Avenue border includes the illustrious Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre, which is, coincidentally, celebrating its 40th anniversary this year. PBT was incorporated in 1969, produced its first season in 1970 and moved the company to their present location in 1984. The PHCA, also celebrating our 40th Anniversary, wishes the PBT a heart-felt congratulations on this auspicious occasion.

Ridgeway Street, where King of the Hill Beverage Center is located, runs parallel and one street above Bigelow Blvd and is the upper border of Polish Hill. One of the recently-opened businesses in Polish Hill is Machine Age Studios. Local favorites Shade, The Harlan Twins and Mariage Blanc have recorded at the studio. Machine Age is located at the intersection of Bigelow Boulevard and the Bloomfield Bridge, a very convenient location for access to the entire city.

For all those hard working people living in the center of Polish Hill, there are establishments to help them relax after a hard day’s (or night’s) work. Gooski’s, Sarney’s, Rock Room and Donny’s. Merriment, food, and entertainment abound. We are very pleased that Alfred’s and Tai+Lee Architects returned to Polish Hill this year.

Polish Hill is one of Pittsburgh’s most convenient residential neighborhoods, with ready access to Downtown and the bordering neighborhoods of the Strip District, Lawrenceville, Bloomfield, Oakland and the Hill District. Within our borders, we have a wide range of businesses from retail to manufacturing. It is a great place to call home.
Weekend of festivals

Immaculate Heart of Mary community festival an\n
There is no better way to celebrate summer than with a festival, and two is even better. For the second year, Polish Hill has had a weekend of festivals. Festivities kicked off with the Immaculate Heart of Mary community festival on Saturday July 18. The church festival lasted all afternoon and into the evening. The festival started the day with a bake sale, with some wonderful Polish baked goods as well as an assortment of breads, cakes and pastries made by neighbors in Polish Hill. There were games for all ages throughout the day as well as Bingo.

The highpoint of Saturday’s festivities was the performance by Ray Jay & The Carousels. Between the smells of the homemade pierogies and kielbasa and the sounds of Polish polkas, it was easy to enjoy the festivities.

Without missing a beat, the Art What You Got festival was up and running at noon on Sunday July 19. Some familiar faces returned to Polish Hill. Joy Ike, a local musician and a favorite performer from the first Art What You Got, was back for this year’s festival. New for this year was Timbeleza, a Brazilian drum group, who made a spectacular entrance marching up Dobson Street.

Nearly thirty artists took over the booths on Brereton, displaying paintings, pottery, accessories and more.

Art activities for all ages were provided by The Andy Warhol Museum, The Mattress Factory, Project 53, Fossil Free Fuels, Carnegie Library and Carley Parrish. Ms. Parrish, resplendent in a pink wig and dress, helped kids and adults make plaster hand casts to take home with them.

After last year’s hurricane crashed through the Art What You Got festival, we were especially pleased with the lovely weather we had this year. Breezy, flashes of sun and low humidity had the festival committee sighing in happiness.

The PHCA and the festival committee are looking forward to bringing the festival back for 2010.
Dance in Polish Hill

and Art What You Got were big successes for everyone.

Thank you to everyone that made the Art What You Got Festival a success.

Volunteers
Braiden Alan
Susan Atkinson
Pam Buchner
Linda Chuderewicz
Kevin Cloud
Mark Dobies
Terry Doloughty
Myra Falicz
Timothy Fishinghault
Colleen Helwich
Jen Kirk
Lou Ann Kotlinski
Louie Kotlinski
Susie Lofaro
Laura Meixell
Alexi Miller
Mike Miller
Catherine McConnell
Mark O’Connor
Doug Ramsey
Josie Ramsey
Ruth Rizner
Josiah Parkinson
Lindsay Ruprecht
Patrick Singleton
Dorothy Sinicki
Walt Sinicki
Jim Stawski
Donna Tecza
Jamie Tully
Sylvia Tully

Art activities
The Andy Warhol Museum
The Mattress Factory
The Carnegie Library
Project 53

Donations
Allegheny County Sheriff’s office
Ben and Jerry’s/Life’s Work
Breadworks
Fossil Free Fuels
Guyasuta Printing
Immaculate Heart of Mary
Mastro Ice
PA Council on the Arts
Jake Peterson
Polish Hill Happenings

West Penn Recreation Center: busting out all over with things to do.

West Penn Recreation Center, located on 30th and Paulowna Streets, boasts a basketball court, a weight room and a game room. During the summer months, the pool is available for Pittsburgh residents. A playground for the younger set and a ball field are located closer to Brereton Street. West Penn Recreation Center also has a generous sized parking lot, located right off of 30th Street. The facility is easy to get to and is well worth the trip.

Two special events are coming up this fall. On September 12, the West Penn Rec Center will hold a Flea Market. We had such a good time at last year’s Halloween party that we decided to do it again this year.

The weight room is open all year, but special weight training sessions will begin in September. The game room is open all year round, too. Tournaments will be scheduled in the fall for ping pong and pool. Men’s basketball league, karate, volleyball and in-house soccer are starting up in September.

Anybody like movies? A family movie night is scheduled for the fall. Also, the popular arts and crafts after-school program is returning.

New for this fall is the dinner program. Sit down dinners will be served at the Rec Center for families to spend some quality time catching up after a long day without the hassle of cooking or resorting to pizza. And no dishes to do!

Interested in aerobics? Please contact Dan Riley at (412) 622-7353. He would be interested in talking to you about getting enough people together to start an aerobics class.

So, spend an evening at West Penn. Meet the kids there after work, play a game, watch a movie, relax with dinner and spend some time with your neighbors.

Open all year
Weight room and cardiovascular area – M-F, 11am – 9PM, S 10am – 3pm

Starting in September...
Ping Pong and Pool Tournaments
In-house soccer, boys and girls ages 13-18

Men’s Basketball League
Every day
Weight Training: 5:30 – 7PM
Sit-down Dinner: 6-7PM

Mondays
Arts and Crafts – boys and girls aged 7-14 | 4:30-5:30PM

Tuesdays
Karate classes – Time TBD
Volleyball – boys and girls aged 13-18 | 4:30-5:30PM

Wednesdays
Arts and Crafts – boys and girls aged 7-14 | 4:30-5:30PM

Family Movie Night – 5-7PM (popcorn and juice served)

Thursdays
Karate classes – Time TBD

For more information about these and other programs, call (412) 622-7353.

Polish Hill Civic Association
Community & Event Calendar

August—November

Aug 4 | 6:30pm | Membership Meeting: West Penn Recreation Center
Aug 5 | 6:30pm | Permaculture Meeting | West Penn Recreation Center
Aug 14 | 9pm | Polish Hill Stomp w/ DJ Junior: Rock Room
Sep 1 | 6:30pm | Membership Meeting: West Penn Recreation Center
Sep 11 | 9pm | Polish Hill Stomp w/ DJ Junior - Rock Room
Sep 12 | Polish Hill Flea Market - West Penn Recreation Center
Sep 16 | 6:30pm | Council to Go - Polish Hill Civic Association
Sep 19 | 1:00pm | 40th Anniversary Party | PHCA
Oct 6 | 6:30pm | Membership Meeting - West Penn Recreation Center
Oct 9 | 9pm | Polish Hill Stomp w/ DJ Junior - Rock Room
Oct 30 | Children’s Halloween Party
Nov 3 | 6:30pm | Membership Meeting and Board
In these turbulent economic times, getting the most for your money is more important than ever. The biggest money pit for most people is their home. With energy rates on the rise, there are many steps you can take at home for little or no cost. Just follow these 10 simple tips:

1. BREATHE EASIER
Help your furnace or central air conditioner breathe easier – check the filter at least once a month and replace it when it’s dirty. At a minimum, change your filter every three months. A dirty filter can increase energy costs and damage your equipment, leading to early failure.

A programmable thermostat can save you money on heating and cooling. But even if you don’t want to install one right now, you can still cut your heating and cooling bills with your current thermostat. Dial down your heat to 68 degrees, lower at night or when you’re away. Save 3% on your gas bill for each degree lower that you set your heat over an 8 hour period. And when your air conditioner is running, you’ll use 4% less electricity for every degree that you raise your thermostat.

2. CHILL OUT YOUR WASHING MACHINE
Did you know that 90% of the energy used to wash clothes goes towards heating water? A laundry detergent designed for cold water washing usually works just as well. So switch to cold water and save $30 - $40 in energy costs a year.

Always running full loads in your washing machine can save 3,400 gallons of water a year.

3. RETIRE YOUR REFRIGERATOR
An old fridge (pre-2001) is one of the biggest energy hogs in your home unless you have an electric furnace or whole house air conditioning.

If you have an older refrigerator and replace it with a new one that’s Energy Star™ certified, you’ll notice the difference in your utility bills – because the new fridge will use about 40% less electricity.

*Find out how much that old refrigerator is costing you by visiting: http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?fuseaction=refrig.calculator

4. A BRIGHT IDEA
Take another look at Compact Fluorescent Lights (CFLs) – they’ve gotten better and cheaper recently, and they’re available just about everywhere light bulbs are sold. Newer mod-}

els can provide the same warm light as old incandescent bulbs. CFLs last years longer than old-fashioned bulbs, an added bonus if you have hard-to-reach light fixtures. Switch from old-style bulbs to CFLs and you’ll cut your electricity bill for lighting by around 75%.

If every American home replaced their 5 most frequently used light bulbs with CFLs, we would save close to $8 billion a year in energy costs... and we’d prevent greenhouse gases equivalent to the emissions from nearly 10 millions cars!

5. THE BIG TURN-OFF
The easiest way to save energy and save money? It takes only a fraction of a second: turn off the lights when you leave a room. And turn off your TV and computer when you’re not using them.

Plug all of your electronic equipment – such as speakers, printers, and modem – into a power strip. That way, after you shut down your computer, one flick of the switch on the power strip will turn off everything.

6. USE YOUR (SHOWER) HEAD
Replacing old shower heads with new low-flow models can cut energy and water use by 25% or more.

Faucet aerators and toilet tank volume-reducing bladders will also help conserve water. Fix your leaky faucets – a faucet that drips 3 times in 5 seconds wastes 13 gallons per day and 4,927 gallons per year!

For an investment of $10 or $20 per shower head, this simple step can save up to $145 a year, according to the US government.

7. FAST & THRIFTY: YOUR MICROWAVE
A microwave oven cooks 75% faster than a conventional oven and uses 80% less power. You can also save energy with a toaster oven or a slow cooker – they’re smaller than a full-size oven and require less power to heat.

Sometimes, only a full-size oven will do. But you can still save energy: keep your oven clean so it reflects heat more efficiently. And don’t preheat your oven unless the recipe insists on it.

8. THE ENERGY TRAP
The U.S. Department of Energy & the Environmental Protection Agency figure you’ll save around $34 a year in energy if you clean the lint trap in your clothes dryer before each and every load.

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A Master Plan for Your Home
By Architect Fred M. Fargotstein

It may sound like too fancy a term to apply to your home renovation project, but developing a systematic “master plan” for your home is prudent thinking.

In fact, my clients frequently choose to approach their home renovation projects as a series of phases, and this can make excellent sense for a number of reasons. Not the least among these might be cash flow; their personal priorities; the need to occupy their houses during construction; and for do-it-yourselfers, family obligations and the demands of their real jobs.

When contemplating a piecemeal approach to home remodeling, however, understanding the “big picture” is critical. Developing a logically sequenced master plan is the best way to avoid potentially costly missteps—particularly the need to “un-do” or “re-do” previously completed work. For instance, it often makes sense to have plumbers and electricians perform all of their “rough-in” work at the same time, and prior to installing any new finishes. And while new cosmetic improvements are always the most alluring, keeping up with required maintenance and arresting any ongoing deterioration must always take precedence.

Before you begin any work, step back to thoroughly understand your goals and constraints. Just as successfully painting a house is ninety percent in the preparation work, the same may be said for the best way to approach renovations to your home at a broader level—with a master plan.

Before you move ahead with planning for all your indoor and outdoor home improvement projects, get the customized advice you need from a design professional.

The Community Design Center of Pittsburgh’s RenPlan® program offers affordable in-home design consultations. To talk to a Landscape Architect, Architect or Interior Designer about your home and garden, contact the RenPlan® program today! 412-391-4333 or www.cdp.org.

Architect Fred M. Fargotstein is a RenPlan® program consultant. Fred specializes in preserving the character of older

For the ultimate savings: use solar power! A backyard clothesline uses no electricity, no gas, and will help your clothing to last longer.

9. SCRAPE & SAVE
Are you still rinsing dishes before you put them in the dishwasher? If so, you’re wasting time and hot water. Dishwasher manufacturers recommend scraping leftover food from plates and bowls, not rinsing them. One study found this simple step saves 20 gallons of heated water a day.

If you have an energy-saving cycle on your dishwasher, give it a try!

Your dishes will air-dry and you’ll save electricity that would otherwise go to heating up electric coils inside the machine.

10. GET PROFESSIONAL HELP
Our trained Energy Audit specialist will check out your home with advanced equipment that can spot leaky doors and windows and pinpoint other ways to save on your utility bills. An Energy Star™ Audit from Conservation Consultants can give you the answers. And the cost is surprisingly low.

For more information about Energy Star™ Audits, call Conservation Consultants at 1 (877) 376-2783.

Keystone Renovation and Repair Program (R&R)

With a little tender loving care, the older properties in Polish Hill can be brought back to life. New homeowners, however, can find it difficult to secure a loan through traditional means because of a low equity. The URA has a new program just for this purpose. The Keystone Renovation & Repair program is for homeowners in the City of Pittsburgh who earn less than $90,000. You can borrow from $2,500 to $35,000. There are no equity requirements. More information is available at URA.org. You can also speak to Sharon Taylor at 412-255-6677.
GIFTS, FOR YOU, YOUR FRIENDS, YOUR BUBCI AND DZADZA
Available at the Polish Hill Civic Association

Everybody needs a Polish Hill T-shirt.
Available in red and black, children’s and adult sizes. $12 each

Beautiful sunset view of the neighborhood by Polish Hill’s Mark Knobil.
Mark Knobil Postcards $1.25 ea
3 for $3.50, 5 for $5.50, 10 for $11.25

A lovely winter scene of Bethoven Street by Pittsburgh favorite, Ron Donoughe
Ron Donoughe Greeting Cards $2 ea

Mr. D’s Pierogi Pins and Pierogi Ornaments
Created by Pittsburgh artist David Watts, these unique items make great gifts. Pictured: pierogi pin. The pierogi ornament is the same, with a ribbon the color of sautéed onion.
Pierogi pin or ornament $5.00 each

Polish Hill and PHCA 40th Anniversary
1.5” Buttons 75 cents

From our home to yours—Polish Hill’s best home cooking.
Polish Hill Cookbook $5

Mail your order to:
Polish Hill Civic Association
3060 Brereton Street
Pittsburgh PA 15219
Allow 10 business days for delivery

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Check or Money Order payable to: Polish Hill Civic Association
From the Office of Mayor Luke Ravenstahl

Dear Neighbors,

I hope that you have had the opportunity to enjoy the wonderful summer weather we’ve been having. In the upcoming weeks the new school year will begin and we will have to turn our thoughts to more serious things.

This month the City will wrap up this year’s Pittsburgh Summer Youth Employment Program (PSEYP). With the help of federal stimulus dollars, federal community development money and The Pittsburgh Foundation, we were able to fund the $1.65 million program, hiring a record 554 youths – more than double the amount employed last year. We were also able to expand the program beyond conservation work to provide business internships and 18 hours of work-readiness training. By reaching out to our youth and encouraging a good work ethic and work skills we open the door to good job opportunities and set them on a path of lifetime success.

As we gear up for the fall, I want to remind you of the great opportunities available for Pittsburgh’s youth. In 2006, I made a commitment to reinvest in our students. I wanted to ensure that they were given opportunities for advancement and higher education by encouraging high school students to work hard and dream big. With that vision, Superintendent Mark Roosevelt and I launched the Pittsburgh Promise, a college scholarship program from students of the Pittsburgh Public Schools and City charter schools. In July, the Pittsburgh Promise released their first ever “Report Card to the Community.” I am happy to report that in just two years, we have seen significant improvements in our schools.

For the first time in those two years, Pittsburgh families are reconsidering Pittsburgh Public Schools for their children and fewer families with children are leaving the City. Proficiency levels are increasing and students of all ethnicities are enrolling in more advanced coursework. We have been able to retain 92% of the first-semester Promise scholars, which is well above national average. Most notably, our investment of $2.5 million has allowed us to provide 757 students with a post-secondary education in our Pennsylvania colleges and universities.

As the new school year approaches, now is the time for parents and students to recommit themselves to being “Promise Ready” so that they too can take advantage of this wonderful opportunity. To view the full copy of the Pittsburgh Promise “Report Card to the Community,” please log on to www.pittsburghpromise.org.

For more information on these initiatives, please contact my Office of Neighborhood Initiatives at 412-255-8680.

Sincerely,

Luke Ravenstahl
Mayor, City of Pittsburgh

Power to the People
By Leah Durand

The residents of Polish Hill owe a big thank you to Julie Sinicki for our Dobson Street Post Office box. It was initially removed in order to repair the sidewalk and was not scheduled to be returned! Julie spoke with Vince Cizaucuskas, the delivery supervisor for the Downtown Postal District, and persuaded him to return the mailbox.

Unfortunately, two other boxes in our neighborhood have been removed. We recently lost the boxes at Melwood and Finland and at the curious intersection of Harmar and Wiggins. It is likely that these boxes were removed due to low usage.

While the official date to lodge complaints has passed, you can still contact the Post Office if you have any questions or concerns regarding the removal of the mailboxes from Polish Hill. You can get a hold of Vince Cizaucscas at 412-642-0769. It might help to start off with a thank you for bringing the Dobson Street mailbox back.

Remember, you catch more bees with honey than vinegar!

West Penn Flea Market
September 12, 2009
11AM—2:30PM
Rain or Shine!

Table Fee: $10

Contact Mrs. Hill at 412-622-7353 by August 15 to reserve your table.
PHCA Membership Application 2009 (only $5.00)
A chance to make a DIFFERENCE

NAME: ______________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
(Street Address)   (City)       (State) (ZIP)
PHONE: _____________________________________________________________
EMAIL: _____________________________________________________________

______ REGULAR MEMBER   Or  _____ SUBSCRIPTION MEMBER
(Polish Hill residents only)  (Non-residents; entitled to newsletter only)

_____ New Member   Or _____ Renewal

For office use only:
REC’D BY: ________    DATE: ________     GOT CARD? _______  LOGGED? _______

Free Notary Service
FREE subscription
Free classified listings at www.phcapgh.org
Help build the neighborhood that you want to live in!
Discounted Car Rental through Enterprise Rent-A-Car
A VOICE on community issues
Return membership application to:
Colleen Helwich, 2nd Vice President & Membership Chair
PHCA, 3060 Brereton Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Polish Hill Voice Editorial and Advertising Timeline

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<th>Submission Deadline</th>
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<td>October 9</td>
<td>November 1</td>
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The Polish Hill Voice is published quarterly.
Advertisers/Photographers: Acceptable formats include:
Black/white camera-ready art
PC-based JPG, TIF or PDF (300 dpi or higher)

Editorial: Contributing writers, artists, poets and historians welcome! Please submit all content to the Editor via email at phcapgh@gmail.com or send to the PHCA office at 3060 Brereton Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15219.

TELL EVERYONE IN POLISH HILL ABOUT YOUR BUSINESS HERE!
Call (412) 681-1950 or email phcapgh@gmail.com
The PHCA’s mission is to: 1.) Serve as a referral resource for the residents of Polish Hill by accurately responding to questions, comments and concerns on topics such as housing, safety, beautification, and public image; 2.) Participate in initiatives to provide decent single-family housing that is affordable to low and moderate income persons, including the rehabilitation of existing properties as owner-occupied and support for prospective developers of such properties; 3.) Promote the beautification of the Polish Hill neighborhood, the viability of the community and the health, well-being and safety of the residents. Through its membership, the PHCA solicits resident input and follows a democratic process to take action on all matters affecting the welfare of the community.

Upcoming PHCA Membership Meetings:

PHCA Membership Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. Meetings are held at the West Penn Recreation Center, 470 30th Street at Paulowna.

August 4
September 1
October 6
November 3—Board Nominations