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### Chill Local



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## Another Mt. Airy development draws protest

by Stacia Friedman

A group of area residents braved the cold on Dec. 4 to protest the development of a new high-rise at the site of the former JOA Mart at Hortter and McCallum streets. Time was not on their side. A notice on the building announced that it is slated for demolition on Dec. 8.

"The timing is surprising since we've been trying to meet with the developer since June of this year to garner plan details and timeline," said Beverly Penn, one of the speakers at a community Zoom meeting on Nov. 4 hosted by West Mt. Airy Neighbors. Penn is part of a grassroots group who live near the site and formed the JOA Mart Ad Hoc Committee to express their concerns.

At the meeting, Penn explained that Zatos Investments, the developer and present owner of the former one-story grocery, had the right under the current CMX-2 Zoning to build up to five stories with a commercial tenant on the first floor and 24 residential units above. Under this zoning, the developer is under no obligation to provide off-street parking in an already highly congested area. It is also under no obligation to share its plans or meet with community members.



Neighbors turned out to help protest a new development at the corner of Hortter and McCallum streets. Photo by Julia King



City Councilwoman Cindy Bass says she stands with neighbors who object to a new five story high-rise where the JOA Mart now stands. Photo by Julia King

"It was our hope to either stop or influence the project. We need to move quickly as this developer will be redefining the look and feel of our neighborhood," Penn said. As it is, Hortter Street turns into the Indy 500 after dark

with cars and motorcycles whizzing by at 50 mph, said Penn. Making a turn off of McCallum onto Hortter at any hour demands the driving skills of a Steve McQueen due to a blind spot caused by a bend in the road.

"It wasn't like that when I first moved here," said Lanina Cavicchio, who is concerned that adding another 24 to 50 cars to the area will create not just parking problems but also a serious danger for pedestrians and drivers. "What about the daycare center directly across the street?" she asked.

"We know we can't stop development," Cavicchio said, "but our goal is to bring attention to what is coming and let the developer know that the community has concerns. A smart developer would reach out."

Zatos Investments has another development project currently in Germantown, on West Cheltenham Avenue right next to the Cheltenham Ave. SEPTA station. "But that's a totally different situation," Cavicchio said. "It's a commercial corridor, whereas this is a quiet residential neighborhood with children waiting for the school bus on the corner, people walking their dogs and mothers dropping toddlers off at daycare."

According to current zoning, (Continued on page 10)

## ZBA shoots down challenge to development

by Tom Beck

The city's Zoning Board of Adjustment unanimously denied the Chestnut Hill Community Association's appeal of a building permit issued to developers seeking to build a five story, 33-unit apartment complex with nine parking spots at 10 W. Bethlehem Pike, clearing the way for the proposal which was heavily opposed by residents to be constructed by right.

Councilmember Cindy Bass called the outcome "extremely disappointing."

"The ZBA was given a lot of information which could have helped our residents in more ways than one," said Bass in an emailed statement to the Local. "A denial of the residents' appeal is a prime example of why we need to ensure our communities are an active part in what is happening around their homes. In the future, we will continue our efforts to have the voices of our community heard."

The civic association's core argument was that the permit was issued in error by the city because the developer failed to propose a building with a 35 foot setback, something it felt the zoning code stipulated.

A developer on the civic's legal team, Josh Horvitz, cited



The CHCA is working with Summit Street Neighbors and the Chestnut Hill Baptist Church to "determine what the communities next steps will be" in the aftermath of the appeal's defeat. Architectural rendering

part of the city code that read the following: "Where any block frontage on one side of a street is divided into two or more districts, no structure shall be erected nearer to the street line than is permitted under the regulations for the district that covers the largest percentage of the street frontage on that block face."

Because the proposal fronts on Bethlehem Pike but also

Summit Street, the civic's legal team argued, it shall not be erected nearer to the street line than 35 feet because RSD-1, which mandates a 35 foot minimum front setback from the street, makes up the largest percentage of that block's zoning.

The developer's legal team, led by Carl Primavera, argued that the appeal was "really an attempt to defeat the project."

"That's why, in my opinion,

they're torturing the language [of the zoning code] or twisting it in a way, as good lawyers do, to come to a certain result," Primavera said. "If we apply the setbacks, we lose, like, 25 percent of the lot and the project, if it can be done, can only be done in a way which is really not good for the developer."

Janice Woodcock, principal of Woodcock Design, testified (Continued on page 10)

# CHILLie the Bear Bench off for a good scrub



A Sharpie vandal will send CHILLie back to artist Rebecca Thornburgh for a touchup.

by Walt Maguire

CHILLie, the popular bear bench outside Jenks playground, has had a hard time lately. Someone used a black magic marker to draw Xs and “Cut it out” across the seat, marring the whimsical map of the Hill.

It will soon be removed for cleaning and restoration.

The nine-foot fiberglass sculpture at the corner of Germantown and Southampton avenues has been a favorite stop for years and shows up in many family selfies. Artist Rebecca Thornburgh drew a whimsical interpretation of Chestnut Hill on the front, and dinosaurs and spaceships on the back, to represent everywhere else. CHILLie even has a coloring book that goes with it.

The next step will be to move CHILLie to Thornburgh’s studio a few blocks away, where she will clean and restore it. It will then be moved to an auto body shop for a new protective coat of urethane, which will protect it from future vandals. When that’s all done, it will go back to its spot outside the Jenks playground.

This will be the second time the bear took a trip. A few years ago, the fiberglass paws were damaged, and he was removed for more than three months.

# Crime Report

The following crime report is for crimes reported in Chestnut Hill and Mt. Airy for the two-week period from November 29 to December 6. Some dates earlier than the current period took place at that date and reported after the fact.

the motor running.

## Chestnut Hill

**Oct 19 Theft of Auto Parts.** A woman in the 200 block of E. Evergreen Ave. sold her car, but when it was towed the PA tags were not returned.

**Nov 30 Burglary.** The office at a stable in the 100 block of W. Northwestern Ave. was entered. Though desk drawers were opened, unclear if anything was taken. Exterior video was available.

**Dec 4 Theft of Auto Parts.** The catalytic converter was taken from a car parked on the 7700 block of Germantown Ave.

## Mt. Airy

**Nov 22 Theft.** When a woman tried to break up with her companion because he stole \$300 from her, he threatened to post a compromising video.

**Nov 27 Auto Theft.** A car parked in the 6200 block of Germantown Ave. was stolen.

**Nov 29 Auto Theft.** A car parked outside a laundromat in the 1100 block of E. Mt. Airy Ave. was stolen. Owner had left

Keys were left on the seat of a car at a gas station at Chew Ave. and E. Washington Lane, and the car was taken while driver was inside paying.

**Dec 2 Theft.** A woman shoplifted cleaning products and shrimp from a store in the 7000 block of Germantown Ave.

**Dec 2 Theft from Auto.** The passenger-side window was broken on a car parked in the 300 block of E. Mt. Airy Ave. A battery was removed.

**Dec 3 Theft from Auto.** A car charger was removed from a vehicle parked in the 1000 block of W. Cliveden St.

**Dec 4 Theft from Auto.** A car parked on S. Valley Green Rd. was broken into. A debit card was removed, then used at a gas station on W. Walnut Lane.

**Dec 4 Theft from Auto.** The window was broken on a car parked in the 500 block of W. Willow Grove Ave. A wallet and cards were removed. A debit card was removed, then used at a gas station.

**Dec 4 Theft from Auto.** A car parked on the 1000 block of Kitchens Lane was broken into. A purse was taken containing cards and \$1,000 cash. An attempt was made to use the debit card later.

**Dec 6 Theft of Auto Parts.** The catalytic converter was taken from a car parked on the 200 block of W. Johnson St.

**Dec 6 Theft.** A shoplifter left with hygiene products from a store in the 6200 block of Germantown Ave.

If you have been a victim of a crime and would like services or support, call Northwest Victim Services at 215-438-4410. For more information about crimes in your neighborhood, call the 14th District Headquarters at 215-686-3140.

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## OPINION

## Arnie



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## Pickleball, a beloved sport, is not just for older players

As Chestnut Hill and Mt Airy residents, and pickleball players, we are writing this letter in reply to Tom Beck's story to offer a more balanced view.

We appreciate the concerns of the immediate residents and would like to work together with our neighbors to improve the situation. Many suggestions were given, and we are certainly willing to be flexible. For example, opening at 9am during the winter is completely reasonable, as is closing earlier in the evening. Closing half of the courts during the winter would probably not make much difference in noise level, but it would drastically reduce opportunities for community members to play.

None of us were aware of the swearing "very loudly and very excessively" that was mentioned in the article. However, we can certainly monitor ourselves for any foul language, as well as how loudly we are talking.

We disagree with Mr. Beck's ageist statements, such as describing pickleball players as "geriatrics with wooden paddles." While some of us are in our 60's and 70's and beyond, players at the Water Tower are also in their teens and 20's. And if someone in their 80's or 90's is playing, that is something to celebrate rather than insult.

While some may feel that "pickleball is not a super athletic game," most players would disagree. It can involve physical stamina, athleticism, and strategy. It has been a great outdoor pastime during the pandemic. Playing pickleball is also a chance to be part of a friendly group that is diverse in age, sex,

race, physical ability, etc. Given the divisiveness in communities lately, we instead come together to share a common passion.

We applaud Councilmember Cindy Bass for her support of the Rec Center, and thank the Center for being a wonderful community hub. We invite our neighbors with concerns to come out anytime to meet us and talk over a cup of coffee. Try a game! We believe that working together would give the best chance of positive solutions.

Sarah Whitman, Chestnut Hill  
Abe Witonsky, Chestnut Hill  
Margaret Shapiro, Mt Airy  
Sue Osthoff, Mt. Airy  
Marilyn McHenry, Chestnut Hill  
Mary Jo McMullin, Chestnut Hill  
Marilyn Paucker, Chestnut Hill  
Eva Stehle, Chestnut Hill  
Debbie Rodgers, Chestnut Hill  
Linda Baldwin, Chestnut Hill  
Cheryl Pinkus, My Airy  
Karen Kulp, Chestnut Hill  
Tyson Smith, Mt Airy  
Tricia Walmsley, Chestnut Hill  
Ellie Seif, Mt. Airy  
Karen Freedman, Chestnut Hill  
Mike Moses, Chestnut Hill

## Recent pickleball article unfair to players and to the sport

The recent article on Pickleball is extremely biased and unnecessarily snarky towards the players. Calling pickleball players "geriatrics" is highly insulting. Is this an article about the noise of the sport or an article making fun of the sport and its players? A quick dictionary search of the word geriatrics - "a person who is very old and incapable or outdated". Is this really what you want to say about the players? Is the subtext of this article some sort of ageism?

So just to correct a few things. First, Pickleball was created as a sport for the entire family of all ages to play together. And it is played by people at the Water Tower of all ages. It is even a college sport. Second, it may be easy to pick up the basics but it is not an easy sport to play well. It takes a lot of speed and strategy and even endurance. If I just read your article and knew nothing else, I would conclude it was a sport for old farts that don't move and just bang their paddles and scream obscenities. This is not the case. Third, cutting morning hours is not an option as a kids camp takes over the courts at 9 a.m. in the summer and this would entirely shut out a large group of people who really need this play.

Perhaps most important of all, this sport has given people hope during the pandemic. It has provided connection and camaraderie and an outlet for exercise and fun. At a time when we couldn't do anything else, we could play pickleball outside and make new friends. I'm not sure I would have gotten through this period without it and I know many others feel the same. It is still a pandemic and we still really need pickleball. I know another youngish player in the morning who plays to stay away from his drug habit. Others talk about going crazy if they can't get out and play.

I realize there is a different noise from pickleball that is perhaps annoying to some. A sound barrier seems like a way to make the courts palatable for the neighbors. Belittling people that play, while certainly not without precedent in this political time, is not necessary or helpful.

Nancy Neill  
Lafayette Hill, PA

## Deer Kill Unjust

A recent Philadelphia Inquirer article about the annual deer kill in the Fairmount Park system prompted me to sound off. Journalistic integrity is hard to come by when reporting on the deer issue. The public expects accurate and fair coverage of the issue. It's only right that deer get a fair shake. In the interest of balance and thoroughness, a reporter would uncover a wealth of information in support of deer.

There is so much to learn. Noteworthy is the fact that white-tailed deer represent a significant and previously unappreciated vector of seed dispersal across North America, including native species. Trillium grandiflorum seeds are dispersed as well in eastern North America. This Trillium can be found in the Wissahickon.

Interestingly, the main stressor on the ecology of the Wissahickon is the human, according to Friends of the Wissahickon (FOW). The impacts are said to be "severe." High levels of visitation in the park can have a significant impact on the behavior of local wildlife as well.

Of course deer have an impact on the ecology, but the science that suggested that deer ravaged one park's ecosystem has been challenged. It

must be said that there's never been a proper vegetation study in the Wissahickon.

Scientific integrity around the deer issue here is nowhere to be found. Deer are scapegoats for larger ecological problems. Human practices also play a role in the big picture.

The war on deer is unjust and must be rejected. The annual intrusion is self-perpetuating. Shooting deer so habituated to a non-threatening human presence is a betrayal of trust and an open-air execution. Philadelphia Advocates for the Deer (PAD) will continue to speak out against this injustice.

Bridget W. Irons

## Thanks to all for Green Fest 2021 Support

The Greenspace Initiatives Committee would like to thank our community for the great turnout and support of Green Fest 2021 on Saturday, December 4. We were able to share conceptional plans for Mermaid Park, collect feedback on Winston Park, highlight our work with Friends of Pastorius Park, and green work with neighbors at the Water Tower and West Highland Train Station. Atten-

dees enjoyed music, raffles, meeting many stewards of Chestnut Hill's green spaces, and the first public outing of The Backyard Gnomes who will be highlighting our greenspace work in 2022. We raised close to \$460 and kicked off our 2021-2022 fundraising campaign. This collaboration of the Business Association, Conservancy and Community Association among other green stakeholders is really amazing and we are so appreciative of everyone's excitement for our newest projects - Mermaid Park and Winston Park. We encourage you to visit chestnuthill.org to make a donation to the Chestnut Hill Tree Fund this holiday season.

Thank you also to our generous donors: Night Kitchen Bakery, Chestnut Hill Starbucks, Hilltop Books / Friends of Chestnut Hill Library, Weavers Way, Tavern on the Hill, Spruce Hollow Landscape Design, Chef Kimberly Fonville, Woodmere Art Museum, Chestnut Hill Conservancy, Chestnut Hill Business District, Chestnut Hill Parking Foundation, Chestnut Hill Community Association and the Chestnut Hill Local.

Laura Lucas  
Greenspace Initiatives Committee  
Chair

## WRITE US

If you wish to respond to any of the letters or articles that you've read in the *Local*, please e-mail the editor at: [carla@chestnuthilllocal.com](mailto:carla@chestnuthilllocal.com)

## Policy Statement

It is the policy of this publication to anticipate community problems and prepare public opinion for their solutions, to review community problems as they arise and to present possible solutions, and, with the help of expert opinion, direct community thinking toward a solution consistent with local tradition and the best forward-looking interests of Chestnut Hill.

It is the policy of the LOCAL to publish all responsible points of view on issues presented in our paper. Unless otherwise expressly indicated, the opinions and points of view expressed in this publication are those of the individual writer who shall be identified by name.

Positions presented or adopted by the Community Association or its board of directors on any matter will be expressly identified as such.

All letters addressed to the LOCAL must be signed and must include an address and a verifying telephone number. All letters must not exceed 300 words.

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**OPINION**

**Let's stop backroom dealing on land development**

In October 2021, a few volunteers in Germantown initiated a Call to Action by the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority ("PRA") to do what it had not done in the past six years...maybe not ever in its history! We called on the PRA to act counter to the politics that has governed the disposition of publicly-owned property in the City. Specifically, we urged the PRA to use its authority to withdraw its award for the redevelopment of the Germantown YWCA building at 5820 Germantown Avenue. We said, "The PRA should do its job, and we would rally the community to handle the politics."

In 2015, the PRA awarded the right to develop the building to an entity known as Keith B. Key Enterprises (KBK), an out of town developer. Over the past 6 years, KBK has failed to meet the development requirements to have the PRA approve a transfer of title to the Building. On October 28, because of our activism, the PRA issued a Notice of Default to KBK, giving it thirty (30) days to comply with PRA requirements. On December 1, KBK was declared to be in default and no longer eligible as the redeveloper of the Building.

The YWCA building has a long, storied history of neglect by the City and the PRA, but the recent history that prompts this letter is a clear example of the political control over disposition of publicly-owned land that allows secret and backroom dealing by District Council members. Via City

Councilmanic prerogative, a District Council member has the power to transfer public land because only a District Council member (by unwritten rule) may introduce the Ordinance required for such a transfer. And what a District Council member wants, a District Council always gets through the power (the "prerogative") granted by all the other District Council members. All members will always vote in favor of any ordinance by a District Council member that concerns land development within that District Council member's district. It's "you scratch my back, and I'll scratch yours," a practice that for years has caused delays, encouraged Pay-to-Play by developers, and dissipated the Mayor's governing power. Councilmanic prerogative has caused blight and unfair dealings on many large publicly-owned properties. To name a few in Germantown - Town Hall, the Wissahickon Playground, the old Wyneva Hotel site, and the Germantown YWCA building, with the YWCA building as the best example.

Sitting majestically adjacent to Vernon Park, a 2-acre park in the central core of Germantown, the YWCA building has been owned by the PRA since 2012 when it foreclosed against Germantown Settlement for its failure to pay the mortgage on a PRA loan of over a million dollars. In 2015, the PRA asked for community support of a development proposal that would involve Ken Weinstein, Mission First, and Center in the Park as partners in developing the Building as an affordable senior housing facility. Center in

the Park is a senior services facility that operates adjacent to the Building, Mission Housing has a stellar reputation as a developer of affordable housing. Ken Weinstein has a stellar reputation for adaptive reuse of old buildings, with The Waldorf School on Wayne Avenue as a prime example.

At a community meeting, the Mission First/Weinstein plan was approved overwhelmingly by the more than 200 people present.

But District Councilwoman Cindy Bass objected to and killed the PRA's selection of the community-approved proposal, stating that "Germantown does not need more low income housing; it needs market rate housing." Bass chose KBK as the developer.

After six years, and with a two-month campaign that collected almost 1200 signatures on a petition and hundreds of emails to Mayor Kenney, Germantown is expressing a resolve to stop the

backroom dealing on land disposition. The PRA acted to give a win to Germantown. A community meeting, scheduled for December 7, will take on the next step of community involvement in the disposition of public land. Quoting a Hidden City reporter in 2015, "Germantown's the only neighborhood in Philly where 250 people would show up to a meeting to talk about a building." I think he's right.

Yvonne B. Haskins, Esquire



The shuttered Trolley Car Diner in East Falls held a Holiday Grad and Give on Saturday, opening its doors to give away a storeful of restaurant, office and kitchen supplies. Anyone taking an item was asked to give what it was worth to them, with proceeds going to the SHARE Food Program. "It was well attended and many people left with their favorite Trolley Car Diner and Trolley Car Cafe memorabilia and restaurant supplies" said Weinstein. "Ultimately, we raised more than \$2,000.



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# A few words by way of finding a home for Miss Frances Berri, formerly of Durango, Colorado

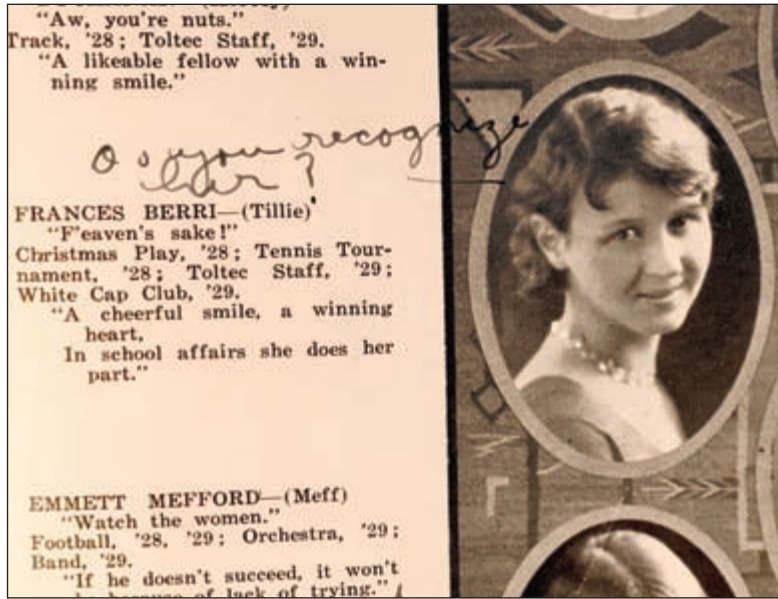
I am seeking here today some responsible person with a good heart who is willing to "adopt" the memory of a young woman who died suddenly in 1932. If "adopt" is not quite the word, perhaps "inherit" would do, or, more formally, "assume custody" for the memory of this young lady. The most tangible forms of that memory are her senior year high school yearbook from 1929 and her hometown newspaper's obituary of her, published in March 1932.

1929 and then went on to the University of Colorado at Boulder. Her friends named her "Tillie" and she was widely known, liked and respected.

She had a "host of friends," the newspaper says, and "wore ever a cheerful smile and in school affairs always done her part." According to "The Toltec" (her yearbook) she was a member of the social committee of the newspaper, the White Caps swimming club and the tennis team. She also took part in the Christmas pageant and was scribe for the Teelawauket Chapter of Camp Fire Girls.

Her copy of the Toltec yearbook is filled with amusing, sweet, very 1920s-slangy comments about her classmates and teachers. Given the time distance from when she wrote those words, they now seem touchingly poignant. In the class predictions section, she wrote that she'd "be personal secretary to a millionaire one day and then marry him." Unfortunately, that was not to be.

After high school she went to college in Boulder and lived in a



Frances Berri, 1911-1932; as the library is cleared, she might finally be remembered by no one.

rooming house on campus. She studied at the university for a few years but in her junior year, on the morning of Friday, March 3, 1932, she woke up appearing "pale and wan" and was encouraged to go back to bed while a doctor was summoned to the boarding house. Her family was

contacted when her condition worsened. By Saturday morning, March 4, she seemed beyond recovery. Later that day she died. No reason or diagnosis was publicly given. Her mother was not able to arrive on the train from Denver until Sunday. She brought Frances back to

Durango on Tuesday. The Wednesday afternoon funeral was held at the Presbyterian Church and burial was at Greenmount Cemetery, Lot 54, beside her one-year-old baby sister, Beatrice, who died in the 1918 influenza epidemic. Years later, Frances' father and mother would join their daughters on the family's shared headstone. A son, Theodore, survived.

Frances Berri came to be my "ward" when I bought a large quantity of books and papers one day about 30 years ago. I don't remember where. I am an antiquarian bookseller when I'm not writing. Besides books, I also acquire anything printed that is interesting, historical, offbeat or beautiful (but not art prints). In that way, I acquired Miss Berri's yearbook. I was amused by her sense of humor, as shown by the comments she wrote in her yearbook's margins. I was also charmed by the 1920s kids' slang she used. That was a very pleasant experience. I determined to mention those things when I put it up for sale.

Then I opened the envelope tucked inside her yearbook. It contained her obituary. I was deeply touched at once, saddened as though someone I knew had died. I suddenly felt protective of her. Over the years I've had to throw away lots of photographs or ordinary yearbooks or newspapers as worthless in the sellers' market. But not this little clutch of pictures and words about this very particular person. Just a kid, and an ordinary one at that, but I felt an inexpressible urge to preserve these little proofs that she'd once lived and roamed the earth as we do. So they've sat on the edge of my desk for 30 years.

But now I'm old enough to be concerned for little Miss Frances Berri's future. I have no idea where her next home will be. Perhaps an archive somewhere, a library, or at least into the protective custody of one of my readers who will take care of her memory until a more permanent residing place is found. Out west, in Durango, might be best, but life has its twists and turns.

Please email me. If more than one person wants to take over the curation of these items, I'll need to know something about you and figure out a way to decide. Thanks. HG

**Enemies of Reading**  
by Hugh Gilmore  
hughmore@yahoo.com

The young lady's name was Frances Berri and according to the Durango News, published in Durango, Colorado, for Friday morning, March 4, 1932, she was born on July 5, 1911, in that town. She graduated from Durango High School with the Class of

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# City moves to find a new developer for historic Germantown YWCA

by Carla Robinson

The long and circuitous story of the Germantown YWCA started a new chapter last week when developer KBK Enterprises had its rights to develop the property taken away by the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority after five years of failing to make progress on the project.

KBK, which is Black-owned and based in Pittsburgh, was initially awarded the rights to develop the property in 2016 after years of inactivity at the vacant building. But since then, the inactivity has continued despite expectations of its adaptive reuse as a mixed use apartment building, which has infuriated neighbors.

Emaleigh Doley, executive director of the Germantown Community Development Corporation, said the decision is welcome news to the many residents who have been complaining about the lack of action on such an important property.

“People may disagree about what they want to see happen there, but there is pretty much universal agreement that six years is too long for it to sit vacant. It’s had a negative impact, not just on the building but also on the surrounding community,” Doley said.

Anne Fadullon, director of the city’s Department of Planning and Development and chair of the PRA’s board of directors planned to outline the reasons for the board’s decision at a community meeting at the First Presbyterian Church on Cheltenham Avenue on Tuesday night.

For Yvonne Haskins, one of the neighborhood activists who led the push for just this result, the announcement was a hard won victory that took years to accomplish. For City Councilwoman



The Germantown YWCA, seen from Vernon Park.

Cindy Bass, who supports KBK, it’s a bitter pill that she says smacks of insider politics tinged by racial bias. For Ken Weinstein, a developer who is very active in this section of the city and lost out on the project in 2016, it’s a new opportunity to develop an attractive property right next to an adjacent lot he already owns.

And for Germantown, the historic community at the center of all this controversy, it’s a demonstration of just how much the economics of the neighborhood have changed.

“Seven years ago, there was so little interest in Germantown that we were the only game in town, and I wasn’t surprised when we were the only ones to apply,” Weinstein said, referring to the fact that he and KBK were

the only two developers who showed any interest in the property when the PRA put it out to bid in 2015, offering it up at a mere \$65,000. “Here we are almost seven years later and the situation is very different. I would expect a dozen developers to now be in the picture.”

Haskins and another community activist, Ann Marie Doley, organized the group they call Friends for the Restoration of the Germantown YWCA this past fall. The 33-member group, which collected 1,200 signatures in favor of dropping KBK and moving forward with another developer, is hosting the community meeting on Tuesday night to discuss next steps.

“Now we will focus on getting a process that is community driven

and transparent,” said Haskins. “This meeting is not about complaints, or the past, rather it’s to set up ways to prevent a repeat of what happened here and set a precedent for Town Hall, and other large public buildings.”

Weinstein said he planned to attend, as did Councilwoman Bass, who said she doesn’t consider the matter totally resolved and that she intends to keep fighting for KBK.

“I’m not a fair weather friend,” said Bass. “Until it’s final I’m supporting KBK. Because I don’t just think they’ve gotten a runaround, I know they’ve gotten a

runaround. There’s been a narrative that somehow KBK, a multi-million dollar corporation is somehow unqualified or unable to do this project. I will be attending that meeting and I plan to lay it all out, fact by fact, case by case, what happened.”

Haskins, who has been fighting to protect the building since 2015, when the city’s department of Licenses and Inspections declared that it was imminently dangerous and so derelict it was in danger of being torn down, tells a different story.

She said KBK never completed  
*(Continued on page 11)*



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## Mt. Airy business moves, asks neighbors input

by Stacia Friedman

Mt. Airy residents are so used to some developers erecting high-rise apartments without apparent regard for the impact on local traffic or quality of life that they were not sure what to expect when Lee Hecht, president of Able Plumbing Supply, invited them to a Zoom meeting. The purpose? To discuss the future of the property after Hecht moves his three-generation family business to East Germantown. More than 20 people participated in the online meeting moderated by Mt. Airy Business Improvement District Executive Director Janis Risch and Board Chair Ken Weinstein.

The most perplexing news to residents was that the property would not be renovated but demolished. "Structurally, it's become a nightmare," said Hecht. "It needs a new roof and, if I do that, I would essentially have to rebuild the whole thing. Plus, my business requires constant loading and unloading of trucks, which is an annoyance for area residents."

By law, Hecht doesn't have to ask anyone's opinion. The 8,000-square-foot property's CMX-2 zoning allows him to develop the space however he chooses, as long as there is commercial space on the first floor. If he wanted to



Located on the corner of Germantown and Meehan, Able Plumbing Supply was started by Hecht's grandfather in the 1950s. Hecht is not moving because business has been bad. Photo by S. Friedman

build yet another apartment complex, no one could stop him. But that is not how Hecht rolls. This

guy cares.

Located on the corner of Germantown and Meehan, Able Plumbing Supply was started by Hecht's grandfather in the 1950s. By now, the store is a neighborhood fixture. Hecht is not moving because business has been bad. In fact, during the pandemic, business has been good.

"When you commute to work every day, you are only in your home for three or four hours before you turn off the lights. You

don't have time for a renovation project. But when you are home 16 hours a day, you start to notice that your kitchen and bathroom need an update," said Hecht, who also has a showroom in Glenside, Flow Baths & Kitchens, which is managed by his wife, Rachel Lucks Hecht.

Participants in the Zoom meeting were hesitant at first. But then the questions started rolling in.

"Will it be another apartment

high-rise?" asked Jonora Eggleston, expressing the community's worst fear.

"No," said Hecht. "Definitely not."

You could feel the release of tension.

Kendra Gudgeon, from the East Mt Airy Neighbors Association, expressed concern about the space being vacant for a long period of time. Hecht assured her, "We will move as expeditiously as possible."

Allyson Lewis, who lives nearby, raised a point: "We are moving away from brick and mortar stores to click and order, so your business would have to offer a service not available online."

Hecht agreed.

Kasey Thompson expressed concern about "loading and unloading."

"There is no intention of repeating what was there. It will not disrupt the commercial corridor anymore," said Hecht.

Thompson asked if art groups could use the space. Hecht was intrigued.

Right now, the property lacks what realtors call "curb appeal." It's a long, squat, one-story building built on an odd angle, not quite on Germantown Avenue, not quite on Meehan, but straddling both. Its front door is open like a gaping mouth while the last of the plumbing supplies are carted away by the truckload.

Days after the meeting, Weinstein described it as "great." Hecht agreed. "It was very positive," he said.

So what's the future of 6815 Germantown? Maybe a community arts center. Maybe a restaurant. Or maybe an idea that has yet to be expressed.

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# Filmmaker/ex-NFL star shows his 'Giants' here Sunday

by Len Lear

Although I am a lifelong Philadelphian, I have always been more of a New Orleans Saints fan than an Eagles fan. Maybe it's the "Let the Good Times Roll" attitude; maybe it's the amazing food and music that squeezes out of every pore of Bourbon Street and the French Quarter in "The Big Easy." There simply is no other place like New Orleans, where hangups and inhibitions fall away like flowers in winter.

And in the mid-1990s my favorite Saints player was Quinn Early, a graduate of the University of Iowa who started his NFL career in 1988 with the San Diego Chargers and finished it in 1999 with the New York Jets. But from 1991 to 1995 he was a Saintly, sublime wide receiver in New Orleans. As a former junior varsity receiver in high school, I definitely appreciated Early's precise route running, sticky hands, quick feet and shifty moves. In 1995 he caught 81 passes for 1,087 yards and eight touchdowns. The Eagles would pay a king's ransom for a receiver with anything close to those ethereal statistics today.

But Early defies the stereotyped notion of a "jock." Majoring in art when he graduated from Iowa in 1987, Early has gone on to become an author, film producer and screenplay writer, history buff, martial arts instructor for more than 25 years, and Hollywood stuntman.

And on Sunday, Dec. 12, 1:30 to 3:30 p.m., Early will show a film he produced, "The Shoulders



Early will show a film he produced, "The Shoulders of Giants," via Zoom at Ebenezer Maxwell Mansion, 200 W. Tulpehocken St. in Germantown, on Sunday, Dec. 12, 1:30 p.m.

of Giants," via Zoom at Ebenezer Maxwell Mansion, 200 W. Tulpehocken St. in Germantown. It tells the remarkable story of Frank Kinney Holbrook, the son of a runaway slave who in 1895 overcame seemingly insurmountable obstacles and racism to become the first African-American college football player in the state of Iowa and lead the Hawkeyes to their first-ever conference championship. Early will introduce the film and lead a discussion after it is screened.

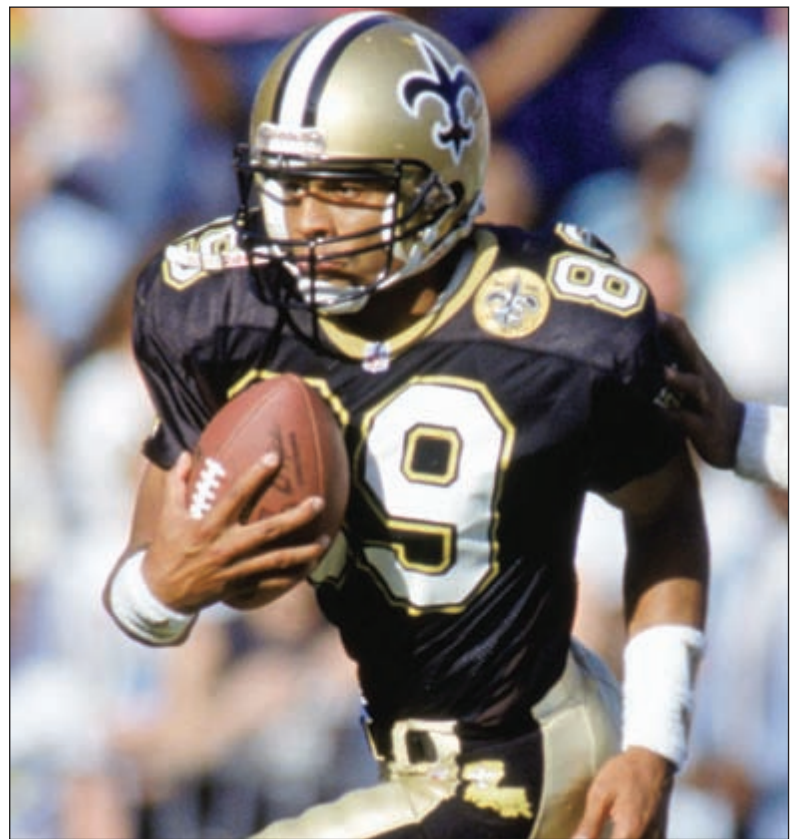
"I found out about Frank Kinney Holbrook by chance," Early told us in an interview last Friday. "I was contacted about working on another early football film, so I Googled football of the early 1900s, and a picture of the 1895 Hawkeye football team popped up. Frank Kinney Holbrook was

the only African American in the picture, so I instantly knew that I was meant to find him. I love to learn about stories like this and those who paved the way for future generations."

Early, a native of West Hempstead, NY, has been a stuntman/actor in Hollywood since 2010. In recent years, he has also gotten into writing and producing. His first film was a short called "Just Bake Cookies," a coming-of-age story about a young man named Quinton and his struggle to navigate his way from the teen years to manhood. Quinton is based on Early's son, Cameron. "When he was a teen and would get in trouble, I would bake him cookies and tell him that I believed in him," said Early.

The ex-NFL star has written four full-length feature screenplays, including one about Frank Kinney Holbrook and one based on "Bryant Acres," a book written by Early's late mother, Ann L. Patterson Early, and published by Quinn in 2017. The book is the true story of Sherrod Bryant (1781-1854), a former slave who went on to become one of the most successful Black landowners in the South, owning a 750-acre farm in Tennessee.

"My mother had the biggest impact on my life," Early said. "When I was 12, my father left home. My mom was a housewife with no money. She rolled up her sleeves and went back to college and got her bachelor's, master's and Ph.D. and became a physiatrist (an M.D. specializing in physical medicine and rehabilitation). She showed me that you can accomplish anything if you



Early's best year out of 12 NFL seasons came during the 1995 season as a member of the New Orleans Saints (seen here) when he caught 81 passes for 1,087 yards and eight touchdowns.

work hard enough. She was my hero!

"I wish my mother was here. She was my best friend. When I was in my 20s and 30s she tried to tell me about her research into our family history. I was more worried about what I had going on, though. When I read her book, 'Bryant Acres,' in 2016, I cried because I wanted to discuss it with her. But unfortunately, she passed away in 2013 of Alzheimer's disease."

Early is currently working out details with The Big Ten Net-

work, which will be showing "The Shoulders of Giants" on TV. He will also be making documentaries about "Black Pioneers in American Sports History Whose Stories Have Yet to be Told." The series is called "This is One."

For more information about the Dec. 12 screening of "The Shoulders of Giants," visit [ebenezermaxwellmansion.org](http://ebenezermaxwellmansion.org) or call 215-438-1861. "Bryant Acres" is for sale at [bryantacres.com](http://bryantacres.com). 100% of the proceeds goes to Alzheimer's research. Len Lear can be reached at [lenlear@chestnuthilllocal.com](mailto:lenlear@chestnuthilllocal.com)



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- 7901 Ridgeway St. (Fox Chase Rec.)
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For drop-off details and leaf collection schedules, call 311 or visit [PHILA.GOV/LEAF-RECYCLING](http://PHILA.GOV/LEAF-RECYCLING)

# ZBA shoots down challenge

(Continued from page 1)

on behalf of the developer. "When I listened to the [civic's legal team]," she said, "what I heard was picking certain provisions out of the zoning code without understanding how they all relate."

Woodcock disputed that there was any frontage on Summit Street and said that the setback would have had to apply to a front yard, which sites zoned CMX-2 don't have.

"They've taken a diagram out of the zoning code and tried to call Summit Street a front yard when in fact it's not a front yard," she said. "CMX-2 does not require setbacks because the purpose of that zoning classification

is to promote street frontage and to support commercial districts."

Bass also chimed in to support the community at the hearing.

"I'm asking that your decision today [is to] really stand with the neighbors, stand with the community, stand with the folks who live there and that we make the best decision, which is really going to minimize impact on the quality of life in this community," she said. "We really want to make sure that even in projects that are by right that there are things done which are not going to decrease the quality of life for those who have lived there through thick and thin, who have really held the neighborhood together."

Neighbors who disapproved of the project spoke to concerns with the aesthetics, the lack of what they feel is sufficient parking and the density.

In a Local article from October, CHCA executive director Anne McNiff told the Local that community members feel the size of the project would be "very detrimental to that location."

"It's right as you're coming into Chestnut Hill," she said. "It was really a hardship to the neighbors and the church."

The Chestnut Hill Baptist Church, built in 1834 and designated to the city's Register of Historic Places in 1973, is a mere 10 feet from where the property would be built.

"The Baptist Church is a historic landmark," said McNiff, "and the highest point in Chestnut Hill."

The CHCA, not giving up on its fight against the development, said it's currently working with Summit Street Neighbors and the Chestnut Hill Baptist Church to "determine what the communities next steps will be" in the aftermath of the appeal's defeat.

# Mt. Airy development draws protest



State Rep. Chris Rabb spoke at the protest. Photo by Julia King



Under current zoning, the developer is under no obligation to share its plans or meet with community members. There's also no obligation to provide off-street parking. Photo by Julia King

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SCAN ME

## Development

(Continued from page 1)

the property can have four stories, but if the owner adds a "green roof," it can go up to five. This is one of the top concerns of the protesters. Their goals include reducing the height of the building, eliminating the roof deck, increasing green space and trees on street level, addressing parking concerns and rubbish collection, adding pedestrian crossings at several intersections, and maintaining the architectural character of the neighborhood with its Wisahickon schist homes, 1940s apartment buildings and old-growth trees.

Besides starting a letter-writing campaign and distributing flyers, the JOA Mart Ad Hoc Committee met with Councilmember Cindy Bass to request a traffic study of the intersection. "Ideally, we would like the City to install speed bumps, a pedestrian crosswalk and perhaps a traffic light at the intersection of McCallum and Horticter," said Cavicchio.

Cavicchio and Penn are holding out hope that Zatos Investments will partner with the community for their mutual benefit.

"Right now, we don't even know if the building will contain condos or apartments," said Penn. "We hope to learn more."

For more information, email: [ConcernedNeighbors-JoaMart@outlook.com](mailto:ConcernedNeighbors-JoaMart@outlook.com).

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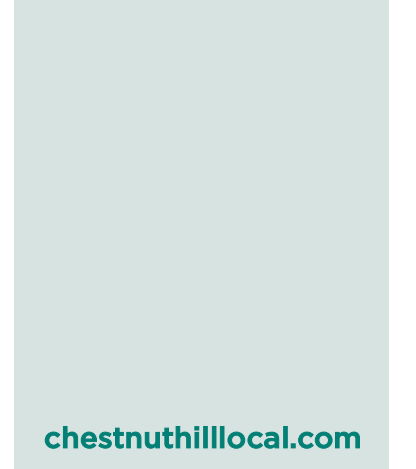
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# City moves to find developer for Germantown YWCA

(Continued from page 7)

any of the work it needed to do in order to start work on the building, and that it was the PRA, and not KBK, that was getting a "runaround."

The building at 5820 Germantown Avenue was built in 1915, and was one of the first racially integrated YWCAs. For decades it was a gathering place for local families.

Sold by the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority in 2006 to Germantown Settlement, the building had been a poster child for blight.

After the non-profit went bankrupt and the PRA foreclosed, it sat vacant for almost five years, deteriorating to such an extent that it was in danger of being torn down. Squatters had moved in, windows were broken and hanging open, and the roof was leaking badly. By 2012, the city's Department of Licenses and Inspections labeled the building "imminently dangerous."

The PRA took over the property again in 2013 and sought RFPs for its redevelopment.

In 2015, Haskins formed The Friends of Save the Germantown YWCA, after which Bass came up with \$3 million to repair the roof and stabilize the building.

That same year, at PRA's request, Weinstein partnered with two local nonprofits, the Mission First Housing Group and Center in the Park, to propose a redevelopment plan that would turn it into low-income senior housing. Bass, however, did not approve, and the PRA rejected the offer.

Then, in November of 2016, the PRA struck a deal with KBK, a company which Bass did support. KBK's initial plan called for a mix of market rate and affordable housing on the upper floors, with commercial and retail on the first two floors.

Then this year, after six years of watching the building sit vacant, Haskins and Doley started a new grassroots effort. And on October 13, Haskins and her group showed up at the PRA's monthly board meeting to ask them to withdraw support for KBK Enterprises and issue a new request for proposals.

"We had 33 people who were co-sponsors to this petition," she said. "I looked them in the eye and told them, you have the power to withdraw that award, and you know that it's the right



The Germantown YWCA, view from Germantown Avenue.

thing to do."

Weinstein said KBK's failure to commence work was not surprising to him, and not because of any fault of the developer. It just didn't make business sense, he said, because he was counting market rate housing as part of

the deal.

"I was shocked when the city awarded the project to KBK back in 2016," he said. "We knew the numbers wouldn't work."

Since then, Weinstein said, rents in Germantown have risen more than the cost of construc-

tion, which means that it might now be possible to develop the property without using low-income tax credits.

It's also not just the number of developers that will be different this time around, Weinstein thinks, but also the racial make-

up of them. And that has been a concern in the past, he said.

"We still have a long way to go," he said, "but there are definitely more developers of color operating in the city now, some of whom are active right here in the Northwest."

Last week, Bass agreed. Still, she complained about what she sees as a "history and a pattern within [the planning department] and the PRA about land disposition, which seems to be a very biased process."

"It's the same narrative that occurs where you have developers from outside the city who are highly qualified, somehow they come to Philadelphia and forget all their development skills," she said. "To act as if it's been a level playing field, that all developers are treated equally in this city is a fiction. It's not even like it's apples and oranges, because those are both fruits. No. This is like you get a bowl of fruit and I get a bowl of dirt."

"It's not right," she continued. "The bottom line is that it's just not right, the way things have been going. It doesn't feel right, and it doesn't look right for the city. I'm embarrassed by it."

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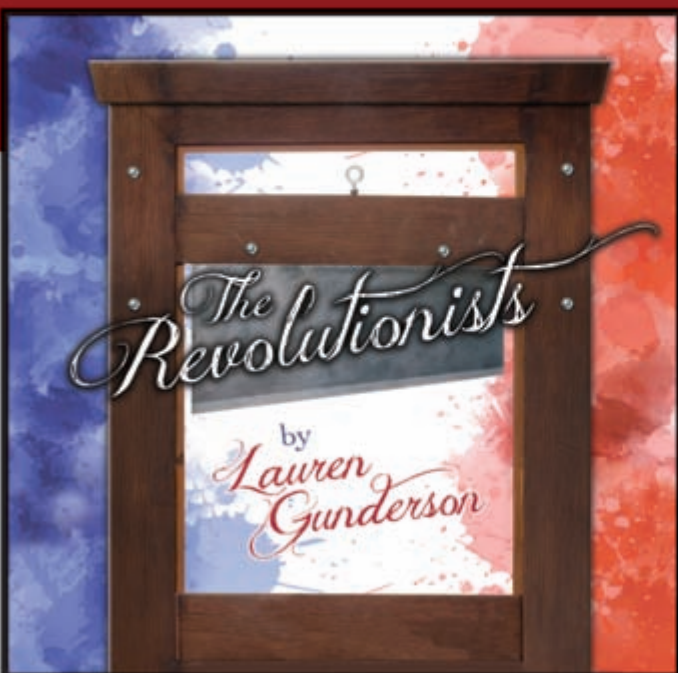


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# Acclaimed novel about lesbian lovers set in Mt. Airy

by Len Lear

During a recent interview with Mt. Airy professor and author Kyla Schuller, she urged me to read a new book, "The Days of Afrekete" (published on Oct. 19 of this year by Farrar, Straus & Giroux) and to interview the author, Asali Solomon, because "the entire book takes place in Mt. Airy and Chestnut Hill, and it is a very good book."

How could I resist? The next day I bought a copy at the Big Blue Marble Bookstore in West Mt. Airy, which is mentioned on page 76 of the book. After finishing the compelling story of two black women who have a turbulent lesbian relationship while students at Bryn Mawr College and then throughout their subsequent lives, I was able to interview Solomon via Zoom.

One of the two main characters, Selena, struggles with mental illness, and the other one, Liselle, goes on to live in Mt. Airy and have a stormy marriage to an ambitious white lawyer, Winn, who runs for the state legislature. For me, the best part of this extra-



Asali Solomon is the acclaimed author of "The Days of Afrekete," which takes place in Mt. Airy and was published on Oct. 19 of this year by Farrar, Straus & Giroux. Photo by Ron Nichols

ordinary book was the vignettes during a party for Winn's campaign contributors. There is dark humor, vulgarity and a wicked dialogue that begs to be made into a movie. Winn is an ironic

name, by the way, for a man who turns out to be a loser.

According to a recent New York Times review by Molly Young, Liselle is "one of those fictional characters so three-dimen-

sionally rendered that it's easy for a reader to slip into their expensive shoes and wander through a world more realistic than reality. In Liselle, Solomon has invented a character who comes to the

mind's eye in high definition with anxieties, jokes, memories, furies and survival instincts all present in prose as clear as water."

Solomon, whose first name Asali is Swahili for "sweet like honey," is an associate professor of English at Haverford College, where she has been since 2010. Growing up in West Philadelphia, she attended the Baldwin School, an elite private girls' school in Bryn Mawr, and then graduated from Central High School. She earned a Ph.D. in English from the University of California at Berkeley in 2002.

Solomon won an award from the National Book Foundation for "Get Down" (2008), a short story collection, and won raves for her novel, "Disgruntled" (2015), the story of 8-year-old Kenya Curtis, who lives in West Philly in the late 1980s and is alienated from her friends because of her upbringing, which mirrors Solomon's own childhood.

"I remain disgruntled always," Solomon said last week. "It is my natural emotion."

In "Disgruntled," Solomon examines what she calls the mythologies of childhood.

"The thing about being young," she has said, "is that you don't know the world is not really waiting to embrace you. You know, a lot of the time the world is at best indifferent and at worst actively hostile."

Everything Solomon writes about takes place in Philadelphia. "I just felt this book had to take place in Mt. Airy because it has the right kind of urban aspiration and class aspiration for Liselle," she said.

Is any part of the book autobiographical? "None of this happened to me," Solomon insisted. "There is almost nothing of me in it. This is me imagining other people's lives."

Nevertheless, she said, "I have been getting feedback about the presence of gays in Mt. Airy." (Advocate Magazine, a national gay publication, has written that there are more gay women in Mt. Airy than in any other neighborhood in the country.)

The word "Afrekete" in the book's title comes from a character in "Tar Beach," a book by Audre Lorde (1934-1992), who called herself a "black lesbian mother, a warrior and a poet." According to Solomon, "The name also is a warrior deity, a trickster figure, a black queer woman symbol."

Solomon, said that in writing "Afrekete" she lifted the structure of "Mrs. Dalloway" (by Virginia Woolf) and "Sula" (by Toni Morrison). At Haverford College, she teaches African American Literature, including courses in Black Horror, New Black Arts Movement, and Memoir and Mythology. "I am reaching an incrementally larger audience with each book," Solomon said. "I was nervous about the New York Times review, but I was pleased because it was very positive."

Solomon, who lives with her husband and two children, has a sister, Akiba, who is a senior editor for the Marshall Project, an online journalism organization that explores issues of criminal justice. Akiba is co-author with Kenrya Rankin of the anthology, "How We Fight White Supremacy" (2019).

For more information, visit [asali-solomon.com](http://asali-solomon.com). Len Lear can be reached at [llenlear@chestnuthilllocal.com](mailto:llenlear@chestnuthilllocal.com).

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## SPORTS

## PC girls bring experience and young talent to title quest

by Tom Utescher

In early 2020, the last time the Pennsylvania Independent Schools Athletic Association held a girls' basketball state tournament, Penn Charter ended its season with a 65-59 loss to Abington Friends in the championship game.

Last Wednesday, the Quakers launched their 2021-22 season by playing those same Abington Friends Kangaroos, and this time PC prevailed, 55-22. It was the team's first appearance in Penn Charter's new Graham Athletics and Wellness Center and the 100th win with the Quakers for head coach Joe Maguire, who is now in his seventh season with the squad.

The game was also distinguished by an impressive varsity debut for freshman guard Kaylinn Bethea, a new student at Penn Charter this year. She led all scorers with 19 points while collecting seven rebounds and eight steals. The returning junior tandem of Aleah Snead and Bella Toomey also made a significant mark on the stat sheet. Snead, a tall guard, recorded 15 points, eight boards, and five steals, while Toomey, a forward, logged 10 points, eight rebounds and five steals.

In an abbreviated 2020-21 season, no official Inter-Ac League champion was crowned, but Penn Charter shared first place with the Academy of Notre Dame. Each team won on its home court in the home-away series, while winning all of their other contests against

league rivals. Germantown Academy, which captured outright or shared the Inter-Ac championship from 2015 to 2020, finished third last winter, losing twice to both the Quakers and the Irish.

Charter was ready to go for the 2021-22 season tip-off last week, bolting to an 18-3 lead over the first five minutes and settling in at 23-7 at the end of the opening quarter. Abington Friends played better in the second period and saw only two points added to its deficit for a 34-16 tally at the half. PC pulled away again in the second half, outscoring the 'Roos 21-6 as Maguire filtered his entire roster onto the floor during the fourth quarter.

Senior forward Amani Rivers, sidelined by injury for much of the past two seasons, contributed four points and five boards, and the Quakers received three points from fellow senior Kayla Bradby, who also plays soccer and lacrosse for PC. The other four points were provided by freshman guard Kendall Small.

The third senior on the PC roster is tenacious guard Maddie Shoup, a three-sport athlete. Both she and her junior sister, Gracie, were out of town last Wednesday. Each of the siblings has committed to play lacrosse in college, and they were starters on PC's top-20 nationally ranked team last spring.

The Quakers graduated five players from their 2020-21 team, but only guard Kaitlyn Hnatkowski was a regular starter. Unfortun-



One of three seniors on a young Penn Charter squad, guard Maddie Shoup should be able to lose the facemask this season. Photo by Tom Utescher

nately, Penn Charter will be missing an impact player who is still a junior at the school. Kelsey Bess, a guard/forward who has been on the varsity team since she was in eighth grade, has been sidelined with an ACL injury.

In addition to the players already mentioned, the roster this season includes sophomores Ava Egan, Ashlie Johnson, and Grace Walter, freshman Jul Toomey (Bella's sister), and eighth-grader Liv Viera.

This winter Coach Maguire will once again be assisted by former Penn Charter standout Brianna Butler, who started for Syracuse University in the 2016 NCAA championship game. Assistant Lauren Gold is an Abington Friends grad who both played and coached at Shippensburg University. Her younger sister, Camryn, played for Penn Charter for one season. The third Quakers assistant this year, Chris Burnett, is a member of the Penn Charter fac-

ulty who has experience coaching boys' basketball.

While vying for the Inter-Ac title this season, the Quakers can expect challenges from the usual suspects. Notre Dame returns a strong team headed by prolific shooting guard Maeve McErlane, a DePaul signee.

Germantown Academy, still the official defending league champion, also has a talented squad and will be looking to step back into the limelight.

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# SPORTS

## Athletic, talented junior class will power Mount basketball

by Tom Utescher

In its last basketball skirmish before these encounters become official, Mount St. Joseph Academy hosted Pope John Paul II High School for a scrimmage late on Saturday afternoon.

The trial run followed a regular game format except for the team score being zeroed out at the end of each quarter. The sum of the scores from the four periods revealed a 47-21 advantage for the Mount Magic over the visiting Panthers.

Mount St. Joe's graduated four players from last year's team, including Division I recruit Grace Niekelski, a six-foot forward who has already started in several games for Dartmouth College. However, the 2020-21 team relied heavily on the sophomore class, and those players are back as juniors to lead the Magic, who have no seniors on the roster.

The Mount's co-captains this season are a pair of 11th graders, forward Georgia Pickett and point guard Keirsten Pumilia. A minor injury caused Pickett to sit out Saturday's scrimmage. Their classmates, guards Lauren Hoffman and Chloe McGroarty, were starters for the Mount last winter.

The other current juniors who were already in the MSJ program are center Alexa Kennedy and guards Carlie Shouldis and Julia Donahue. They have a new classmate and teammate in forward Erica Martin, a transfer from Council Rock North High



The Mount's basketball team captains for 2021-22 are juniors Georgia Pickett (left) and Keirsten Pumilia. Photo by Tom Utescher

School, where the current head coach, Jim Roynan, is a former Mount mentor.

Now a sophomore, forward Emily Birmingham was the only freshman on the Mount St. Joe varsity last season. She's now joined by fellow soph and forward Audrey Kukla, and this year's

lone freshman representative is forward Addy Smith. Smith's mother, the former Denise Cattie, played basketball at Germantown Academy and went on to become a player and captain at NYU.

Last Saturday Hoffman had the hot hand at the outset. Starting out with an "and-one" three-

point play, she then scored off a steal and deposited a pair of three-point field goals. Martin lobbed in a "three" in the final minute to help the Magic end the first quarter with a 15-6 lead.

Hoffman continued to score and Pumila and Donahue added points as an 8-3 second quarter

gave the hosts a 23-9 halftime lead. About the only downside was that the Mount also had more personal fouls; these were tabulated for the entire half, as usual.

McGroarty came on for 10 points in the third round to lead the Magic to an 18-6 advantage for the quarter. With the Mount starters mostly on the bench, the fourth frame was a 6-6 standoff. The Magic had continued to foul, putting their guests into the double bonus, but the Panthers did not perform well at the free throw line.

Hoffman's early efforts resulted in a game-high 17 points, complemented by McGroarty's 10 and by seven points from the freshman, Smith. There were four points from Martin, two apiece from Pumilia, Donahue, Birmingham and Shouldis, and one from Kennedy.

The Magic were due to officially launch their season with another appearance at the tip-off tournament held annually at Twin Valley High School in western Chester County. Within their own Athletic Association of Catholic Academies, the Mounties will square off against traditional powers such as Villa Maria and Gwynedd Mercy. They will no longer engage one of the league's best teams in recent years; St. Basil Academy closed its doors for good in June.

Head coach Matt Feeney and assistant coach Joe Pensabene are back for their third season piloting the Magic.



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# SCH, GFS well-matched in wrestling opener

by Tom Utescher

Most winter sports teams were able to play at least a limited game schedule last winter, but no form of social distancing was possible in wrestling competition. Just now, grapplers are getting back on the mat to officially compete for the first time since the 2019-2020 academic year.

Springside Chestnut Hill Academy and Germantown Friends School were back at it last Tuesday, when the SCH Blue Devils hosted the Tigers in the dual-meet season opener for both schools.

Neither team had a full line-up in the 14 weight classes, and this turned out to be a very competitive contest. The teams were tied 30-30 when in the final match, the 285 lb. bout, senior Mac Levin secured a pin to boost the Blue Devils to a 36-30 victory.

Springside Chestnut Hill picked up one other pin during the afternoon, collecting the rest of its team points through four GFS forfeits. Germantown Friends won four matches through pins, and one more through an injury default.

There were double forfeits in three other weight classes, and two of them began the day's proceedings in the 106 and 113 lb. flights. SCH then took a 12-0 lead in the meet score as forfeits by the Tigers were accepted by Blue Devils senior Jack Sanderson at 120 lbs., and by sophomore Andrew Mahony at 126. After



Germantown Friends senior Will Jiggetts looks to the official to signal a pin in the 145 lb. match. Photo by Tom Utescher

that, there was a mutual forfeit in the 132 lb. class.

The first actual action on the mat, in the 138 lb. category, featured SCH's Jorge Bonvicini and fellow sophomore Levi Rudick of the Tigers. Rudick quickly scored a takedown and remained in control until pinning his rival with 37.3 seconds left in the opening period.

Another first-period pin followed for GFS at 145 lbs. Here, Blue Devils freshman Finn Whit-

tle was pinned with 16.2 seconds left by Will Jiggetts, just one of two seniors on the Tigers' roster (along with Dante Billups).

Facing Germantown Friends freshman Garnet Ramsey, SCH sophomore Thomas Strain injured a knee early in the 152 lb. match and was unable to continue. His withdrawal resulted in an 18-12 lead for the visitors in the team score.

The Tigers' advantage continued to grow through several more

matches. At 160, SCH freshman Nasir Yard scored an early takedown, but by the end of the first round, Tigers 10th-grader Simon Labor had engineered a 5-3 lead in points. Late in the second period, Yard was once more in the controlling position, but Labor scored a reverse and then a pin with 25.1 ticks to go.

Billups, one of the visitors' most experienced grapplers, built up an 11-2 lead in his first period against a junior for the host team,

Micah Ford. Starting on the bottom for the second round, Billups reversed and pinned Ford with 1:29 still to go in the period.

The visitors' fortunes began to change when they had to forfeit to SCH senior R.J. Moore in the 182 lb. class. Next up at 195, Blue Devils senior Ben Rodgers pinned GFS sophomore Dean DeSeve 34 seconds into the match, bringing the home team closer to the Tigers in the team score, 24-30. A Germantown forfeit at 225 lbs. to senior Joe Cassidy of Springside Chestnut Hill tied it up at 30-all.

In the deciding match at 285 lbs., the action quickly went to the mat with a takedown by a senior veteran for the Devils, Mac Levin. GFS sophomore Leo Katowitz stayed on his stomach for awhile, but eventually Levin turned him and got the pin with 29.6 seconds left in the opening period.

Outside of the circle, Ed Dingley returns for his seventh season as head coach of the Blue Devils, and back as his assistant is former Chestnut Hill Academy wrestler Joe Aversa ('07).

GFS also has a former wrestling alum, Jared Lazorko ('16) back to help out sixth-year head coach Paul Hammond. Anthony and Idris White have come on board the coaching staff, as well. Both brothers are products of the Philadelphia Catholic League who wrestled in college, Anthony at Millersville University and Idris at the University of Maryland.



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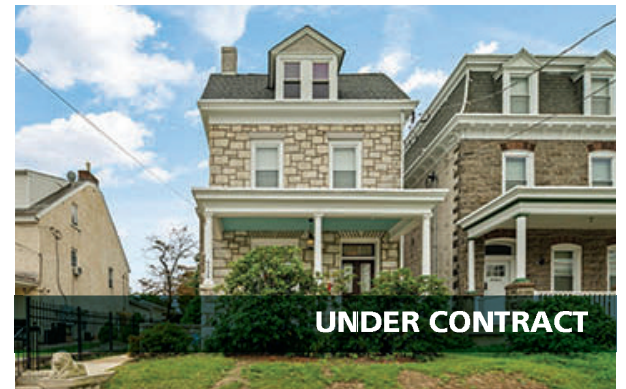
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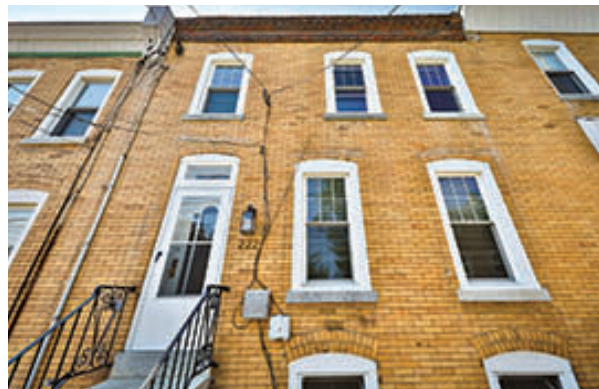
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## Supply shortages on Christmas trees, best to buy early

by Stacia Friedman

This year, there's a run on almost everything, including Christmas trees. That was what brought Chestnut Hill resident Gail Cataldi to Laurel Hill Gardens on the first Monday following Thanksgiving.

"I'm afraid there will be a shortage," said Cataldi, who was looking for a seven-footer.

Her concerns were echoed by Laurel Hill Gardens manager Susan Dannenberg. When asked if they will be selling trees straight through to Christmas Eve, she said, "We sell them until we run out. But that will happen before Christmas."

For more than 40 years, Laurel Hill Gardens, 8125 Germantown Ave., has been a go-to place, not just for Christmas trees, but also tree stands and all the other decorations needed to draw wide-eyed wonder from children. That includes a sparkling tree topper, LED lights, bows and mistletoe. (LEDs use at least 75 percent less energy than traditional lights and last 25 times longer.)

"All our trees are Fraser firs from North Carolina," said Dannenberg, who advises keeping them well watered and using a preservative. If you buy them fresh, Fraser firs are among the longest lasting Christmas trees. If you water them regularly, they will

last four to six weeks.

Trees at Laurel Hill Gardens come in six sizes, from five to 12 feet high. They offer delivery and decoration services for indoors and outdoors, an excellent option if you are wary of climbing ladders or unraveling yards of electric wiring. They also have a large assortment of Christmas wreaths.

Tom and Tamar Jacobson of Mt. Airy selected a wreath early this year. "I'm Jewish and Tom is Christian so we compromised and have a wreath instead of a tree," Tamar said.

### Tree tips

How do you know if it's fresh? Grasp a branch to test for strength and freshness. A fresh tree should feel supple with only a few green needles coming loose when pulled.

Make sure your tree is not too close to a heat source, like a radiator or a window, since heat and sun tend to dry trees out more quickly. Always turn off your tree lights when leaving the house or going to bed.

If babies or toddlers will be in the house, make sure there are no small decorations or tinsel within their reach. Extension cords and light cords also should be beyond the grasp of tiny hands. Some holiday plants such as real mistletoe, live poinsettias and holly berries are toxic if swallowed, according to the Children's Health and



Tom and Tamar Jacobson choose a wreath at Laurel Hill Gardens. Photo by Stacia Friedman

Safety Association [safekid.org](http://safekid.org).

Christmas trees and dogs are a bad combo. Tree water can poison your pet, and fir tree oil will cause dogs to vomit, so cover the base of the tree stand with tin foil to avoid it turning into a drinking fountain. Chewing on an electric light cord also can lead to disaster. Avoid using glass ornaments if you don't want to pay an astronomical vet bill for internal bleeding. And you might want to forego tinsel. Another solution? Keep Fido in a crate or in a different part of your home.

Cats present even more problems. By nature, they are climbers. Your Christmas tree is their Mt. Everest! According to Chewy.com, whether your tree is artificial or real, you need to firmly secure it. Besides a stand, consider placing eye bolts in the wall and using clear fishing line to hold it in place. Keep ornaments high and avoid anything that dangles. Make sure the stand is covered so kitty doesn't drink from it.

### Environmental concerns

If anyone in your family is concerned about the environmental impact of Christmas trees, there is good news. A real tree spends around eight years growing in the field before it is harvested. So instead of being manufactured like an artificial tree, a real tree converts CO2 into oxygen, provides a

(Continued on page 23)

## Grocery prices to spike yet again, highest in 30 years

I never thought I'd be saying this, but I might have to listen to my mother and get my own captain's chest freezer, the kind she's been loving for years in her own basement.

I didn't want to go here. I didn't want to have the second freezer filled with pork chops, Totino's Pizza Rolls, freezer-burned cod, chicken fingers and other things I couldn't use before they went the bad way.



But if the grocery store predictions I'm seeing hold true as 2022 arrives, we may all be in for a sticker shock surprise. And ahoy! A captain's chest of my very own may be on the horizon, with hopes there won't be a major power outage any time soon. (Let's not forget the infamous July hailstorm that knocked out power for days here in Flourtown, and took the contents of my whole freezer and fridge. As I've said before, it was like a little Italian death for me.)

In all seriousness, a great grocery debacle is coming our way and is more than 18 months in

the works. We apparently had a honeymoon period between 2015 and 2019, when grocery prices remained pretty static.

Enter the pandemic. If we thought black market toilet paper and questionably effective, high-priced hand sanitizer were the worst it could get, we all need to think again. Even the moderate yet troublesome price increases we've seen over the past year-and-a-half will pale in comparison to the grocery apocalypse we are in for when the new year rings in.

I didn't want to do this column before the holidays, but it's like a ticking time bomb, with a January 1 reveal. Lack of labor, unemployment, the cost of refrigerated and even regular transportation to deliver the goods, as well as manufacturing and livestock hiccups are all catching up like a bad, bad Covid hangover, and it will make almost everything we buy cost a lot more next year. As in three weeks from now.

And we're talking products from all the big companies, like Kraft, Tyson, even Clorox, according to reports this month. Everything is slated to increase about 8% more than the 6% it already has this past year. To put it in perspective, the norm is about 2% per year. This upcoming hike will be the highest since about 1990, when dramatic infla-



Rebecca Franks of Erdenheim and her son Ethan unloading her weekly groceries. Photo by April Lisante

meatballs in the gravy, April? Shame on you!"

The problem will exist whether you are an in-store, aisle-by-aisle shopper, or an online order and pick-up fanatic.

Rebecca Franks is an example of someone I consider to be a grocery pro. The Erdenheim mother of two picks up her groceries from three different local supermarkets and in multiple online orders each week, one order for her family of five, which includes her mother, and another order for her mother-in-law and aunt who live in Oreland. She knows all the prices, she knows what's on sale, and she's already planning for the price increases.

"I've kind of switched things up," said Franks. "I generally do not buy red meat because it's so astronomically expensive. Produce has gone up. I look around for what is cheapest."

"I'm going to continue to shop around and clip coupons," she said. "And there are certain things I'll buy in bulk at Sam's Club."

What are some other ways we can combat the rising prices for at least the first half of 2022, before we can hope to see some relief later in the year? I rang up my Supermarket Guru, Phil Lempert, an L.A.-based Today Show and Inside Edition favorite, for advice. (Continued on page 22)

tion reared its head.

If we really look at our grocery receipts, we've already seen that we've paid more for holiday dinners this year than last year. And it's a disproportionate problem: reports cite that lower-income families pay more of a percentage of their incomes for groceries

than those with higher incomes.

But things like steak and bacon already have seen increases in the mid-20% range. Can't imagine how much we'll be paying for that Sunday brunch slab of bacon. Fifteen dollars? Twenty dollars? Time to go vegan? I can already hear my late grandmother: "No

# Germantown conductor leads AVA celebration

Longtime Germantown resident Richard Raub joined four other conductors to lead students from the Academy of Vocal Arts and the AVA orchestra in “A Celebration of Opera” Nov. 12-30. I caught opening night in Kimmel Center’s Perelman Theater, but four other performances were given in Center City, Lehigh University, Bucks County and the Main Line.

Raub, one of AVA’s most senior and respected vocal coaches, conducted scenes from Rossini’s “Il barbiere di Siviglia” and Thomas’ “Mignon.” The nearly three-hour program also featured excerpts from Mozart’s “Don Giovanni,” Lehar’s “The Merry Widow” and Verdi’s “Rigoletto” with AVA



Titus Muzi and Eric Delagrance perform scenes from “Barber of Seville” with Richard Raub on the podium. Photo by Don Valentino

**Note-Worthy**  
by Michael Caruso  
mjcjsb@aol.com



music director Christofer Macatsoris wielding the baton, Beethoven’s “Fidelio” with Audrey Saint-Gil conducting, Puccini’s “Madama Butterfly” with David Antony Lofton leading, and Puccini’s “La Boheme” with Robert Kahn.

Raub’s soloists in the Rossini were baritone Titus Muzi in the title role of the Barber of Seville, tenor Shawn Roth as Count Almaviva, and bass Eric Delagrance as Don Basilio. Together with the players of the AVA Opera Orchestra, they caught the “Mad Hatter” insanity that has made this one of the most popular comic

operas in the repertoire. All the same, both the vocal and instrument writing showcase Rossini at his most inspired. The “coloratura” pyrotechnical displays of the vocal writing dazzle the ear while the sizzling scoring does more to set the stage of the narrative than costumes or sets.

Raub elicited superb singing from his young vocalists and energetic yet supple playing from his instrumentalists.

The third act trio from “Mignon” was a tantalizing preview for AVA’s fully staged production of the opera set for Feb. 19-26, 2022. His soloists here were mezzo Monique Galvao in the title role, tenor Zachary Rioux as Wilhelm Meister, and bass-baritone Peter Barber as Lothario. All three sang with consummate sophistication and intense dramatic conviction, making the most of Raub’s impeccable instrumental support. Macatsoris was at his “Ital-

ianate” best in the tragic third act of “Rigoletto,” drawing stirring performances from Kevin Godinez, Ethel Trujillo, Sahal Salam, Alice Chung and Cody Muller. It seemed as though the entire student body was onstage for the second act of “La Boheme,” yet Robert Kahn held the festive chaos completely under control.

Next on AVA’s season is a “Winter Recital” set for Dec. 14 & 16. Call 215-735-1685 or visit [avaopera.org](http://avaopera.org).

### ORATORIOS OF CARISSIMI

Matthew Glandorf conducted Choral Arts Philadelphia and the Philadelphia Bach Collegium in performances of two oratorios by Giacomo Carissimi (1605-74): “The Universal Flood” and “The Dialogue of the Giant Goliath” Nov. 10 & 14. The first took place in the Episcopal Church of the Holy Trinity, Rittenhouse Square, Philadelphia; the second was given

in the Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd, Rosemont. The former featured the full Choral Arts choir whereas the latter was sung by only the 10 professional core soloists. I heard the second.

American music lovers often wrongly think that the “oratorio” was invented by its most glorious exponent, George Frederic Handel. But Italian musicians were composing oratorios even before Handel felt the financial need to write “Messiah.”

Although both of these scores by Carissimi pale before the majesty of “Messiah,” the “Goliath” opus is particularly impressive for its eloquent setting of its text and its highly dramatic vocal writing. Glandorf led his singers and players with a deep understanding of the period style and a moving commitment to each oratorio’s narrative.

Choral Arts will celebrate the end of 2021 with a performance of

Bach’s “Christmas Oratorio” Friday, Dec. 31, at 4 p.m. in the Episcopal Cathedral of Philadelphia. Visit [choralararts.com](http://choralararts.com).

### HOLIDAY CONCERTS

Mendelssohn Chorus of Philadelphia will return to Chestnut Hill for the first time in two years for its traditional “Feast of Carols” concert Saturday, Dec. 11, at 4 and 7:30 p.m. in St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, 22 E. Chestnut Hill Ave. The parish’s own music director, Andy Kotylo, will be the organist for the performance. He’ll be joined by Timberdale Brass for a roster of music that includes Pinkham’s “Christmas Cantata,” the world premiere of Texu Kim’s “The New Year’s Magpie Song,” and a new carol composed by the chorus’ new artistic director, Dominick DiOrio, who will conduct the concert. Visit [info@mcchorus.org](mailto:info@mcchorus.org).

For Chestnut Hill music lovers interested in combining a touch of history with the holiday spirit, a trip into Society Hill might hit the spot. Old St. Joseph’s Roman Catholic Church, founded by Jesuit Fathers in 1733 and Philadelphia’s oldest Catholic Church, will present “Advent Lessons & Carols” on Sunday, Dec. 12, at 3 p.m. Parish music director Mark Bani (a former student of Chestnut Hill’s Richard Alexander) will lead the Church’s Schola Cantorum in music by Bach, Mathias, Willcocks and Rutter. “Old St. Joe’s” is located at 4th & Walnut streets. Visit [oldstjoseph.org](http://oldstjoseph.org).

You can contact NOTEWORTHY at [Michael-caruso@com-cast.net](mailto:Michael-caruso@com-cast.net).

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# Late blooming actress a 'misfit' at Allens Lane

by Rita Charleston

“Dearly Departed,” a play about the dysfunctional Turpin family living in the backwoods of the Bible Belt, proves that living or dying in the South is seldom tidy and often hilarious, as we have learned from Tennessee Williams, William Faulkner and others. Despite their earnest efforts to pull themselves together for their father's funeral, the Turpins' other problems keep overshadowing the solemn occasion. Amidst the chaos, they find comfort in friends and neighbors, an eccentric community of misfits who just manage to pull together and help each other through their hours of need and finally, the funeral.

The play, presented by Allens Lane Theatre, continues through Dec. 12 and is the work of David Bottrell and Jessie Jones. Directed by Dakota Adams, Glenside resident Kathleen Harmer takes the role of the Turin family matriarch, Raynelle Turpin. In her best Southern accent, Harmer describes Raynelle as someone who has been married to her husband for 40 years, is a church-

going woman who has raised two sons and now must face life without her father.

Bottrell is also an actor best known for playing Lincoln Meyer on the ABC-TV series, Boston Legal. Bottrell and Jones later adapted “Dearly Departed” into a movie called “Kingdom Come” starring Whoopi Goldberg, LL Cool J and Jana Pinkett Smith, wife of Will Smith.

“It's a sad time when someone in your family dies, but life goes on,” Harmer said. “And that's what we're seeing in 'Dearly Departed.' Sure, we're dealing with a dysfunctional family, but what family isn't?”

Harmer, originally from Cheltenham and a graduate of Cheltenham High School, said she always wanted to be an actress but never had the courage to try to reach her dream. “In school I never acted in any productions. I was a shy, scared young girl who didn't know how to overcome those things and do the things I really wanted to do. So I settled for a job as a secretary.”

But in adulthood, Harmer finally found the courage to give acting a try and follow her heart. She



Glenside resident Kathleen Harmer plays the Turin family matriarch, Raynelle Turpin, one of several “misfits” in “Dearly Departed,” now at Allens Lane Theatre through Dec. 12.

enrolled at Philadelphia Community College and later went on to Temple University to receive her B.A. in Communications. “While studying, I continued to do office work and try my hand at acting at night. Of course, all that gets harder as you grow older, but for me it was worth it,” Harmer said.

Since taking the plunge toward

achieving her goals, Harmer has done some TV and film work and appeared at community theaters in the area. She said, “When I am given a role, I try to find something in my own life I can draw on. When I get a script, I get excited. I love the process of acting, but I still keep my day job at the Temple University School of Medicine,

where I've been for many years. I work in a small office where everyone is very supportive of what I'm trying to do.”

Harmer said that in addition to loving acting itself, she loves the process of rehearsing. “It gives me focus, a purpose. I'm always nervous on opening night, but I just love the whole process.”

With her future always on her mind, Harmer said she hopes to get good roles and bigger roles. “I'm drawn to female characters who are a little different. Aside from being on stage, I'd also like to add more TV and film work to my resume. Someday, I'd like to have a role in something like 'Law & Order: SUV,' playing a detective, a therapist, a victim — even a dog walker who discovers the body! Anything at all! Having finally achieved my dream of acting, I will tell you this - life is good.”

Allens Lane Theater is located at 601 Allens Lane in West Mt. Airy. For additional information, call 215-248-0546 or visit [allenslane.org](http://allenslane.org). Rita Charleston has been interviewing theatrical personalities, both famous and not-quite-famous, for the Local and other publications for many years.

# Quintessence puts on a rousing revival of Little Women

by Hugh Hunter

Just in time for the holidays, Quintessence Theatre reopened with a rousing revival of “Little Women The Broadway Musical” (2004) with a book by Allan Knee, based on the semi-autobiographical novel of Louisa May Alcott. For over two hours, this high-energy show never lets you rest.

In its 20 plus songs, the lyrics of Mindi Dickstein stay true to the characters without getting bogged down in pretentious language or excessive rhyme. Thus, the music of Jason Howland has room to breathe and players are invited to act out their songs. The score is still another example of the seminal influence the late Steven Sondheim had on Broadway..

Marielle Issa, a New York City based actor and graduate of Northwestern University shines in the key role of Jo. Her signature song “The Fire Within Me” lays bare Jo's struggle to mature as a woman and a writer. Without hamming it up, Issa honors the many moods of rebellious Jo.

The authenticity of Issa's Jo is so pervasive it seems to spill over into other characters. Cara Dipietro (Amy), Paola Morales (Beth) and Caitlin Ort (Meg) play Jo's sisters. They are all distinctive stage presences.

Kudos to Eleni Delopoulos; the three-time Barrymore nominee keeps you laughing all night as the cantankerous Aunt March. Veteran actor Frank X is equally notable as

cranky Mr. Laurence, at first a comic presence, then dignified and ceremonially serious.

Completing the cast are Donnie Hammond (Marmee), Jordan Dobson (Laurie), Lee Thomas Cortopassi (Mr. Brooke) and Jered Mclenigan (Professor Bhaer). Everyone picks up on the score's invitation to act out their songs. Two good examples were Hammond's rendition of “Here Alone” and Mclenigan's moving sense of isolation in “How I Am”.

There have been numerous film and theater versions of “Little Women” over the years with a necessary focus on the big dramatic moments that play on stage. But staged translations of Alcott's novel stumble when it comes to the untimely death of young Beth.

Alcott's own young sister died



The March sisters, with their friend and neighbor, Lawrence.

from scarlet fever. It devastated her family, and Alcott turns the

painful event into a compelling story. But theater cannot reproduce the novel's nuanced detail. On stage, the death of Beth feels like the worn, romantic trope of the sensitive, too-good-for-this-world young person.

It is a problem here, too, but the surrounding production under Director Hassan Al Rawas overwhelms the melodrama. His choreography (Devon Sinclair/Adrienne Maitland) and costume design (Jane Casanave) is inventive — especially when Jo stages her “blood and guts” opera story. And the five piece band under Conductor Tom

Fosnocht, with orchestration by Spicer Carr, is so dynamically present that, at times, it feels like a Greek Chorus.

Quintessence theater itself becomes a player. Its cozy ambiance is perfect for the many domestic scenes. In the end, you truly believe the sisters deeply love one another — the perfect gift to put under your Xmas tree.

Quintessence is located at 7137 Germantown Ave. “Little Women The Broadway Musical” will run through Jan 2. Tickets available at 215-987-4450 or [quintessencetheatre.org](http://quintessencetheatre.org)

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**The Weekly Crossword** by Margie E. Burke

**ACROSS**

1 Sounds from the meadow

5 Cry like a baby

9 Word with “gift” or “thrill”

13 Cattle breed

15 “The Mod Squad” coif

16 Fillable bread

17 Everybody's opposite

18 Fight stopper

19 Pasty-faced

20 One who etches

22 Sofa's cousin

24 Nile wader

25 Do museum work

26 Black currant liqueur

29 Fourth-down player, often

30 Up in the air

32 Anger, with “up”

35 Genetic letters

36 Part of DWTS

39 Atlantic food fish

40 Fill beyond full

42 Future organ giver's document

44 Casual top

47 Forge, PA

48 Film material

50 Gambling game

51 Sheik's bevis

52 One of the ancient Seven Wonders

56 Chrome alternative

57 Glade or green starter

59 Renter's document

60 Lily plant

61 Quarterback's protection

62 Hole-boring tool

63 Scout groups

64 Crumbly cheese

65 Pear homophone

**DOWN**

1 Source of misery

2 Mysterious by-line, for short

3 Keyed up

4 Eagles tune

“Tequila \_\_\_\_\_”

5 Makes a cake, say

6 Way off

7 Kind of humor

8 Give some slack

9 Splash in drops

10 Like some fiction

11 Survey choice

12 Check cashier

14 Pelican or puffin

21 Scenic outlook

23 Jersey's time zone

25 Altercation

26 Cows' mouthfuls

27 Tolstoy heroine

28 Double-barreled weapon

29 Lace edging

31 Agassi of tennis

33 Old stories

34 Water whirl

37 Hemingway work

38 Snack bar?

41 Holds high

43 Macro lens shot

45 Omelet ingredient

46 In and of \_\_\_\_\_

48 On the horizon

49 Core members

50 Where Hawkeye served

52 Dime division

53 It's a long story

54 “Ruse” anagram

55 Dried up

58 Compete (for)

Answers to Previous Crossword:

B	A	L	S	A	A	L	S	O	B	A	S	E
O	N	I	C	E	R	O	A	R	E	V	I	L
U	N	B	A	R	D	I	G	N	I	F	I	E
T	A	R	R	A	G	O	N	E	N	R	A	G
A	C	T	O	R	T	R	A	I	N	E	R	
C	A	R	E	E	N	W	A	Y	N	E		
A	L	I	D	E	C	A	L	E	N	A	C	T
R	E	A	P	R	I	G	O	R	D	U	L	I
T	E	N	O	R	G	E	N	U	S	R	A	P
S	O	L	A	R	R	E	P	I	N	E		
S	P	A	T	T	E	R	M	A	N	I	C	
T	O	P	D	O	G	C	O	L	D	C	U	T
A	S	P	A	R	A	G	U	S	U	N	L	I
F	E	L	T	T	I	R	E	P	I	A	N	O
F	R	E	E	O	N	L	I	S	C	R	E	W

# Springside grad's memoir about struggle with alcoholism

by Len Lear

The late oilman John Paul Getty was once asked by a reporter if he had any advice for young people seeking fame and fortune. "I have three simple rules that will guarantee success to anyone who follows them," he replied. "The first is to get up early every morning. The second is to work very hard for long hours every day at something you love doing. The third is to be sure to strike oil."

Well, Chestnut Hill native and former Springside Chestnut Hill Academy lifer Maggie King was never able to follow the third rule, but she definitely mastered the first two. A multi-tasking overachiever, King was an excellent student at SCH as well as captain of the field hockey team, a member of the lacrosse team and an actress in school plays. "And my mother was dealing with cancer, which was also stressful. There was also the stress of being a closeted lesbian," she said last week. "I did not 'come



Author Maggie King writes about her "double life" as a teenager, succeeding in academics, sports and other extracurricular activities while drinking vodka to the point of blacking out on weekends.

out' until I was in college."

And King, who appeared on the surface to "have it all," now says she was keeping yet another explosive secret. Starting at age

16, she began drinking vodka heavily, to the point where she realized she was an alcoholic. While a freshman at Wellesley College in Massachusetts in 2017,

she entered a 12-step recovery program, and in September 2018 the 19-year-old began writing a semi-memoir, "Pregame: Alcohol, Addiction & Recovery Through The Eyes of a College Student," which was published in July 2019 by New Degree Press, a publishing house in Potomac, MD. It is an emotionally charged book that takes you through her personal story, the stories of others in recovery, and addiction policy issues in the United States.

When it comes to the most economically privileged college kids, you might say they are not all in the same boat -- some are in a raft, and some are in a yacht. But they are all in the same storm. "Binge drinking is endemic on college campuses all over the United States," King said. "Like me, many kids from affluent communities who go to private schools are under enormous pressure to succeed and get into the top colleges. I did not think that I deserved good things. Alcoholism is a coping mechanism, a survival tool that I used to deal with anxiety and depression. The stigma kept me from seeking help for a long time. This is a book for parents, teachers who want to get through to kids, law enforcement and the medical community."

There are 16 reader reviews of "Pregame" on GoodReads.com, the nation's largest book review website. The average rating is

4.31 out of 5. A typical review from Cira Mancuso, author of "Skin," reads: "Few people exhibit bravery like Maggie King in 'Pregame.' Addiction is a silent killer, an epidemic overshadowed by the normalization of drinking and drug use today, particularly on college campuses. King's book highlights the fundamental need for change in policy and conversation."

King graduated from Wellesley in June of this year with a B.A. in political science. In September she began her graduate studies at the University of Pennsylvania School of Social Policy and Practice, pursuing an M.S. in social policy. She also has a full-time day job with Children First (formerly Public Citizens for Children and Youth), a 40-year-old nonprofit founded by King's grandmother, Margaret Estey, and for which King's mother also worked.

The nonprofit does public policy work, advocating for vulnerable youth, wards of the state like those in foster care, issues relating to pre-kindergarten, child care, and juvenile justice. "I am now working on a lead paint poisoning campaign," King said.

"I have a much more balanced life now. We alcoholics are all or nothing. Many are high achievers. I felt a strong desire to be exceptional. That is Springside. I (Continued on page 21)

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# Local 'Phantom' superstar says he was 'nerdy fat kid'

by Rita Charleston

Broadway star Hugh Panaro was born and raised in East Oak Lane, attended St. Helena's School in Olney, went to La Salle College High School in Wyndmoor and ultimately graduated from Temple University's Boyer College of Music. Describing his early years, Panaro told us last week that he was "raised in a happy, musical and multi-generational household in a neighborhood that was safe and secure. Those were carefree days when we could walk back and forth to school at St. Helena's without a care in the world, and our parents never had to worry about us."

A multi-talented performer, Panaro has raised his voice in many well-known and successful musicals all over the world, including "Phantom of the Opera," "Les Miserables" and "Sweeney Todd." He's won the hearts of countless fans with his musical talent, garnered numerous awards and honors and is readying an appearance with the Philly POPS at their annual Holiday Christmas Special, Dec. 4-18, at the Kimmel Center Cultural Campus.

So it's really hard to believe that this handsome, successful performer describes himself as a "nerdy little fat kid" who spent most of his time sitting "in front of the television set, watching 'Gilligan's Island' and eating." But, he insists, "That was me. That's what my childhood consisted of. At the age of 12, I also

became the church organist at Saint Helena's Roman Catholic Church, but that didn't help any. You see, if you play the drums, you're cool. But if you play the organ, you're just a nerd."

Around the same time, Panaro's parents began looking around for something to occupy their son's mind besides TV and Twinkies. "And around the same time, my mom suggested we see 'Annie,' with Andrea McCardle, a Philly girl, and that's when everything changed for me." Panaro said that after seeing 'Annie,' he fell in love with the theater and knew that's what he wanted to do with his life.

He started to study voice, began getting himself in shape and when still just 12, captured his first stage role as Friedrich in a local production of "The Sound of Music." In school the roles kept coming, and his ambitions kept growing. "And the day after I graduated from Temple, my dad loaded up the station wagon and drove me to New York to fulfill my dreams."

And fulfill them he did. Panaro is perhaps best known for having played the coveted role of the Phantom in Broadway's "Phantom of the Opera" more than 2,000 times. He made his Broadway debut in the original production of "Les Miserables" as Marius. He made his West End debut in the original London company of Harold Prince's "Show Boat," as well as the Tony Award-winning production of "Sunday in the Park with George." And his resume goes on



Panaro, who graduated from La Salle College High School in Wyndmoor, played the coveted role of the Phantom in Broadway's "Phantom of the Opera" more than 2,000 times.

and on and on.

Returning to Philly and the POPS after a three-year absence, Panaro said he's looking forward to the show. Joining voices with another Broadway star, Scarlett Strallen, with music conducted by David Charles Abell, Panaro said that one of the songs he'll be singing is "I'll Be Home for Christmas," which he finds especially fitting.

"My parents are both gone now, so this is the first time I won't see some of my family out in the audience. Still, it's great to be singing in my hometown. It may sound corny, but no matter how many times you sing in public, when your friends and family are out there, you want to be the very best you can be. It's like a big reunion, and I feel very supported when I sing in Philadelphia."

More details on the show and ticket information are available at [phillypops.org/christmas](http://phillypops.org/christmas). Rita Charleston has been interviewing theatrical personalities, both famous and not-quite-famous, for the Local and other publications for many years.

## Springside grad's memoir

(Continued from page 20)

put so much pressure on myself to succeed. It's detrimental to your self-esteem. I would put on a mask every day, like 'look how perfect I am and see how many things I can do.' And yet I would black out on vodka, and I was so lonely. Many of my classmates did not enjoy hanging out with me. I was leading a double life."

King's professional and person-

al goals focus on empowering everyday Americans through community organizing and legislative advocacy. When she is not in class or working at her job, King may be crocheting, binge-watching Netflix or playing with her dog, Lucky.

For more information, visit [margaretkingauthor.com](http://margaretkingauthor.com) Len Lear can be reached at [llenlear@chestnuthilllocal.com](mailto:llenlear@chestnuthilllocal.com)

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# Mt. Airy's Allegra stars in 'Terror' play on Hill

by Len Lear

By day, Mt. Airy resident Jen Allegra is the director of product management at Tridium, a digital behavioral health company in Center City that aspires to “optimize the behavioral treatment process to provide better patient outcomes.”

But when the sun goes down, Allegra becomes Olympe de Gouges, an incredibly gutsy woman, author and activist who struggles to write a play about the French Revolution's Reign of Terror in 1793 Paris, an artistic endeavor which, if discovered by the authorities during that time, would render her headless. In this potentially lethal enterprise, Allegra is advised, prodded and spurred on by three brassy, impatient and insistent women who are eager to make history. (Olympe de Gouges was a real historical figure who was guillotined in 1793 at the age of 45 for her criticisms of the leaders of the Reign of Terror.)

In playing de Gouges, Allegra has the lead role in “The Revolutionists” by Lauren Gunderson, America's most produced playwright, which opened Nov. 26 at Stagecrafters, 8130 Germantown Ave., and will continue through Dec. 12. “The Revolutionists,” written in 2017, has been widely performed throughout the country, garnering critical and audi-

ence praise alike. Gunderson's plays have focused on female figures in history, science and literature.

“Olympe means well,” Allegra told us last week, “but she is a pretty terrified person and tries to live in her artistic bubble ... despite the fact that the play is set during the French Revolution, it is pretty hysterical and shows the warmth of sisterhood.”

Allegra grew up in University City, where her Bostonian parents were the resident directors of the graduate dorms at the University of Pennsylvania. “I went trick-or-treating in the dorms as a child,” said Allegra, who graduated from Masterman High School and George Washington University, where she started out as a psychology major and ended up pursuing a degree in theater.

I could not resist asking Allegra if she has ever been kidded about having a last name that is also the name of an over-the-counter cold medicine. “Growing up,” she replied, “no one could pronounce my name. When the allergy medicine came out, pronunciation wasn't as big of a deal, but the kidding is pretty minimal.”

What is it that Allegra enjoys most about acting? “At first, it was a way for a really shy kid to be brave. Now, it's the process of working with talented people to create a piece of work that entertains audiences and makes us all



Mt. Airy resident Jen Allegra plays the lead role of Olympe de Gouges, a human rights and women's rights martyr, in “The Revolutionists,” now at Stagecrafters until Dec. 12.

think about something important and maybe even learn something about ourselves.”

Allegra told us in an earlier interview that “the accolades (from acting in plays) are certainly

fun, too, but you don't get them while rehearsing. But what you do get while rehearsing is a magical feeling and the collaborative journey, which totally fulfills the little kid in me.”

Allegra, who was inspired by her mother, also a performer and singer, has acted in many plays at Stagecrafters. Which role was her favorite? “My favorite role is always the next one,” she said. “I know it sounds like a cliché, but there is something really beautiful and valuable in every role that I've done. And I don't want to annoy any directors reading this article if I don't mention their show.”

Allegra is a single mom whose two children, Michael and Claire, used to volunteer at Stagecrafters. Mike graduated from New York University during the pandemic (“It was pretty sad to have a virtual graduation”) and Claire is graduating from The College of St. Scholastica in Minnesota a week after her mom's show closes.

What does Allegra like (and dislike, if anything) about living in Mt. Airy? “I love that it's so close to the Stagecrafters and the diverse and kind community. And the trees. If I had to pick one thing that I don't like, it's that it's not as walkable in certain parts.”

For more information, call 215-247-8881 or visit [thestagecrafters.org](http://thestagecrafters.org). Len Lear can be reached at [llenlear@chestnuthilllocal.com](mailto:llenlear@chestnuthilllocal.com)

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## Grocery prices to spike again

(Continued from page 17)

It turns out there are a few key reasons why national food companies are feeling the crunch and passing on some of the cost to shoppers. In 2022, we'll be dealing with the aftermath of wildfire crop loss, climate change, and a basic lack of manpower following the pandemic, with many workers simply not returning to work.

“We are down 100,000 truck drivers,” said Lempert.

Climate change issues also will manifest themselves in many ways at the grocery store. There is a 30% lower coffee yield coming our way, so increased prices are coming for your coffee fix, if I can be more of a Bah Humbug here.

Lempert says the worst-case scenario is this may last several more months, so it's important to shop smart, and your “best bet is to shop around.”

Some of his tips include:  
- “Look for alternative stores like dollar stores, that operate on the ‘opportunistic model,’ meaning that they buy from brands that discontinue products, or change packaging or recipes.” You can save up to 50% in some cases.

- When you find products you like, stock up, because “once they sell out, you won't find them again.”

- Check out warehouse clubs like Sam's Club or Costco, but “don't overbuy. If you are a two-person household, getting that 64-ounce jar of salsa might spoil before you can consume it.”

- “Be realistic on how much you will eat and how much storage space you have.”

Ah, storage space. I guess it comes back to the captain's chest after all.

## Holiday Deadlines

Due to the Christmas and New Years Holidays, The Chestnut Hill Local will have early display ad deadlines for the following editions.

**December 30<sup>th</sup> edition**  
Deadline for Space Reservations and materials for ads requiring production services:  
**WEDNESDAY, December 22<sup>nd</sup> at noon**

Print-Ready Ad Material Deadline (no production work needed):  
**MONDAY, December 28<sup>th</sup> at noon**

**January 6<sup>th</sup> edition**  
Deadline for Space Reservations and materials for ads requiring production services:  
**THURSDAY, December 30<sup>th</sup> at noon**

Print-Ready Ad Material Deadline (no production work needed):  
**MONDAY, January 4<sup>th</sup> at noon**

**Classified Deadlines will remain at Monday at noon for both editions.**

# Supply shortages on Christmas trees, best to buy early

(Continued from page 17)

habitat for wildlife, and keeps large tracts of space across North America open and green. Unlike artificial alternatives, when you are done with a real tree, it is 100% recyclable and 100% biodegradable.

When you choose a real tree, you put money back into the local economy. It supports your retailer and their employees, as well as the growers who provide their trees.

### History

In ancient times, Romans marked the winter solstice with a

feast called Saturnalia in honor of Saturn, the god of agriculture. They decorated their homes and temples with evergreen boughs. Over the centuries, this tradition was appropriated by Christians.

Although Christmas trees were common in Germany by the 16th century, as late as the 1840s they were viewed as pagan symbols by most Americans. Puritans believed that any celebration of Christmas outside of a church service was a desecration. In Massachusetts, people were fined for hanging decorations. By the

1890s, thanks to an influx of Irish and German immigrants, America embraced the tradition.

If you think your tree is a ceiling scraper, consider this. The 2021 Rockefeller Center Christmas tree is an 85-year-old Norway spruce that stands 79 feet tall. It is decorated with more than 50,000 multi-colored LED lights and is topped by a three dimensional Swarovski star, which is covered in three million crystals and weighs 900 pounds.



The availability of trees may be unpredictable this year. Photo by Carla Robinson

### More than trees

Laurel Hill Gardens also stocks a large assortment of old-time toys, the kind that will take you back to your childhood and make a big hit with the grandkids. Sure, kids know their way around Nintendo, but have they ever played jacks, pickup sticks, held a Slinky or drawn on a Magic Slate? These vintage toys make fun stocking stuffers.

What else awaits you at Laurel Hill Gardens? Artisanal pickles!



Vintage toys, still popular, are part of the Christmas mix at Laurel Hill Gardens. Photo by Carla Robinson

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## Decorate the holidays with a distinct and personal touch

A huge part of the holiday season is the creation of surroundings that speak to our traditions... a Christmas tree, a menorah, poinsettias and dreidels all become important to our holiday experience.

But each piece can take on individual style, depending on how we were raised and how we have approached our current décor. Some rely on their interior style to determine a holiday theme. A modern interior may display a metallic tree covered in shiny glass balls and silver ornaments. A traditional interior may have a Fraser fir, with red and gold balls and twinkling lights.

Many years ago, a friend wanted to create an authentic 19th century Christmas inside her Queen Ann Victorian home. Finding vintage doilies at an



A country Christmas, resplendent with lots of pine cones and natural greens.

the theme of the holiday décor. Using a multitude of “flower tubes” we used individual flowers in pinks, yellows and blues to decorate the tree. We then surrounded the tubed stems with greenery attached with white ribbons. It was a truly unique holiday approach, and the homeowner was so honored by our personal and distinctive design it became her yearly holiday tradition.

Don't be afraid to be creative with your decorations. Individual collections, hobbies and interests can become the impetus for distinctive and personal holiday décor. But whatever you choose, try to make your surroundings say something individual about your tastes, and especially about things you enjoy. You will be amazed at how the holiday season can take on a personal note, and how your family and friends will appreciate the individual effort you have employed.

Enjoy the season!

Patricia Cove is principal of Architectural Interiors and Design in Chestnut Hill, and can be reached at [patriciacove.com](mailto:patriciacove.com)

**By Design**  
by Patricia Cove



the tops of wall art or mirrors, or tied on to the bottoms of chandeliers and sconces, not only adds festivity to a space but gives that wonderful winter time aroma. I even love attaching holly sprigs

to the individual panes of multi-light windows, another Williamsburg practice that is so colonial in design.

Another holiday house tour gave me the chance to work with-

in a modern living room that had a pink and green color scheme. The owner was the past president of the Philadelphia Horticultural Society.

So there was no question as to

antique market, and using miniature dried roses, she created tiny nosegays that were then hung on the tree using mauve and pink ribbons. Vintage hat boxes set beneath the tree housed all the gifts. She even went as far as to cook a delicious steamed pudding for the table's centerpiece.

Holiday house tours often give homeowners the opportunity to go all out in their holiday décor. When my own home was on the tour several years ago, I did just that, recreating an authentic colonial Christmas. Relying on a cherished book I had purchased in Williamsburg years ago, it provided step-by-step instructions on how to create one of Colonial Williamsburg's holiday signatures, a sugared fruit tree. I purchased a nail-studded wooden tree form, and using a combination of oranges, apples, pears and nuts, I brushed on an egg white and water solution so that the sprinkled sugar would adhere. Small boxwood cuttings were placed in between the pieces of fruit, forming the tree. Using magnolia leaves at the base, the fruit tree served as the focal point of the table.

So many people are drawn to more naturalistic holiday décor. The color combination of red, green and brown, using natural greens, berries, and holly, has always been a favorite of mine. Several years ago I came across a 15-foot garland made entirely of pine cone clusters, which was then wrapped around the tree. With the addition of red berries and natural wood ornaments, the tree looked as if it were resting in the forest. Balsam sprigs added to

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8227 Germantown Ave

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Pay per month \$1200  
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Call 267-884-9394

**OUTREACH COMMUNITY NURSE**

UUH Outreach Program supports older adults in their efforts to age safely, with dignity, at home. Small, multi-disciplinary program based in NW Philadelphia, with a unique, home-based service model, a biopsychosocial approach to nursing, and a focus on health promotion and disease prevention. Job description and application information at: [uuhoutreach.org/employment](http://uuhoutreach.org/employment). Please no calls.

**PART-TIME DRIVER (Female pref.)**

I live in Lafayette Hill and am unable to drive. Looking for a sincere, helpful, fun person to help me with errands, appts, mostly local. Six-day per week flexibility required. Current drivers license and references please.  
Please call Margie, 610 406-1336

**Receptionist/Office Assistant**

Real estate company in Chestnut Hill has an open position for a Receptionist/Office Assistant. Greeting guests, answering phones, data input, processing mail and other office administration type tasks. Proficient knowledge of Excel and Word is needed.

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**LEGAL NOTICE**

**ESTATE NOTICE**

Notice is hereby given that, in the estate of the decedent set forth below, the Register of Wills has granted letters testamentary or of administration to the persons named. All persons having claims against said estate are requested to make known the same to them or their attorneys and all persons indebted to said decedent are requested to make payment, without delay, to the executors or administrators named below.

LEFFLER, LOIS I., Deceased  
Late of PHILADELPHIA  
Executor:  
MWESIGWA MUTASHOBYA  
Address: c/o SMITH AKER GROSS-MAN & HOLLINGER  
60 East Penn Street  
PO Box 150  
Norristown, PA 19404-0150  
Or Attorney(s):  
James L. Hollinger, Esq.  
60 East Penn Street  
PO Box 150  
Norristown, PA 19404-0150

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE**

The undersigned, wishing to avail themselves of the provisions under the PA Self-Service Storage Facility Act 73 P.S. sec. 1901, hereby gives notice of the sale under said act to wit; **Monday the 20th day of December, 2021 at 10:00 AM**, on that day will conduct a public sale to the highest bidder, with bidding to take place on [lockerfox.com](http://lockerfox.com), FOR CASH ONLY, the contents of spaces at **iStorage Ivy Hill, 7600 Queen St, Glenside, PA, 19038-8031**

- CLEMONS, KEAUNNA 2337 Household items.
- MILLS, VAL 2514 Household items.
- BURTON, DERRICK 2305 Household items.
- SAVAGE, TOWANDA 1216 Household items.
- BURTON, DERRICK 2407 Household items.
- DUNCAN Jr, EDWARD 2414 Household items.
- JONES, ELEASA 3017 Household items.
- BUSH, MICHAEL 2433 Household items.
- JEFFERSON, SHANIKQUA 1608 Household items.
- STOWE, DANA 1704 Household items.
- BRYANT, TAMARA 2626 Household items.
- HAYES, SHARON 1305 Household items.

THIS SALE IS BEING MADE TO SATISFY THE LANDLORDS LIEN. THE PUBLIC IS INVITED TO ATTEND AT [LOCKERFOX.COM](http://LOCKERFOX.COM). SALE IS SUBJECT TO ADJOURNMENT.

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See details on the ClassiFINDS ad on the next page.

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**PETS**



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All real estate advertised herein is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act, which makes it illegal to advertise "any preference, limitation, or discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, or national origin, or intention to make any such preferences, limitation, or discrimination." We will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate which is in violation of the law. All persons are hereby informed that all dwellings are available on an equal opportunity basis.  
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**CHESTNUT HILL \$925,000**  
Set on a tree-lined street in a fantastic location just steps from the Ave, is this renovated 4 bedroom, 3.5 bath sunlit farmhouse with garage. Historic charm is combined with modern amenities throughout. Large living room with fireplace, new gourmet kitchen with breakfast bar and French doors to the spacious rear deck, owners suite with walk-in closet and large bath, and PARKING! Walk to shops and dining, the train station, or Pastorius Park for their summer concert series.



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**MANAYUNK \$275,000**  
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Spectacular new construction in desirable location in Chestnut Hill. Fabulous open-concept living floor with stunning Chef's Eat-In kitchen, spacious second-floor master floor with laundry and office. Third floor features lovely guest suite with walk-in closet and en-suite bathroom. Two additional bedrooms each with walk-in closets and a shared bathroom plus a second laundry room. Optional elevator 4-stop elevator runs from the finished lower level all the way up to the secondary bedroom floor. Optional finished lower level with bonus and optional powder room and guest suite. Detached 2 car garage and 10-year property tax abatement.



**ART MUSUEM \$185,000**  
This beautifully updated 1 Bedroom pet friendly condo has all the amenities for today's savvy buyer. Professionally managed, 24/7 concierge, fitness center, meeting room, shuttle bus access, and so much more! A charming 10th floor unit allows for wonderful natural light and endless views. Walk to Center City, Fairmount Park, the Art Museum, Whole Foods, Boathouse Row, and all the great shops and restaurants Fairmount has to offer!

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