



# Chestnut Hill Local

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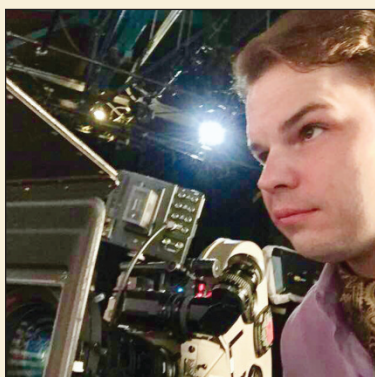
Serving Chestnut Hill, Mount Airy and Springfield Township

Vol. LXI, No. 2

Thursday, December 5, 2019

\$1.00/Copy

## Chill Local



Hill filmmaker's 5th film shown at Woodmere

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## Homes & Home



Historical Hill home's botanical past

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## Recalling the Chestnut Hill Market: Local grocer Sam Blumenthal ran the market on Germantown Avenue from 1917 to 1955

by Lois Perch Villemaire

Sam Blumenthal was a ladies man. He was handsome, and he knew it. He worked at staying in good shape and weighed himself every day like a prize fighter. As a teen, he was on the track team at Central Manual Training School in downtown Philadelphia. He was a stylish dresser and took pleasure in wearing nice clothes.

Sam was neat and precise about his surroundings. He kept his desk immaculate and posted a calendar where he carefully printed his scheduled appointments.

Sam's father was also a good-looking man with dark curly hair and a thick mustache. Everyone thought he had become an alcoholic when he began to stagger and slur his words. Sam was embarrassed by the changes in his father, but at the time no one knew the real reason for his odd behavior.

People avoided him, and his shoemaker business declined. Sadly, this also caused a loss of contact with his extended family. In a matter of months he died when Sam was a teenager. An autopsy revealed it had been a brain tumor. The year was 1912.

After her husband's death,

(Continued on page 5)



The Chestnut Hill Market about 1930. Owner Sam Blumenthal is at the far left with his young son.



Pauline and Sam Blumenthal in 1971 at their 50th wedding anniversary.

## Friends of Abolition Hall lose appeal to halt developer's conditional use permit

by Brendan Sample

The ongoing controversy over Abolition Hall saw another new major development in favor of developer K. Hovnanian Homes. The Montgomery County Court of Common Pleas officially dismissed the Friends of Abolition Hall's appeal of the Whitemarsh Township Board of Supervisors' decision to grant Hovnanian a conditional use permit to construct 67 townhouse buildings on the Abolition Hall property.

"The judge's ruling affirms our position that the Whitemarsh Board of Supervisors properly granted conditional use approval

after reviewing our proposed development plans," said Mike Weissnitz, Hovnanian community manager. "We look forward to continuing with the approval process, and working with the Board of Supervisors and the community at large to move this project forward."

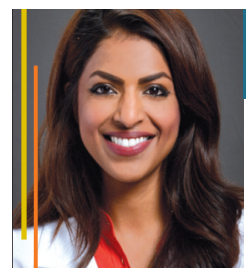
The two sides initially tried working on a settlement after the first court hearing in September. They were unable to work anything out, however, with negotiations ultimately coming to a "roaring halt" according to Friends convener Sydelle Zove, who claimed that Hovnanian was unwilling to budge in any significant way. About 10 days before the final ruling, the Friends gave notice to Judge Thomas Bran-

ca that mediation had been unsuccessful.

Members of the Friends are still considering whether or not to move forward with a further appeal of their case. Regardless of what happens with the conditional use permit, Hovnanian will still need to obtain a land use permit, as that part of the process is still ongoing.

Hovnanian submitted a draft of its plans for the site in April to Township Engineer Krista Heinrich, along with a list of waivers that would allow the developers to bypass certain elements of the township design code. Heinrich then issued a review memo pointing out dozens of instances

(Continued on page 10)



Roshin Thomas, DO

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It's How You Live

# Mt. Airy scientist to speak at SCH on conservation crisis

by Len Lear

“It’s a struggle to hold on to optimism, but it’s crucial,” insists Dr. Winnie Hallwachs, tropical biodiversity scientist and long-time Mt. Airy resident who wishes that the biodiversity crisis would be given equal weight to the climate crisis. “What I know for certain is that the natural world needs protection and action, including but going well beyond climate change. Like many other people, I look with wonder and hope at the Parkland students and the team they built up and at Greta Thunberg and her clarity. Anyone can play a role, and roles add up to a critical mass.”

Hallwachs, 65, who earned a B.A. from Princeton University in 1976 in biochemistry and Ph.D. from Cornell University in 1994 in ecology, has lived in Mt. Airy for 50 years, but for the last 40 years she has lived in Costa Rica more than half of every year doing biodiversity research. She is responsible for 391 research works with 6,882 academic citations, and she will be giving a free public lecture titled “A Porcupine, Moth Legs and a Drive to Conserve What is Slipping Away” at Springside Chestnut Hill Academy (SCH) on Saturday, Dec. 7 at 4 p.m.

Over the last four decades, Hallwachs and Daniel Janzen, 80, her husband and scientific partner at the University of Pennsylvania, have worked on tropical forest restoration and on the conservation of the biodiversity of Área de Conservación Guanacaste (ACG), in northwestern Costa Rica. A UNESCO Natural World Heritage

Site, its 420,000 acres contain over 650,000 species (2.6% of total global biodiversity) and are home to wild parrots, peccaries, boas, ocelots, migrant birds from North and South America and many, many insects. Janzen is a professor of conservation biology in the Penn biology department, and Hallwachs is a biodiversity conservation research biologist. He has been at Penn since 1976 and she since 1978.

Since 2004, Hallwachs, Janzen and their collaborators have identified thousands of new species among the more than 43,000 ACG species sequenced to date. In 1997, Hallwachs co-founded the Guanacaste Dry Forest Conservation Fund (GDFCF), a non profit organization whose mission is to promote “the long-term survival of ecosystems and biodiversity of ACG through conservation, education, science-based management and biodiversity development.”

Hallwachs told us last week that her interest in biodiversity “started with a fascination with animals and fresh water when I was young, but it only became an active part of my life in the mid 1980s, from recognizing the real danger that the Costa Rican dry forest area where I lived was facing. One of these dangers was human-set fires, but the biggest threat came from the general public feeling that parks were set-aside lands with no clear importance, no value to them and no owner to defend them.”

Regarding the hot-button issue of climate change, Hallwachs insisted, “It is real. It is tremendously damaging to everything and to people in all walks of life and all economic levels. In the



Dr. Winnie Hallwachs, tropical biodiversity scientist and Mt. Airy resident, will be giving a free public lecture on species biodiversity at Springside Chestnut Hill Academy on Saturday, Dec. 7, 4 p.m. The friend she is holding is enjoying the winter back in Costa Rica.

park where I work and live, the signs were somewhat deniable in the 1980s, worrisome in the 1990s, and it was in the year 2000 that I first heard someone will global knowledge, the director of science at The Nature Conservancy, say that biologists all over the world were reporting that their sites and research were affected by climate change ... From the biological signs all around me, the change has accelerated each decade since. We need to take action now.”

Hallwachs’ family moved from a small town in upstate New York to Philadelphia in 1967, when she was 13.

“I have vivid memories of our first short visit,” she said. It was late May, and all the azaleas were in bloom, the sun was shining,

and it was so alive and colorful and lush compared to upstate New York in late spring. But the first hot and humid Philadelphia summer was a bit of a shock!”

Regarding life in Mt. Airy, however, “We really lucked out with wonderful neighbors on our block on Carpenter Lane. When we moved here, the history of West Mount Airy Neighbors pulling together to confront white flight, panic selling and redlining was recent and vivid. Looking back now, I think I absorbed a feeling of hope and possibility about what can happen when people come together around a mission.”

Not too many other people I have ever interviewed (in fact, none) have had insects named

after them, but at least eight insect species have been named after Hallwachs and Janzen. “Usually I know the taxonomists who chose the name,” she pointed out, “and often what matters most is the friendship or intention of that person, or whether the insect lives in one of my favorite places, or who collected the first specimen found. Dan feels that there are already plenty of species named after him, and he would rather the honor go to other people who are also doing very good things.”

For more information about the Dec. 7 talk, visit [www.sch.org](http://www.sch.org). Len Lear can be reached at [llenlear@chestnuthilllocal.com](mailto:llenlear@chestnuthilllocal.com)

## Crime Report: One theft

The following crime report is for crimes reported in Chestnut Hill from Nov. 25 to Dec. 1, 2019.

Please note the dates in bold listed below are when the crimes occurred, not when they were reported.

**Nov. 26.** Theft on the 400 block of East Abington Ave. A woman told police that an unknown person removed a black and white chair (valued at \$130) from her room at a nursing home without her permission.

**Summary:** One crime for the week – one theft.

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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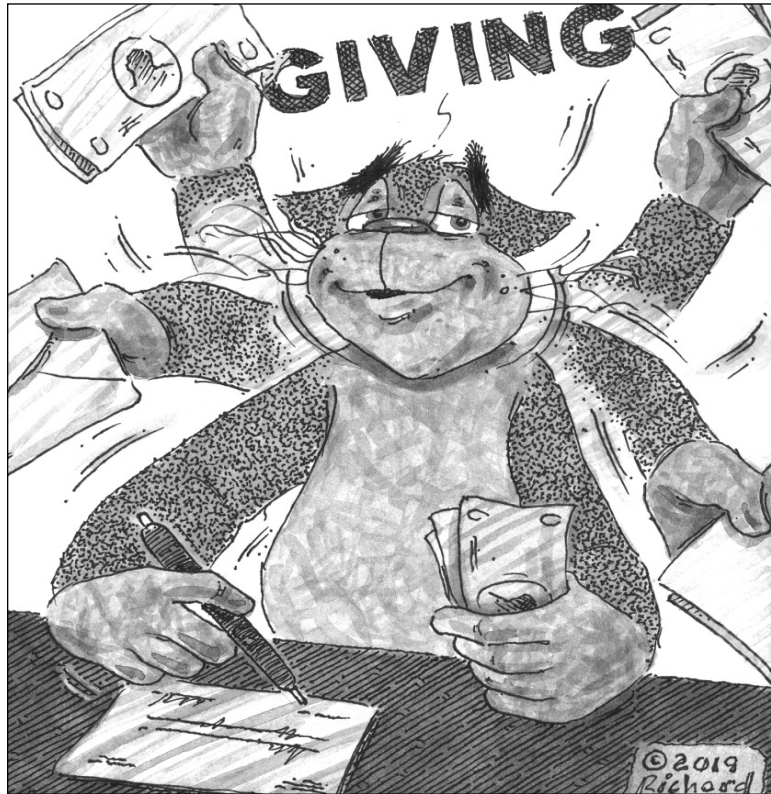
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## OPINION

## Arnie



## Water Tower Rec Center needs our support

by Peggy Bradley

What I enjoy most about the Water Tower Recreation Center is the melding of our community. There are no class, race, gender, age or political barriers. It is where I see the best of Chestnut Hill. There are many wonderful programs happening at our community recreation center. These take place every day in an aging building on a scenic, historic property. It is an especially vibrant and healthy place to be.

Every weekday there is a thriving after-school program that serves 90 elementary children.

There is a pre-school and extended-day program for younger children. The gymnastics program is bigger than ever with 145 children. Adult programs include volleyball, yoga, fitness classes and a fitness center.

The Chestnut Hill Youth Sports Club offers organized sports for boys and girls, regardless of skill level. This massive program is run by volunteers all year. Pickleball, my first love, is played

four times a week by an organized group. The courts are terrific, as are the tennis courts. The playground and basketball courts are consistently busy with camps and community users.

The Water Tower staff and program instructors work tirelessly in a very difficult facility. The Advisory Council meets monthly, prioritizing repair strategies and plotting fund raising.

Philadelphia is the poorest major city in the country. Our public schools and recreation centers reflect that. The Water Tower, even though it is centered in a prosperous community, is no different. I have firsthand knowledge of this because I work and play in both.

This season, the staff and council will battle the ancient boiler and its many failing parts that sporadically provide heat. Currently we are in a state of partial repair. The programs continue, nevertheless. The staff and the kids still show up.

Amazingly, our recreation centers are solely responsible for the infrastructure of the buildings.

Cindy Bass, our City Councilwoman, has been instrumental in accessing any funds available to support our center. Our community is responsible for the rest.

Please keep our recreation center in the generous part of your holiday spirit. Drop in to see people in motion with smiles and friendship. Volunteer to help with the many tasks at hand as we push for the repairs and funding to sustain our center. There is a suggestion box for your ideas on how to make our community center more than it is. Most importantly, please donate so that there will be heat this winter. Will you please take the time to share our needs with friends and family?

To help us raise funds for the boiler replacement, please donate at [gofundme.com/f/water-tower-rec-center-boiler-system](https://www.gofundme.com/f/water-tower-rec-center-boiler-system).

Peggy Bradley is a member of the Water Tower Advisory Council

## Pa.'s recent legislative victory is an opportunity to celebrate two organizations that help to protect children from abuse

by Helen W. Mallon

Until around 30 years ago, few, if any, organizations existed to help sexually abused children. Today, Philadelphia's children find a safe, caring response at Philadelphia Children's Alliance, which is a national model for similar organizations.

In one child-friendly building in North Philly, PCA offers coordinated services to children and their families at no cost. Trained forensic interviewers and medical professionals, therapists, DHS workers, the Special Victims Unit of the Philadelphia Police, and court advocates work together easily. Once, they were isolated in silos around the city. Today, they are all under one roof, along with credentialed medical professionals from Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, who are specially trained to work with abused children.

Under stress, children often give a different story to different adults. PCA's forensic interviews are digitally recorded so that children don't have to relive their trauma with each hurdle they meet. Frightened children are no longer dragged from emergency rooms to police precincts to meetings with social workers, lawyers and others.

Darkness2Light, founded in 2000, is a national and internation-

al nonprofit dedicated to child sexual abuse prevention. Its trainings are flexible enough for a one-time event or a deeper dive. Offerings vary from online tips for parents who need help speaking to their own children about safety, to research papers and fact sheets. D2L's online and in-person trainings cover the gamut: healthy touch, mandated reporting, bystander training and child trafficking. All these are tailored to individuals, educators and community groups. In early 2020, D2L will offer two-hour trainings at several locations in the Philly suburbs at a very reasonable cost.

In mid-November, after a protracted battle in Harrisburg, the legislature passed two bills in support of adults who were abused as children. Bill 962 eliminates the criminal statute of limitations and extends the civil statute until the victim reaches the age of 55. Until now, that age limit was 30. Governor Wolf signed this bill into law just before Thanksgiving.

Bill 963 is a constitutional amendment allowing a two-year window of opportunity for victims who have aged out of the current statute to sue abusers for damages. While the full legislature passed the bill last week, this amendment to the state constitution will require another approval by the full legislature, followed by a ballot referen-

dum put to Pennsylvania voters. It will be 2021 before the legislature votes on it again.

Why the need to extend the statute of limitations? Why offer victims of this particular crime special treatment? While PCA does cutting-edge work, the roughly 3,000 children – including kids from Chestnut Hill, Mount Airy and Roxborough – they help yearly are only the tip of the iceberg. Many kids cannot disclose their abuse to anyone. If they do, the adults they tell have to be supportive. These bills offer the potential for justice for adults who were silenced as kids.

Brain science yet provides another answer. In his seminal book "The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma," psychiatrist Bessel Van der Kolk writes, "There have ... been hundreds of scientific publications spanning ... documenting how the memory of trauma can be repressed, only to surface years or decades later ... Total memory loss is most common in childhood sexual abuse, with incidence ranging from 19 percent to 38 percent."

When their memories only surface later in life, adult survivors must be able to pursue justice as part of their healing process. Fortunately, the Pennsylvania State Legislature agrees.

The amendment was champi-

oned by Berks County Representative Mark Rozzi, himself a survivor of child sexual abuse. Like him, I am a survivor. Like him, I have endured sleepless, nausea-filled nights. I could tell no one about my abuse, not even myself. I suppressed the memory for 20 years. I have tasted in my own mouth the difference between bitterness and forgiveness, and I have chosen the sweeter taste.

The search for justice, even retroactive justice, is not vindictive. Wrongs cry out to be righted, whether they were perpetrated against oneself or another.

In two years, I'm hopeful that

Pennsylvania voters will have the chance to say yes to justice. In the meantime, statistics demonstrate all of us know an adult who was sexually abused as a child. Sadly, all of us know at least one child who was – or will be – in the one out of 10 kids sexually abused before the age of 18. Race, wealth and class are no protection here. For now, Philadelphia Children's Alliance and Darkness2Light offer not only help, but strategies to end the scourge.

Helen W. Mallon is a volunteer with Philadelphia Children's Alliance. Her website is [helenwmallon.com](http://helenwmallon.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, to study community problems 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 the various issues presented in the Forum. 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 Forum must be signed and must include an address and a verifying telephone number. All letters must not exceed 300 words.



## Chestnut Hill Local

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## from our readers

## A preview of Quintessence's 'Wizard of Oz'

Intelligence, love and courage is how they deal with wickedness in the merry old land of Oz - with a healthy measure of music, song and dance, too! I saw a preview of Quintessence Theater's production of L. Frank Baum's "The Wizard of Oz," which officially opens this Thursday. It's positively, absolutely, undeniably good. The innovative production is so engaging that it seemed almost cruel that the Munchkins didn't invite us to sing along, even just a smidgen, with "Ding Dong! The Witch is Dead"

in the first act or "Follow the Yellow Brick Road" at curtain call, especially since there were more than a few munchkins among us, some in costume. I bet the glittery, little good witch - or was she a Dorothy - who spun around excitedly on her toes in the lobby before the house opened felt the same way.

Brian Rudnick  
Chestnut Hill

## Happy for Springfield coverage

I'm delighted to see the Local now covering the Springfield Board of Commissioners' meetings. It's been such a loss since the Spring-

field Sun disappeared. Thanks for stepping in, and for making our local government process more transparent.

I've lived in Springfield Township for 13 years, and I know it's a well-run municipality. But broader public visibility of the decision-making process is always a good thing, and that's what you're doing.

Joy Bergey  
Flourtown

Editor's Note: The coverage of Springfield Township is due in thanks to township resident and Local reader Betsy Wallace, who will be taking notes monthly for the Local.

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# Sam Blumenthal, opened his Avenue shop 102 years ago

(Continued from page 1)

Sam's mother was left to raise five children. She continued his business by hiring a young shoemaker to run the store and compensated him with room, board and a small salary. Sam and his two brothers had to find work to help support their mother and two sisters.

Sam wasn't interested in the family shoe repair business. He got an entry-level position with the Pennsylvania Railroad but soon discovered it wasn't for him. With his outgoing personality, he found it boring to work as a laborer. He gravitated to selling produce and working in a local grocery store, learned all he could about the food business and dreamed of opening his own market in the right location of the city.

He worked long hours, but on his day off Sam enjoyed riding different trolley lines to explore sections of Philadelphia, with its established and expanding public transportation system. One summer day, Sam hopped on the Route 23 electric streetcar that stopped near his home. He planned to examine the northwest direction of the city.

Sam heard foreign voices, and he inhaled the unfamiliar aromas of food being sold from wooden carts. He observed residential, commercial and industrial areas as the trolley swayed, stopped and started up again along the way. The clanging bell was loud and announced each upcoming stop.

After riding for about an hour, he arrived at the northern terminus where the route of the streetcar would reverse at a loop at Mermaid Lane. Sam exited the trolley and began to walk. It was an uphill stretch called Germantown Avenue. After several blocks, he saw a large three-story hotel with a covered porch, impressive residential dwellings and numerous shops on the tree-lined street. People were strolling on the sidewalks.

He was in Chestnut Hill. When Sam approached the busiest block of storefront businesses, he was fascinated and even more pleased when he saw a train station. Sam knew that convenience and transportation were important factors in deciding on a favorable place for his store. He became hopeful about the possibility of owning a grocery market in Chestnut Hill someday.

For two years, he worked hard to save money while continuing to help his family. Whenever Sam had time, he rode the familiar 23 trolley and walked up the street to

monitor the shops on Germantown Avenue, watching for vacancies. He found out that there were plans for the Route 23 trolley to be extended, continuing to "the top of the hill," a nickname given to describe the higher land elevation in comparison to other parts of the city. The loop would be located at Bethlehem Pike, a great plus for any adjacent business.

Because he was on the trolley regularly, Sam began to recognize other riders. He became casually acquainted with a petite young woman. In keeping with his friendly personality, he tried to chat with her, but she was shy and reserved. They exchanged a few words, but it never went beyond that. When she left the trolley, she entered a dress shop on Germantown Avenue.

In 1917, Sam opened the Chestnut Hill Market at the location of his dreams, 8512/8514 Germantown Ave. He rented the narrow space from the Still family. When he celebrated his grand opening, the space was jam-packed full of the freshest produce and meats that Sam could find at the farm markets in South Philadelphia. Chestnut Hill had a clientele that demanded the best in food products, and Sam was determined to provide it.

Pauline was the oldest of four daughters, all born in Philadelphia within a five-year span to Jennie and Nathan. Everyone called them the Goldberg girls. Pauline was petite, barely five feet tall with dark brown hair and blue eyes. She was sensitive about her short stature and wore heels whenever possible to add inches to her height. When she was bare-footed, she walked on her toes.

Pauline went to public school until she completed the eighth grade. Her older brother Joseph wasn't home much, or if he was, he was studying because he hoped to become a doctor. Pauline was the one Jennie turned to for help with the younger children. Her sister, Sara, married before the age of 20, but the other three sisters remained single until their 30s.

Pauline wanted to please her father. When he suggested that she attend Peirce School of Business and Shorthand to further her education and be able to qualify for a better job, she was willing to attend. In 1910, Peirce created its first secretarial course by combining the existing shorthand studies with business elements, such as accounting and commercial law.

Nathan read about Peirce, and as a progressive man, he knew



An old photo of Sam Blumenthal and his partner Charlie Hayman, who ran the Chestnut Hill Market at 8512 Germantown Ave. for many years. (Photo courtesy of the Chestnut Hill Conservancy)

that women could be a positive entity in the workforce. He wanted his daughters as well as his sons to be well educated. Ahead of its time, Peirce was providing the opportunity for women to prepare for a career, especially when wartime took many young men into the military. Pauline took classes that qualified her as a bookkeeper.

Between working and helping her mother, Pauline didn't have time for a social life. She rode the 23 trolley to work and back home each day. Not many eligible men came into the dress shop where she worked as a bookkeeper.

One customer in particular was Edna Ewing, who was a few years older than Pauline and was married to Tom. Even though Pauline was not a sales clerk, she would often take time to admire the newest dresses, blouses and skirts with Edna. Pauline had a flare for

fashion due to her father's years in the garment industry.

Tom was used to Edna's attempts at matchmaking, and he usually paid no mind to getting involved. This time he thought of someone — the friendly, hard-working young man who operated the market near his store.

On April 3, 1921, the family and friends of Sam and Pauline gathered in the parlor of her parents' home on North Franklin Street for the wedding. The guests, including Tom and Edna Ewing, filled the room and spilled into the entrance foyer. Pauline's young niece peeked down through the ornate spindles of the second-floor hallway. She had whooping cough and was unable to attend, but she caught a glimpse of the excitement as the newlyweds left for their honeymoon. Afterwards, they moved into a brand-new row home at the

corner of Ardleigh Street and Highland Avenue, where they lived, one block from Sam's grocery store for the rest of their lives.

Sam and his partner, Charlie Hayman, expanded and renovated the Chestnut Hill Market in 1934, serving their local clientele until they retired in 1955. In the summertime, groceries were delivered to their customers at the Jersey Shore. Sam used to say, "I know my customers!" After the market closed, it became the location for Dorothy R. Bullitt's dress shop, which operated there until about 1990. Sam passed away in 1974 at age 80 and Pauline in 1979 at age 89. They had two children, nine grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren.

Lois Perch Villemare is the granddaughter of Sam and Pauline.

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# Germantown Community Basketball Tournament marks 30th year, Dec. 6 - 7

The Germantown Community Basketball Tournament will be celebrating its 30th anniversary of connecting students and neighbors through a shared love of basketball and athletics.

The community is invited to come watch the tournament and cheer on local student-athletes on Friday, Dec. 6, and Saturday, Dec. 7, at the Germantown Friends School's Scattergood Gym on 31 W. Coulter St.

This Germantown tradition has taken place annually since its

inception in 1989 and features exciting out-of-league matchups between squads whose schedules would never otherwise intersect. Saturday will conclude with the annual presentation of the Germantown Community Service Award, which recognizes community leaders who live the mission of the tournament, bringing people together and supporting Germantown in meaningful ways.

This year, the school will honor the founders of the Danny Rumph Foundation: Sharif Hans-



ford, Mike Morak and Justin Scott. The foundation brings awareness to sudden cardiac arrest, providing screenings for hypertrophic cardiomyopathy and donating automated defibrillators to community recreational facilities.

Tickets are \$3 for students and \$5 for adults. All funds from the ticket sales support the GFS Community Basketball and Enrichment Program, a summer camp that focuses on skill-building both on the basketball court and in the classroom. In honor of the tournament's 30th anniversary and the CBE's 50th year, GFS has set a goal of raising enough funds to support 10 campers this summer.

### Tournament Schedule:

#### Friday, Dec. 6

- 3:30 p.m. (Girls) – Roxborough vs. Parkway Northwest
- 5 p.m. (Boys) – Simon Gratz vs. Parkway Northwest
- 6:30 p.m. (Girls) – GFS vs. Bodine
- 8:00 p.m. (Boys) – GFS vs. Bodine

#### Saturday, Dec. 7

- 12 p.m. (Girls) – Consolation Game
- 1:30 p.m. (Boys) – Consolation Game
- 3 p.m. (Girls) – Championship Game
- 4:30 p.m. – Germantown Community Service Award Presentation
- 5 p.m. (Boys) – Championship Game

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## Community Matters: Zoning and Development Review in Chestnut Hill

by Joyce Lenhardt

*This is the second of a series from the Chestnut Hill Community Association Physical Division*

Many people wonder how development is regulated in Chestnut Hill when they see a new building under construction or excavation underway in a fenced-off lot. This article is a primer on how the development process works, and the role of the CHCA and other community organizations. While Chestnut Hill feels like a village, it is, as we all know, part of Philadelphia. Not only do city wage and property taxes apply to us, so does the zoning code.

There are three basic avenues by which development can proceed: by-right, by variance/special exception or by a rezoning. As of-right development proposals are entirely consistent with the zoning laws of Philadelphia and do not require any government or citizen review. Parcel-level rezonings are uncommon in Chestnut Hill, so this article will focus on variances and special exceptions, both of which must be approved by Philadelphia's Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA).

The Philadelphia Zoning Code identifies what can be built as of right. See Philadelphia's property website – atlas.phila.gov – for information on every property in the city.

Zoning categories are based primarily on the existing land use pattern. If a street has primarily single houses, it is probably zoned to allow only single houses. If most houses are attached to another, as in twins, the zoning is likely to allow new construction for attached housing.

Further details pertain to lot size, number of feet of front/side/rear yards from building to lot line, open space, how property will be used, etc. If an application for construction abides with the restrictions listed in the zoning code, it will be granted a building permit by the Department of Licenses and Inspection (L&I) as of right, and without community review.

If an application submitted to L&I does not comply, the Department issues a "Refusal" which identifies the components of the application that are outside the limitations of the zoning code.

If applicants choose to appeal the refusal, they must present

their application to the community and demonstrate why they want to build or use the property in the way they do, and why the limitations of the zoning code create a "hardship." They are supposed to demonstrate how the hardship makes the property impractical as it is zoned.

The presentation to the community is made to Registered Community Organizations (RCO). The CHCA, Chestnut Hill Conservancy, and the Friends of the Wissahickon are our local RCOs. Per the zoning code, one RCO meeting is required, with written notification to all neighbors within a 250-foot radius.

This is the key point at which Chestnut Hill's practice is unique. The CHCA has a long-standing land use review process that generally requires applicants to present at public meetings to a series of committees:

- Land Use Planning & Zoning Committee (LUPZC) is comprised of professionals in architecture, urban planning, landscape architecture, zoning law, real estate, or other related professions pertaining to land use.

- Streetscape Committee is comprised of design professionals who review signage and façade projects in commercial locations.

- Development Review Committee (DRC) is comprised of representatives of LUPZC plus the Chestnut Hill Business District, the Chestnut Hill Conservancy, and the CHCA Streetscape Committee.

If the project impacts the historical nature of a property, the Chestnut Hill Conservancy conducts further review with its Historic District Advisory Committee (HDAC). Once the DRC, LUPZC, HDAC, and Streetscape have reviewed a project, it is referred back to a second DRC meeting, which evaluates all input. It is to this meeting that applicants send written notices to neighbors for the official RCO meeting. This is the one meeting that is required by the city. Fortunately, in Chestnut Hill, neighbors and community members have multiple opportunities to voice their concerns about a project, but it does require them to pay attention to the agendas of the various meetings (which are always published in the Chestnut Hill Local).

Then the CHCA board, taking

into consideration all input, including that of the community, submits a letter of support or opposition to the ZBA.

ZBA hearings are public and allow public testimony. Their decisions can be appealed. An appeal, the merits of which must be established at the ZBA hearing, is then referred to the Court of Common Pleas and, at times, on to the Commonwealth Court. It is uncommon but not unheard of for variance reviews to be taken this far.

*The ZBA is not bound by community input. However, the most important component of the Chestnut Hill review process is to work towards achieving agreement on optimal results with the options at hand before presentation to the ZBA. We are often successful in this.*

## CHCA Agenda

ALL MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

**Wed. Dec. 5th**

**8:30 a.m.**  
CH Streetscape Committee  
CHCA office –  
8434 Germantown Ave.

**Mon. Dec. 9th**

**7:00 p.m.**  
Membership Meeting  
CHCA Office –  
8434 Germantown Ave.

**Thurs. Dec. 6th**

**8:00 p.m.**  
Land Use Planning &  
Zoning Committee (LUPZ)  
CH Hospital, 8835  
Germantown Ave.

**Sat. Dec 14th**

**9:00 a.m. 10:00 a.m.**  
Chestnut Hill Holiday  
Parade  
www.chestnuthill.org for  
more information

**Sat. Dec. 7th**

**10 a.m. – 4p.m.**  
Chestnut Hill Holiday  
House Tour  
www.chestnuthill.org for  
more information

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# Chestnut Hill Hospital receives quality achievement award



(From left): John Scanlon, Chief Medical Officer, Lee Jablow, MD, Chair/Medical Director of Emergency Medicine, Melissa Leach, MSN, Stroke & Chest Pain Program Coordinator, Scott Friend, VP & Chief Quality Officer, Privacy & Compliance Officer, and Timothy Marks, MSN, VP and Chief Nursing Officer.

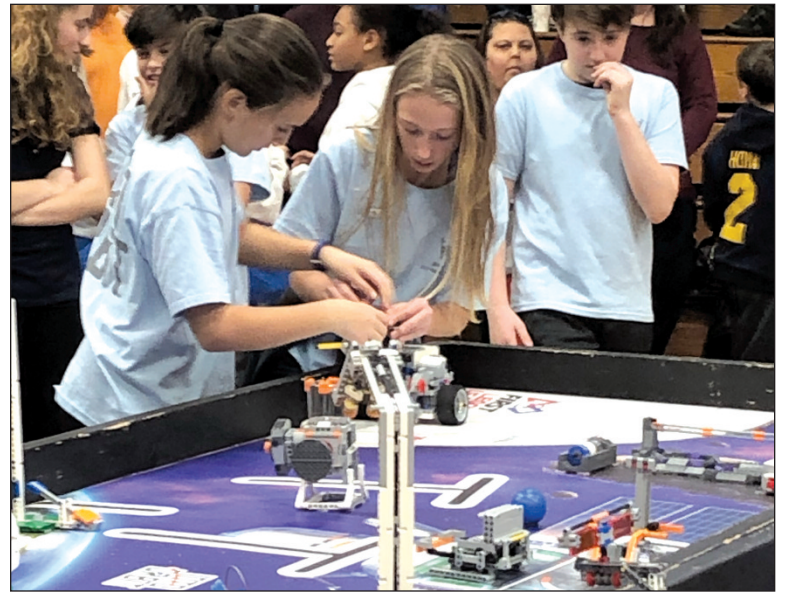
Chestnut Hill Hospital received the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association's Get with the Guidelines® Target: Stroke Honor Roll Elite Plus Gold Plus Quality Achievement Award.

The award recognizes the hospital's commitment to ensuring

stroke patients receive the most appropriate treatment according to nationally recognized, research-based guidelines based on the latest scientific evidence.

"Chestnut Hill Hospital is dedicated to improving the quality of care for our stroke patients by implementing the American Heart Association's Get with the

Guidelines-Stroke initiative," says Melissa Leach, MSN, RN, stroke and chest pain coordinator, Chestnut Hill Hospital. "The tools and resources provided help us track and measure our success in meeting evidenced-based clinical guidelines developed to improve patient outcomes."



In the throes of last year's competition during the 2018 tournament are members of one of the SCH teams: Gretel Hoffman (left) and Georgia O'Connor (right).

## World robotics champs SCH to host local tournament for lower and middle school robot enthusiasts

Springside Chestnut Hill Academy (SCH), home of the 2019 FIRST World Champion robotics team, host a robotics tournament for lower and middle school students this Saturday, Dec. 7. More than 400 robot enthusiasts (from 40 teams) will converge on the school for the FIRST Lego League Jr. Expo (FLL Jr) and FIRST Lego League Qualifier (FLL).

FIRST, whose acronym stands for "For Inspiration & Recognition of Science and Technology," has posed a challenge called "City Shaper," which asks students to observe how cities and buildings grow, thrive and change. FLL teams create new, innovative

solutions to help shape an optimal future, using environmental and modern-day tools and technology. Teams will need to write sophisticated programs to meet the 20-30 robot skill tasks baked into the challenge. FIRST hopes that competitors can use what they learn to help plan strong, sustainable cities of the future.

Families are encouraged to abandon holiday shopping for a few hours and head to campus to catch some of the heated, hand-wringing competition. Peak action will take place after lunch, from approximately 1 to 4 p.m. The event will be held in the Vare Field House, 8000 Cherokee Street.



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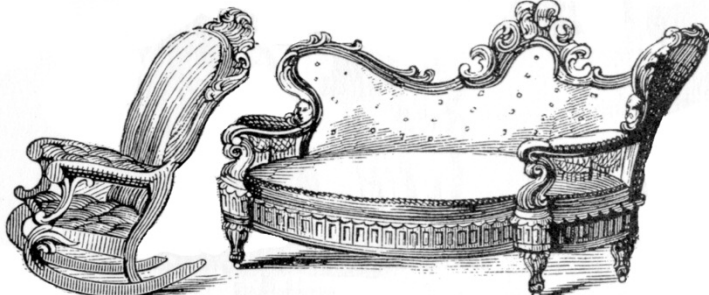
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# COMMUNITY calendar DEC 5-8

## thu 5

### Ugly Sweater HolidayFest

6 p.m.  
Malelani Cafe  
6734 Germantown Ave.  
Holiday Season is upon us. Who doesn't love an ugly sweater party. You are in store for a treat, bringing people together singing and sipping. For more information, go to <https://malelani.cafe/>.

### Grief Support Group

6:30 p.m.  
Keystone House  
8765 Stenton Ave.  
Grief Support Group for adults meets monthly at Keystone House in Wyndmoor. You are welcome to participate no matter when you experienced a loss. It is open to all whether or not your loved one was a KeystoneCare patient. Please feel free to attend for understanding and comfort. Keystone Hospice 215-528-4300 [cpugh@keystonecare.com](mailto:cpugh@keystonecare.com).

## fri 6

### Chestnut Hill First Fridays

5 p.m.  
Chestnut Hill  
8000 to 8600 blocks of Germantown Ave.  
Philadelphia's Garden District springs to life this season with First Friday Events in Chestnut Hill. Celebrate the weekend with extended store hours, shopping & dining specials, fun activities, entertainment, and more. For more information, email [intern@enroutemarketing.com](mailto:intern@enroutemarketing.com).

### Storytime at the Arboretum

10:30 a.m.  
Morris Arboretum  
100 E. Northwestern Ave.  
Join us for fun and engaging reading sessions with local librarians. Each session is tailored to the changing seasons and complements the natural setting of the Arboretum. Storytime is held outdoors in nice weather, at the Outdoor Children's Classroom, next to the Widener Visitor Center. In the case of inclement weather, storytime is held in the side tent or classroom at the visitor center. [www.morrisarboretum.org/](http://www.morrisarboretum.org/).

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### Wine & Cheese Night

5:30 p.m.  
Primex Garden Center  
435 W. Glenside Ave.  
Come join us for a fun filled leisurely evening of snacks and discount shopping for the holiday season. Fun for the whole family - wine & cheese for those 21+ and apple cider and cookies for the kids. Register in the store or by calling 215-887-7500 or emailing [jclark@primexgardencenter.com](mailto:jclark@primexgardencenter.com).

## sat 7

### Ambler Holiday Parade

1 p.m.  
Main Street  
Ambler's Main Street's Annual Holiday Parade is always a wonderful community event that you don't want to miss. Arrive early to get to your prime spot on Butler Ave. and enjoy the bands, floats, Mummers, and more. And, don't forget who else can be there: Santa!

### Breakfast with Santa

9 a.m. - 11 a.m.  
Presbyterian Church of Chestnut Hill  
8855 Germantown Ave.  
Join Santa Claus at The Presbyterian Church of Chestnut Hill. Enjoy eating a pancake breakfast, writ-

ing a letter to the North Pole, making a seasonal craft, and taking pictures with the man in red. Please bring your own camera (or phone) for photos, and please feel free to arrive in your most festive attire. Pajamas are ok, too. All proceeds will benefit our missions partners who seek to end hunger and homelessness in our community and beyond. Tickets are slightly less than \$10 per person in advance through Ticket Leap and \$12 per person at the door. Purchase tickets online by going to the link below [pcch.ticketleap.com/breakfast-with-santa-2019](http://pcch.ticketleap.com/breakfast-with-santa-2019) or call Presbyterian Church of Chestnut Hill 215-247-8855.

### Gingerbread House Workshop

1 p.m.  
United Lutheran Seminary,  
Brossman Center  
7301 Germantown Avenue,  
Get into the Holiday spirit by decorating a house. Registration includes: 1 house (pre-assembled), over 30 treats to decorate your house, refreshments and more! East Mount Airy Neighbors [info@eastmountairy.org](mailto:info@eastmountairy.org).

### Holiday Bazaar

10 a.m.  
Northwestern Stables  
120 W. Northwestern Ave.  
Visit our festively decorated barn

and enjoy family-friendly fun. We will have riding lessons on our "reindeer horses", and encourage you shop our hand-made crafts, seasonal food and bid on our fabulous raffle prizes. You can also have your picture taken with Santa and his horse. It is free to attend; this is our biggest fundraiser of the year. Proceeds help sustain our community riding programs and help to maintain the historic property. Northwestern Stables Inc. [execdir.nws@gmail.com](mailto:execdir.nws@gmail.com).

### Make Your Own Holiday Wreath

6 p.m.  
Weavers Way Mercantile  
542 Carpenter Ln.  
Create a festive winter wreath for your home this season. We will be combining fresh-cut live evergreens and seasonal foliage, plus ribbon and natural embellishments, to craft a lush 12" wreath. Marisa Keris will demonstrate how to get started and offer any assistance. All materials will be provided but bring your own pruners and gardening gloves. Light refreshments will also be served. >>Cost: \$45 per person including materials. Pre-registration is required. Call 215-843-2350 or email [outreach@weaversway.coop](mailto:outreach@weaversway.coop).

## sun 8

### Christmastime In Keswick Village

4 - 7 p.m.  
Keswick Avenue between Easton Road and Abington Avenue  
Keswick Village kicks off the holiday season with its annual tree lighting, carolers, trolley rides throughout The Village to look at home and shop decorations, ending with Santa's arrival.

### Festival of Carols

4 p.m.  
Upper Dublin High School  
Performing Arts Center  
800 Loch Alsh Ave.  
Fort Washington, Pa.  
An afternoon of beautiful carol arrangements for choir and orchestra with inspirational poetry and audience carol sing-alongs throughout. Cost \$20 for general admission. \$15 for group sales. \$5 for students. Children under 12 are free. For more information, go to [mcomusic.org](http://mcomusic.org).

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# Friends of Abolition Hall lose appeal

(Continued from page 1)

where the plan failed to meet the code. Hovnanian revised its plans and resubmitted them in early September with more waiver requests, only to receive a similar response. Meetings of the Whitemarsh Planning Commission are still being held in an attempt to further work out these

issues.

The planning commission has raised questions about roadway width, parking, the design of structures, and configuration of garage-fronted buildings. Most significant among the issues raised, however, has been the presence of sinkholes on the property and stormwater management. Members of the commis-

sion have expressed concerns that the amount of construction Hovnanian wants to do on the property could cause the sinkholes and stormwater to become unstable.

"These are absolutely critical issues," Zove said. "Very substantial concerns about development of this nature are coming out through the land-use process ... Among other aspects, the planning commission is clearly concerned about the presence of sinkholes and the suitability of

land for this project. The public shares those concerns – they've been asking who would buy a property here for half a million dollars in light of these sinkhole issues."

The next meeting of the Whitemarsh Planning Commission is set for Tuesday, Dec. 10, at 7 p.m. at 616 Germantown Pike, Lafayette Hill, PA 19444. Brendan Sample can be reached at [brendan@chestnuthilllocal.com](mailto:brendan@chestnuthilllocal.com) or 215-248-8819.



**ADOPT-A-PET:** Trina is not even a year old but was found with her two kittens "dumpster diving" for scraps of food. Trina is a very mellow and quiet cat who enjoys attention and lots of petting. She is fully vetted and would love a home for the holidays. She is residing at Bendas-CatRescue adoption center, PetSmart, Plymouth Meeting. Call 215-872-1636.

## death notice

### Natalie Faith Pierce Kent Kempner

Natalie Faith Pierce Kent Kempner, Woolwich, Maine, was born on Jan. 18, 1924 to Gertrude Lindahl and George Kyle Pierce in Binghamton, New York. She grew up a happy child "oblivious to the Depression that required me to sleep in the living room so my mother could take in roomers". During her years at Smith College, which coincided with World War II, her view of the world widened and she became a committed Pacifist and as she discovered the Society of Friends, she joined the Northampton Friends Meeting. She married Orlow Albert Kent, known as Oakie, in 1947 and settled in Ithaca, New York. In 1948 they set out for two years of Voluntary Service with the American Friends Service Committee in Munich, Germany working with the International Refugee Organizations' Children's Village. Their first child, Michael, was born in Munich in 1950. Returning home they worked as co-directors of the Ithaca Children's Home. Their son, Peter, was born in 1951. From 1951-1953 they lived at a low-income housing project in Cleveland while Oakie was in graduate school. Their daughter Nancy was born in 1953. The next four years saw them in Rhinelander, Wisconsin where Joe McCarthy was Senator. "It was a time when even my small job as International Projects Director for the local Girl Scout Council was considered suspect. My reaction was to take a strong political stand!" Their youngest child, Nicholas Orlow, was born in 1956. During 1963 and 1964 the family lived in newly independent Tanganyika, East Africa where Oakie directed the AFSC's Voluntary International Service Assignments (VISA) that provided grassroots work experience for young adults and alternative service for Conscientious Objectors (CO's) to the draft. "In April, 1964 Oakie died in an automobile accident. Natalie and the four children returned to Ithaca where Natalie worked as Program coordinator for the parents of Head Start children and then became a full time student at Cornell where she earned a Master of Art in teaching history and social studies, designing a program of African studies for Ithaca High School. Natalie married Fritz Kempner in 1971 and moved to Philadelphia where she focused on Environmental Education, founding and directing the Norris Square Neighborhood Project, a non-profit bi-lingual learning center. By 1981 she was a very active participant in Philadelphia's Sanctuary Movement, giving shelter to Central American refugees at the Chestnut Hill Friends Meeting House. The Sanctuary work and the Norris Square project were very significant passions for her and many of the people she met during those years have kept in close touch with her. In 1990, Natalie and Fritz retired and moved to Woolwich, Maine. As Quaker and Pacifist, she served on the National Board as well as on many committees of the American Friends Service Committee. She also served as Clerk of Friends Meetings in Ithaca, Philadelphia, and Brunswick, Maine. "Since retirement my delights have been the natural world, the poets, and my eight grandchildren who range in age from 12 – 42. The world by the Kennebec River is breathtakingly beautiful. It is hard, from here, to grasp the news of the day." "A Quaker meeting in Natalie's honor will be held at the Day's Ferry Congregational Church, Woolwich Maine on December 28, 2019 at 11AM. To share your thoughts and condolences with the family, please visit [www.desmondfuneralhomes.com](http://www.desmondfuneralhomes.com)

## death notices

### Audrey Coleman Nichols

Audrey Coleman Nichols Age 84, passed away peacefully on November 17 in the care of family and loved ones at her home in Ambler, Pennsylvania. Born Audrey Frances Coleman on December 9, 1934 to William and Gertrude Coleman, she spent her childhood in Tarrytown, New York, Daytona Beach, Florida, and Hyannis Port, Massachusetts. She attended Barnstable High School and Endicott College. On December 1st, 1963, she married George Quincy Nichols in Boston Massachusetts. The couple settled in Dover, Massachusetts, moving to Lafayette Hill, Pennsylvania in 1977. Possessed of an eye for beauty, Audrey was well known for her sumptuous gardens, her award-winning flower arrangements, and her careers in antiques and interior design. She had a wry sense of humor, a love for the cacophony of flea markets, and a great appreciation for travel, art, and good conversation. She and George raised three children. A few years after the death of her husband in 2008, her health began to falter, and she lived a quiet life surrounded by beauty at her home in Ambler. Audrey is survived by her brother Robert, her three sons George, Jon, and Tucker, and her five grandchildren Quincy, Grantland, Elliott, Ruby, and Ada. Services will be held on Saturday, December 7th, at 11:00 AM, at St. Thomas' Church, Whitemarsh in Fort Washington, Pennsylvania. In lieu of flowers, the family has asked that donations be made to the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society at <https://phsonline.org/donate>



### Louis W. Dante

Louis W. Dante, age 94, on November 29, 2019 of Chestnut Hill. Beloved husband of the late Jane F. (nee Gavaghan). Devoted father of Patricia A. Schneider (Robert) and Mary Louise Hughes (Donald); loving grandfather of Christina Schneider Hemm (Ryan), Kevin Hughes (Rose), Steven Schneider, and Jane Hughes. Lou was born on October 20th, 1925, the 4th of 6 children born to Antonio and Mary Dante. He attended Springfield Twp. High School, class of '43, and served in the US Army after graduation. He was a dedicated member of Our Mother of Consolation parish from the 1940's up to the time of his death. He had a strong faith which guided him throughout his life. His strong work ethic was instilled by his parents, who immigrated to the US from Italy. Starting at age 10, he worked as a shoe shine boy at the Philadelphia Cricket Club. He continued to work there as he grew older, rising from caddy to bartender to maître'd, assistant manager and eventually, club manager. Over the years, he was instrumental in hiring many young Chestnut Hill residents for the club, as dishwashers, busboys, waiters, waitresses and bartenders. He was a member of the Club Managers' Association, serving on the board in various capacities over the years. Leaving the Philadelphia Cricket Club after 50 years, he worked at Philadelphia Country Club as well as Germantown Cricket Club until being hired by North Hills Country Club. He spent his retirement years there as a bartender for over 20 years. A diagnosis of dementia caused Lou to retire from a job he loved. He loved spending time with his family, playing golf, taking day trips to the casinos and smoking a good cigar. Lou and Jane were known to be the first ones on the dance floor at parties. He loved his daily walks along the Avenue, saying hello to various friends. His neighbors could always count on him to be the first one to shovel snow and rake leaves. Over the years, people would comment how happy he was and how he always brought a smile with him wherever he went. The many caregivers that met Lou over the last few years all commented that he was one of their favorite patients. His bright smile and jolly laugh would make their work so much easier. He will be missed by many, especially his family. Relatives and friends may call at Jacob F. Ruth's, 8413 Germantown Ave., Chestnut Hill, Thursday, Dec. 5th 6:30-8:30PM. A visitation will also be held Friday, Dec. 6th, 9AM at Our Mother of Consolation Church, 9 E. Chestnut Hill Ave., Phila., PA 19118. Funeral Mass 10AM. Interment Holy Sepulchre Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, donations may be sent to the Alzheimer's Assoc., 399 Market St., #102, Phila., PA 19106 or Crossroads Hospice, 523 Plymouth Rd., Suite 225, Plymouth Meeting, PA 19462.

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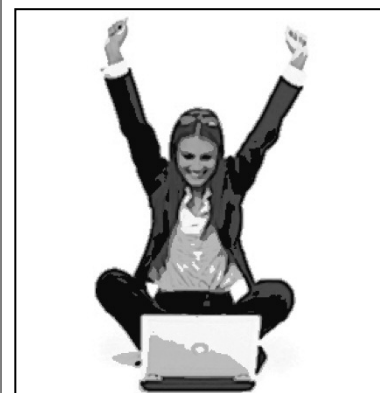
## Conservancy membership vote

Current members of the Chestnut Hill Conservancy will be asked to vote on the following proposed 2020 leadership changes at the Chestnut Hill Conservancy's Annual Meeting on Sunday, Jan. 5, at Norwood Fontbonne Academy. Time tbd.

**2020 New Director Nominees**  
Pascal Maeter  
Paul Meyer

**2020 Re-election of Current Directors**  
Patricia Cove  
Diane Drinker  
Eileen Javers  
Emilie Lapham  
Dennis Meyer  
Randy Williams

**2020 Historic District Advisory Committee**  
Patricia Cove  
Shirley Hanson  
Eileen Javers  
Matt Millan  
William F. O'Keefe, Jr.  
Miles Orvell  
Deborah Popky  
Peter Saylor  
Randy Williams



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## SPORTS

## Community

## Almost all of GA team back from 30-1 season



Germantown Academy's senior captains are (from left) Jaye Haynes, Elle Stauffer and Maddie Vizza. (Photo by Tom Utescher)

by Tom Utescher

This winter, the girls of Germantown Academy will have a tough act to follow on the basketball court — themselves. Last season, the Patriots captured both the Inter-Ac League title and the Pennsylvania Independent Schools championship, and the only loss during their 30-1 season came against a Florida squad ranked in the top five in the nation. It was the second year in a row GA had made a 12-0 run through the Inter-Ac.

Talented shooting guard Rachel Balzer has moved on to play for George Mason University, but that was the only graduation loss for GA. The members of this year's senior class have been making their mark on the Patriots' program since their freshman season. The tri-captains are Jaye Haynes, who is heading to La

Salle University, Elle Stauffer, who will play for Harvard, and Maddie Vizza (a fourth-year starter at point guard), who has chosen Northeastern University. Another senior, Norwood-Fontbonne Academy graduate Maddie Burns, has signed with the University of Michigan to play lacrosse, and a fifth senior, Sarah DiLello, has decided to play softball for Ursinus College.

Another senior, forward Caitlyn Priore, is returning to action after knee surgery sidelined her last winter, and classmate Molly Oeth, also a front court player, has come back to the gym after not playing since her freshman year.

Becca Booth, a 6'2" returning starter, represents the current junior class, along with versatile forward Jessica Moore and guard Charlotte DiLello (who, like her sister Sarah, is a product of Lafayette Hill's St. Philip Neri

School). Additional depth is added to the guard position by sophomores Lilly Funk and Bri O'Hara, while 10th grader Alex Goodridge can play guard or small forward. A new GA student, 6'3" freshman Kendall Bennett, will see varsity action as a post player.

Joining mentor Sherri Retif for her 23rd season at the helm of the Patriots is a seasoned coaching staff that includes Andre Strothers, Misha Horsey and Dia Veneziano.

The talented and deep Germantown team will head out of town for tournaments before and after Christmas, in addition to hosting GA's annual Make-A-Wish event the weekend before the holiday. The Pats will take on Philadelphia Catholic League power Neumann-Goretti High School in the annual Play-by-Play Showcase at Jefferson University in late January.



Four seniors, (from left) Hayley Hunt, Carmen Williams, India Barnes and Kait Carter, are the Penn Charter captains this season. (Photo by Tom Utescher)

## PC basketball looks to continue climb in Inter-Ac League

by Tom Utescher

On the morning of Black Friday, crowds were rattling the doors at Penn Charter's Dooney Field House, waiting for them to be unlocked so they could rush in to see the Quakers' girls' basketball team make its first home appearance in a preseason scrimmage.

Penn Charter will be led by four senior captains this season: India Barnes, Kait Carter, Hayley Hunt and Carmen Williams. Hunt, a lacrosse goalie, already committed to play that sport at Stony Brook University during her freshman year.

The Quakers only graduated two players from the 2018-19 roster, one of them being starting guard Emma Maley. Carter, Hunt and Williams are returning starters, along with Kelsey Bess, still only a ninth grader this year.

The juniors who are full-time varsity players are Laila Hamiter, Kaitlyn Hnatkowsky and Janae Stewart, while fellow 11th graders Ava Coyle, Kaitlynn Haughey, Jamie Kubach and Molly McMahon will swing between the varsity and JV teams.

Sophomores Amani Rivers and Maddie Shoup are also swing players. In addition to Bess, there are two freshmen who have arrived at PC from Northeast Philadelphia grade schools, guard/forward Aleah Snead and forward Bella Toomey.

Head coach Joe Maguire and assistant Amber Gooden are both back for their fifth season at PC. A new addition to the staff is Shannon Glenn, who played at Chestnut Hill College for two seasons and was named the Central Atlantic Collegiate Conference Rookie of the Year in 2016-17.

Two years ago, the Quakers finished fifth in the Inter-Ac League, but last winter, they ended up in a tie for second place with the Academy of Notre Dame, earning an overall record of 23-7. Defending champ Germantown Academy remains very strong, but Notre Dame graduated a starting forward and a pair of guards who are now playing in NCAA Division I.

In addition to scheduling strong non-league opponents from the Philadelphia area, PC will participate in several out-of-state tournaments.

## 'Kountdown to Kraziness' at Springside Chestnut Hill

by Greg Starks

In anticipation of Springside Chestnut Hill's upcoming basketball season, the school hosted its first "Kountdown to Kraziness" event to build up excitement for the teams.

Fans gathered in the school gym on Friday, Nov. 22, eagerly awaiting the night's upcoming events. There was a DJ playing music while the players were being introduced and throughout the whole event. Both the girls' and boys' varsity and JV teams played scrimmages against each other. There was a fan skill challenge, a managers vs. parents shootout and the most anticipated event — the slam dunk contest.

An avid sports fan, SCH Head of School Stephan Druggan was in attendance, as he enjoys going to sporting events at SCH. He always strives to make the school the closest community that it can be and believes that events like this highlight that.

"This brings people together," Druggan said. "They get to have some laughs and see the future talent of their winter program."

Even though you are supposed to be in high school to play on the teams, eighth-grader Ronald DiPietro was good enough to be called up to play on the varsity team this year. This was DiPietro's first time

getting actual in-game experience at the varsity level.

"It was amazing," DiPietro said. "Just giving the ball to my teammates and figuring out a way to win at this fun event is amazing! I'm glad to be on the high school journey this year."

From someone who just made his varsity debut to a player who is a seasoned veteran, senior David Robinson Jr. has been at SCH for two years and has been elevated to team captain status for this year. Robinson helped lead his team to a close victory during the scrimmage. Even though his team won, he focused on the bigger picture of what the event was all about.

"I got to bond with my teammates and just have fun," Robinson said. "Sometimes you forget how to have fun when you're playing a game, but tonight just reminded me to have fun and just play like it's my last game."

Coach Julian McFadden is in his fourth year as the head coach of SCH's boys' basketball team. He is the one who came up with the idea of "Kountdown to Kraziness" and knows just how important this event was to building team chemistry.

"It was something we've never done on the high school level," McFadden said. "I've never seen it done on the high school level. If anything, it gives them [the play-



Scott Bandura was the dunk contest winner.

ers] time to first be teenagers and be able to cheer each other on, and be able to have that camaraderie that they probably wouldn't get until they got to college. I think it's really good for them to see each other in a different light."

The final but most anticipated event of the night was the dunk contest. The two competitors were seniors Robinson and Scott Bandura. Robinson struggled to find his rhythm early, but Bandura came out swinging. He came out

and did a couple of steady but flashy dunks, while the crowd stood in anticipation waiting to see what he was going to do next. Robinson finally found his rhythm as he showcased some monstrous slams, but his early-round struggles cost him the competition. Bandura's best dunk was a self alley-oop off the wall. After that, the competition was basically over and he walked away as the dunk contest champion.

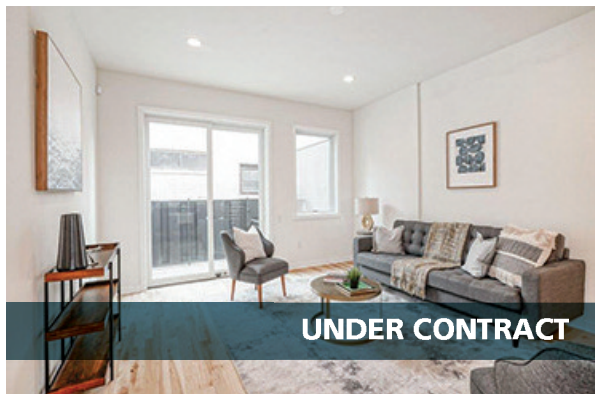
"It feels great," Bandura said. "It's the first one I've ever been in, so it just feels good."

Even though Robinson lost in the dunk contest, he still had nothing but praise for his teammate.

"I'm glad Scott won," Robinson said. "He deserved it, and after that second one off the wall, I just couldn't compete with that."

Once the night's festivities came to an end, it would be back to business for the SCH basketball teams. McFadden believes that a winning culture has been brought back to the basketball program. With each year, he believes that the "Kountdown to Kraziness" events will just get bigger.

"Now that it's a thing that's happened, I'm just hoping people will go home and say they had a good time," he said. "It's something that other students, parents and families will want to see and just be a part of."



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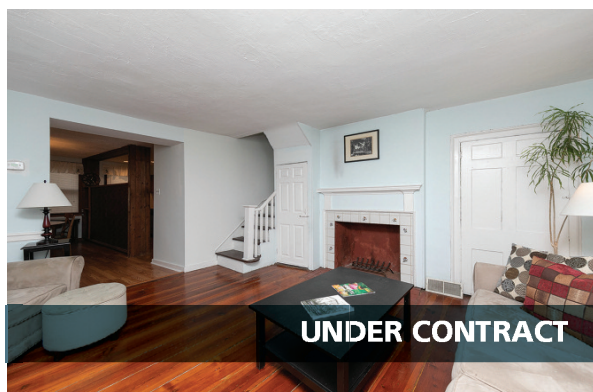
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## Hill director's 5th feature film screening at Woodmere

by Len Lear

We tend to think that movie makers ply their craft either in New York or Hollywood, but Chestnut Hill native Andrew Repasky McElhinney, a movie director whose fifth feature film, "Christmas Dreams," screens Tuesday, Dec. 10, 7:30 p.m., at the Woodmere Art Museum, is an exception to the rule. ("Christmas Dreams" is a holiday kids dance fantasia that mashes up the stories of "The Little Drummer Boy" and "The Nutcracker.")

McElhinney, 41, the film programmer who administers the non-profit screening series The Chestnut Hill Film Group at Woodmere, is also a multi-media video installation performance artist and director specializing in burlesque and cabaret in addition to cinema and theater.

His previous feature films include "Magdalen" (1998), "A Chronicle of Corpses" (2000), which was named one of the top 10 films of that year by New York Times film critic Dave Kehr, who called Andrew's film "the debut of a genuinely original sensibility;" "Georges Bataille's Story of the Eye" (2003) and "Animal Husbandry" (2008). McElhinney also has a film in post-production, "Casual Encounters: Philadelphia True Crime Confessions," that connects several famous Philadelphia true crime stories from the last 25 years.

McElhinney told us last week, "In 'Christmas Dreams,' sharp-eyed viewers will spot cameos by Ralph and Natalie Hirshorn as well as Chestnut Hill Film Group member Judith Buten and former



An advertising poster for "Christmas Dreams," by Chestnut Hill filmmaker Andrew McElhinney, which will be shown at Woodmere Art Museum on Dec. 10.

Chestnut Hill Library security guard John Terry Jones in the film's Christmas Fair sequence. The movie features over 180 performers in the cast and to date is the largest independent movie ever made in Philadelphia.

"I found the young performers in 'Christmas Dreams' very easy to work with. I think it is because I started making movies when I was 15, and often I was directing actors who were mostly older than myself, but I was also sometimes working with actors my age or a little younger. So I guess from the start I've known how to communicate with all ages. I think the trick is to listen and to be



McElhinney, doing post-production editing on "Christmas Dreams."

direct and make eye contact, smile and laugh."

How did McElhinney happen to direct this film? The producers — Michael Rapp, Kim Lenny and Nancy and Gene Fohel — were looking for a director, and Lou Bluver, who produced two of Andrew's previous films, put the parties in touch with each other. "Rapp had a seven-page concept summary that we whipped into a shooting script along with the

choreographer Jenn Rose ... There is an epic Busby Berkeley snowball fight that opens 'Christmas Dreams' that was associate producer Nicole Elizabeth Cook's idea. I loved shooting that sequence; we had a giant crane!

"Movie musicals, when they are done right — Disney's 'Alice in Wonderland' and 'Cinderella,' 'Singin' in the Rain,' 'Monterey Pop,' 'Tommy,' 'Cabaret,' 'All That Jazz,' 'Pennies From Heav-

en,' etc. — are gloriously and totally cinematic. So 'Christmas Dreams' was a chance to do something I had not done before, which is always of interest. As a film director, I am interested in working in all genres ...

"Furthermore, I've always made movies set around holidays — Halloween, Christmas, Mother's

(Continued on page 19)

## Animals love pizza, thanks to honored Hill illustrator



The cover of Liz Lynch's wonderful new book for children, "Pandas Love Pizza."



Chestnut Hill illustrator Liz Lynch has produced another adorable children's picture book that would make a perfect Christmas gift for young children.

by Len Lear

When Chestnut Hill illustrator Liz Lynch, 37, won the first place prize for drawing at the recent Fall for the Arts festival on Germantown Avenue, it could not have surprised anyone who is familiar with Liz' whimsical, brilliant artwork, most recently featured in her latest book, "Pandas Love Pizza," which officially came out on Nov. 15 of this year.

Lynch, a Hill resident for eight years, already has a legion of fans from her previous illustrated children's book, "Pandas Love Pickles," which came out in December of 2017 and has so far sold more than 20,000 copies. ("Pandas Love Pizza" is sold in several stores throughout our community, including Villavillekula, Robertson's, all Nesting House locations and Just Jane. In addition to local stores, Liz sells her books from PandasLovePizza.com and Amazon. The book has also been sold at Anthropologie and is included in the children's book club membership, Literati.)

It is almost impossible not to smile when viewing Liz' delightful, charming, life-like drawings of a giant panda, meercat, sloth, etc., chowing down on a slice of pizza. I would not be surprised if a national pizza chain approached Liz with an offer for her artwork that she could not refuse.

Where did the offbeat idea for "Pandas Love Pizza" come from? "Typically, trying new foods for little kids can feel pretty scary," Lynch explained last week. "I wanted to show that trying new foods is very accessible and fun for young children, particularly picky eaters. I also decided that I wanted to keep the panda on the cover so pizza was a pretty easy choice, being that most kids can relate a positive experience to eating pizza! If pizza is a safe food, maybe a silly animal trying avocado, beets, falafel or other healthy food options won't seem so intimidating.

"My ultimate goal in creating these children's books is to provide

(Continued on page 15)

# New memoir by only Jewish person to do p.r. for Vatican

by Len Lear

Once Ed Eisen posed as a terrorist. The Mafia made him an offer (\$48,000 to do public relations for a convicted murderer for one year) that he could — and did — refuse. Comic Jackie Gleason showed him the door. He dated Christine Jorgensen, the Katelyn Jenner of her day. And Mother Teresa changed the course of his life.

Award-winning journalist Ed Eisen has been a radio DJ, TV producer, talk-show host, the first Jewish spokesman for a Pope and more. Now, in his new memoir, "Front Row Seat," Eisen, 83, who also has his Chestnut Hill stories, tells the tale of a remarkable transformation and how he acquired a front row seat to Philadelphia area history over the last half-century.

After the Philadelphia Evening Bulletin went out of business in January of 1982 after 135 years in business, Eisen was hired by the Chestnut Hill Community Association to do publicity over an environmental issue the CHCA was involved in.

And when Eisen worked for the



Eisen interviews former heavyweight boxing champion Joe Frazier, of North Philly, one of the famous names in Eisen's new book.

ian in 1975 after he became the first Jewish person ever to do public relations for the Vatican!

Eisen was working for Gray & Rogers when the company was selected to represent Pope Paul VI for an event called the 41st Eucharistic Congress, which took place in Philadelphia in 1976, bringing to the city more than one million Catholics from all over the world. Eisen was asked to be the point man to handle worldwide publicity for the event.

"But I'm Jewish," Eisen told his boss, Dave Ferrell. "I've never been to Mass, never sat in a Confessional, never attended an infant baptism."

"Don't worry," said his boss, reminding him that Jesus was Jewish. "You'll learn. You won't have to kiss the Pope's ring. I'll do that next week in Rome. You just handle the news media in Philadelphia."

As a part of that assignment, Eisen did get to interview Mother Teresa, which he insists changed his life. (Eisen's father's job was cleaning offices during the workweek, but on weekends he served as a cantor in synagogues all over West Philadelphia.)

During the interview, Eisen told the nun who would be canonized as a saint in 2016 that his move from journalism to public relations had been a mistake and that getting back into journalism would be challenging, if not impossible. "Nothing is impossible for God," she said, adding that "You need not be a nun to have a purpose, but without a mission life can be very empty. What is your purpose?"

The interview prompted Eisen to re-examine his purpose, whereupon he decided to get back into journalism if that was possible. After several failed attempts, by a fortuitous circumstance he was hired to be a business writer for the Philadelphia Bulletin after a candidate the paper really wanted backed out.

After the Bulletin went out of business in January, 1982, Eisen became an entrepreneur by starting his own p.r. firm, Eisen & Associates, which lasted until he retired in 2010. Since then Ed has become a motivational speaker. He speaks to retirement homes and other organizations and institutions about his experiences with a mass murderer, Jackie Gleason, Joe Frazier, the Rev. Martin Luther King, Sen. Ted Kennedy, Christine Jorgensen, members of the Philadelphia Mafia and more. His programs range from politics to religion, from history to philosophy, to the lessons he has learned on a road often less traveled. These experiences are also recounted in his book.

"Ed Eisen has received high client acclaim here for his bi-monthly current events program called Sound-Off!" according to Ceil Krajewski, of the Pine Run Retirement Community in Doylestown. "Our people tell me they look forward to his one-hour Friday get-togethers, where anything can be discussed and everything is on the table!"

Eisen's next presentations will be: Monday, Dec. 9, 10:30 a.m., at Britany Farms Estates, North Wales, 10:30; Tuesday, Dec. 10, 10:30 a.m., at Normandy Farms Estates, Blue Bell; and Wednesday, Dec. 11, 1:30 p.m., at Rydal Park, Abington.

For more information, visit [www.edeisenshow.com](http://www.edeisenshow.com)



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Gray & Rogers public relations firm in the mid-1970s, he came up with the idea for "The Great Train/Car Chase," a promotion he created for SEPTA to publicize a then-new train station in Valley Forge.

In the promotion, Eisen had Chestnut Hill icon Thatcher Longstreth, the late City Councilman, leave the Valley Forge Train Station on the train at the exact same time that the late Jack Kelly, also a City Councilman and the brother of Grace Kelly, left the station in a sports car with a blonde passenger. The idea was to see who could get to a center city train station first.

"Thatcher won by three minutes," said Eisen. "The story made the front page of both the Inquirer and Bulletin. That's the kind of crap you find in public relations. I was basically a Barnum & Bailey promoter. Mean-

ingless fluff. I even hired an Indian to do a rain dance so it would rain on Jack Kelly's convertible.

"I had broken the Pennhurst story (horrific conditions at a facility for the mentally ill), which ran for one year in the Inquirer along with lots of other important stories, but I transferred my love and passion for journalism to public relations (because of the low pay at the Inquirer), a silly thing I came to hate, and then it took a long time to work my way back to journalism because p.r. people are like defense attorneys. You only tell one side of a story over and over again, so editors are skeptical about hiring someone who has done that for years."

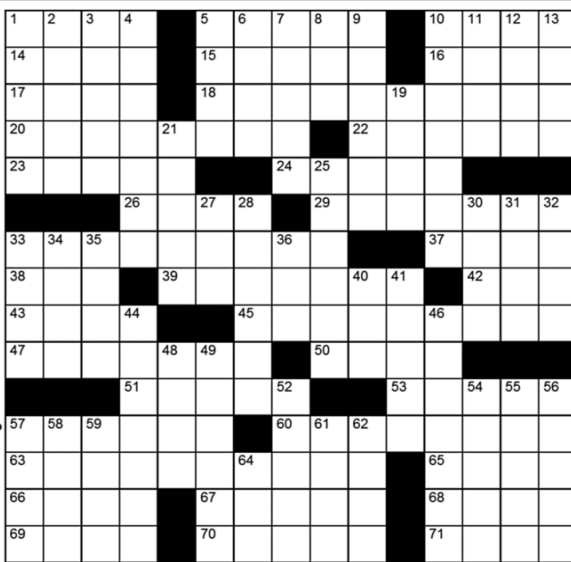
However, Eisen did eventually get back into journalism, which he credits to Mother Teresa. (Yes, THAT Mother Teresa!) He actually interviewed the world-famous humanitar-

## The Weekly Crossword

by Margie E. Burke

### ACROSS

- 1 Type of bag
- 5 Like some cheddar
- 10 Ho-hum
- 14 Throw, as dice
- 15 Coke's bear
- 16 Unsophisticated sort
- 17 Not being used
- 18 Wind instrument
- 20 Trucker in a union
- 22 Linen closet items
- 23 Kind of boom
- 24 Scouting group
- 26 Remote location?
- 29 Consumer
- 33 Part of TKO
- 37 Indonesian island
- 38 "Without further ..."



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- 39 Boastful person
- 42 Hightailed it
- 43 Small stream
- 45 Day of \_\_\_\_\_
- 47 Armchair companion
- 50 Pitchfork part
- 51 Lightweight wood
- 53 Gentle push
- 57 Seward's state
- 60 College age
- 63 Cold season
- 65 Smallest pup
- 66 Hathaway of Hollywood
- 67 Tablelands
- 68 Something to build on
- 69 Vintage designation
- 70 Appears
- 71 Salacious look

- 3 Haggard's hero
- 4 Flaw
- 5 Squabble
- 6 Fine-tune
- 7 Open-eyed
- 8 Pro-footballer in L.A.
- 9 Part of an atom
- 10 It creates drafts
- 11 Pear-shaped instrument
- 12 Genesis brother
- 13 His partner
- 19 State of mind
- 21 Biscuitlike pastry
- 25 Surviving organism of old
- 27 Pudding fruit
- 28 Squirrel's cache
- 30 Rani's wrap
- 31 Enthusiasm
- 32 Saturn feature
- 33 Edible root
- 34 Anagram for "tide"
- 35 Stable youngster

- 36 Absorbed, as a loss
- 40 Enjoy Aspen
- 41 Heavy metric weight
- 44 Maine entree
- 46 On the fence
- 48 Put together
- 49 Burglar deterrents
- 52 Licorice-like flavor

- 54 Tennis tie e.g.
- 56 Sign above a door
- 57 Not at home
- 58 Pickup shtick
- 59 Oscar winner Paquin
- 61 Mosque leader
- 62 Bitter end?
- 64 Pipe fitting

### Answers to Last Week's Crossword:



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# ENTERTAINMENT calendar DEC 5-7

## thu 5

### "Elf"

1:30 - 4 p.m.  
Center on the Hill  
8855 Germantown Ave.  
Join us for this Holiday comedy favorite movie "Elf." Buddy (Will Ferrell) was accidentally transported to the North Pole as a toddler and raised to adulthood among Santa's elves. Unable to shake the feeling that he doesn't fit in, the adult Buddy travels to New York, in full elf uniform, in search of his real father. \$2 includes popcorn. For more information, go to [www.chestnuthill-pres.org/center-on-the-hill/](http://www.chestnuthill-pres.org/center-on-the-hill/).

### Agatha Christie's "Witness for the Prosecution"

The Stagecrafters Theater  
8130 Germantown Ave.  
A young man, Leonard Vole, stands accused of the brutal murder of a wealthy older woman, a casual acquaintance who, over time became most fond of him and changed her will in his favor. The stakes are sky-high as renowned London barrister Wilfrid Robarts summons all his legal talents in order to prove the man innocent. Agatha Christie at her best, treating us to a taut murder mystery, has crafted a thriller suspenseful to its very end, deftly combined with astute psychological insights and ... well, lots of tingly fun throughout. For more information, go to [www.thestagecrafters.org/](http://www.thestagecrafters.org/).

### An Indonesian Dinner for An Important Cause at From Bali to Bala

7 - 9 p.m.  
Bali to Bala  
8532 Germantown Ave.  
Share a delicious meal in a truly special Indonesian tradition of a communal Liwetan dinner of local dishes prepared with love by our friends Pecel Ndeso. Most importantly, half of the ticket cost will

help with legal aid for our dear friends, an Indonesian family devastated by an ICE raid. Pre-registration is required. \$40 per person, but reserve quickly: seating is very limited. For more information, go to <http://frombali-tobala.com/bali-bala-show-invites-experience-indonesia-without-ever-leaving-home/>

## fri 6

### Annual Carol Night

7:30 p.m.  
Chestnut Hill College  
Rotunda, St. Joseph Hall  
9601 Germantown Ave.  
Celebrate the holidays at Chestnut Hill College's Annual Carol Night with CBS3 anchor Janelle Burrell. The college's primary musical groups, which include jazz, string and wind ensembles and the Hill Singers, perform Christmas tunes both old and new. The performance concludes with Christmas carol sing-a-longs and a visit from Santa Claus. The event is free and open to the public. Following the performances, a reception will be held in the East Parlor of St. Joseph Hall. Guests can enjoy the college's fully decorated campus, and children have a chance to meet and get their photograph taken with Santa. For more information, call 215-248-7001.

### Beatles vs. Stones Tribute Show

8 p.m.  
Keswick Theatre  
291 Keswick Ave.  
Tribute bands Abbey Road and Satisfaction perform "The International Rolling Stones Show" and engage in a musical showdown of the hits. (215) 572-7650.

### The Music of Ray Charles and Betty Carter: Music to Shake the Soul

6 p.m.  
Woodmere Art Museum  
9201 Germantown Ave.  
The powerful voices of Ray

Charles and Betty Carter take us on a journey through life's experiences and emotions. From "What'd I Say" to "Baby It's Cold Outside," experience how these two artists hit that deep spot in the music box. Woodmere Art Museum 215-247-0476 or [info@woodmereartmuseum.org](mailto:info@woodmereartmuseum.org).

### Quintessence Presents: "The Wizard of Oz"

7:30 p.m.  
Sedgwick Theater  
7137 Germantown Ave.  
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### VoxAmaDeus: Handel Messiah

7 p.m.  
St. Paul's Episcopal Church  
22 E. Chestnut Hill Ave.  
VoxAmaDeus led by Valentin Radu, artistic director and conductor, performs HANDEL MESSIAH at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Chestnut Hill. For more information, call 610-688-2800 or go to [VoxAmaDeus.org](http://VoxAmaDeus.org).

## sat 7

### 2019 Chestnut Hill Holiday House Tour

9 a.m.  
Woodmere Art Museum  
9201 Germantown Ave.  
The holiday season is a time to

relive cherished traditions, and for Chestnut Hill, there is no better tradition than spending a day enjoying the Christmas Holiday House Tour. Presented annually by the Chestnut Hill Community Association (CHCA), this year's tour will feature five of the area's loveliest historic homes decorated for the holidays. Get into the holiday spirit and find inspiration for your Holiday celebrations while experiencing the rich architectural heritage of Chestnut Hill. Tickets: \$40 for Chestnut Hill Community Association Members \$45 for non-members Group Tickets. Many restaurants and shops will be offering discounts for Christmas Holiday House Tour attendees, and our event trolleys will stop at each house on the tour, and along Germantown Avenue. This is an all-weather event. You may ride our festive event trolleys from house to house or drive your car. Attendees check in at Woodmere Art Museum to pick up their map, wristband, and booties. Attendees

are invited to the Woodmere Art Museum when they finish the tour to enjoy their annual holiday exhibit. Check-in at Woodmere Art Museum to pick up your program booklet, wristband, and booties. Additional registration locations may be added. For more information, go to [www.chestnuthill.org/](http://www.chestnuthill.org/).

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# Animals love pizza, thanks to honored Hill illustrator

(Continued from page 13)

as many learning opportunities and tools as possible without seeming overly dense. I feel 'Pandas Loves Pickles' and 'Pandas Love Pizza' both accomplish this perfectly. A child can read these books and learn the alphabet, sounds that letters make, explore different animals and foods, maybe even cook something they saw in the book, all without feeling like a lesson is being forced."

Lynch grew up in upstate New York, just outside of Rochester. "We were looking to move from Hoboken, NJ, for job reasons, and fell in love with this area while visiting my husband's family here."

The local author has a degree in studio art from Lafayette College and told us in a previous interview that illustration has always been her passion, and publishing a children's book has always been her goal. She went the self-publishing route because it potentially offers the most money. But it's also labor-intensive. "I worked really hard at it from start to finish," Lynch said. "I worked so hard, and I was so close to it for so long."

Lynch and her husband, John, have two children, six-year-old Ellis and Everett, who is three-and-a-half. John is the vice-president and management director at Calcium, a healthcare marketing agency. He works directly with clients to help

create advertising content and is the operations manager of Liz' book business

Lynch's own favorite illustrator is the legendary Maurice Sendak. "There is something so whimsical about his illustrations that I feel capture your imagination in a way that really sets him apart." Liz has plans for another food-themed book as well as a counting book that has a funny twist.

What is the hardest thing Lynch has ever done? "Learning the economics of the European Union IN FRENCH while studying abroad in Paris my junior year of college was REALLY hard, but flying solo with

two toddlers is hands-down the most difficult thing I think anyone can do."

What is the best advice Liz has ever received? "Don't wait to do what makes you happy."

If Lynch could live anywhere on earth, where would she choose? "The easy answer is the beach because I always feel recharged and inspired when I'm there."

Lynch will be at the Erdenheim Holiday Market this December signing books, as well as the Nesting House in Mt. Airy. For more information, visit [PandasLovePizza.com](http://PandasLovePizza.com) Len Lear can be reached at [lelearn@chestnuthilllocal.com](mailto:lelearn@chestnuthilllocal.com)

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# Transform tasty Christmas cookies into tree ornaments

A few years ago, my baker husband had this wacky idea for the Christmas tree.

He suggested we make a cookie-themed tree. All the ornaments would be freshly baked cookies.

I'd seen it before in Martha Stewart Living magazine and a few other places that made the idea highly intimidating.

But this year, I've committed to doing this. I'll be decorating a whole tree, covered in gingerbread and sugar cookies, iced and decorated. The confections will be perched just high enough so that my mini poodle won't be snacking all night.

late on any cookies because of pets," Edelman said. "We typically would make gingerbread men eyes and buttons with chocolate chips, but I would use nonpareils instead."

When you've created your dough, Edelman suggests making sure it comes to almost room temperature before rolling. Also, she insists on rolling it out between two ¼-inch yardsticks, to assure the dough is a uniform thickness, which will help avoid breakage.

Just place two yardsticks on the counter on either side of the dough ball, and work the rolling pin over the dough until it reaches the height of the yardstick.

Next, when it is time to cut out your cookie shapes, first dip your cutter in a bowl of flour, which will help keep the cutter from sticking to the dough. Dip before each cut.

Then, lift the cookie with a wide spatula to a cookie sheet lined with parchment paper. Now, it is time for the critical step: punching the hanging hole.

"The hole should not be too close to the top," Edelman warned. "It also needs to be big enough in case the dough bakes part of it closed."

To make the hole, start about one half to three quarters of an inch from the top of the cookie, and use a metal straw, or an item with a similar width.

Once the cookies are completely cool, they can be iced. Edelman suggests using only a royal icing, which is made with 3 ounces egg white, 4 cups confectioners' sugar and 1 teaspoon vanilla extract. The icing can be dyed with food coloring. This icing dries quickly, stays hard and keeps the cookies from breaking.

After the icing dries, cookies can be strung with a thin ribbon, and can



Night Kitchen owner Amy Edelman has plenty of experience making ornaments out of Christmas cookies. (Photo by April Lisante)

even be used next year. "You can use them again next year," Edelman said, "As long as they are stored in Tupperware." "I liked that idea best. Much easier tree decorating in 2020."

Here are two basic recipes from allrecipes.com for butter cookies and gingerbread. These are tried and true recipes I have used successfully, and they are easy enough for anyone, even me. They make about three dozen cookies per recipe. Remember to add the critical step, though, by punching your hanging hole in the cookies before placing them in the oven.

**Sugar Cookies**  
 2 ¾ cups all-purpose flour  
 1 tsp. baking soda  
 ½ tsp. baking powder  
 1 cup butter, softened  
 1 ½ cups white sugar  
 1 egg  
 1 tsp. vanilla extract

Preheat oven to 375. In a small bowl, stir together flour, baking soda and baking powder. Set aside. In a large bowl, cream together the butter and sugar until smooth. Beat in egg and vanilla. Gradually blend in the dry ingredients. Roll rounded teaspoons of dough into balls, and place on ungreased cookie sheets. Poke hole in each cookie about ½-inch from top. Bake 8 to 10 minutes before removing to cool on wire racks.

**Gingerbread Men Cookies**  
 3 cups flour  
 2tsp. McCormick ginger, ground  
 1 tsp. McCormick cinnamon, ground  
 1 tsp. baking soda  
 ¼ tsp. McCormick nutmeg, ground  
 ¼ tsp. salt  
 ¾ cup butter, softened  
 ¾ cup firmly packed brown sugar  
 ½ cup molasses  
 1 egg  
 1 tsp. McCormick pure vanilla extract

Mix flour, ginger, cinnamon, baking soda, nutmeg and salt in a large bowl. Set aside. Beat butter and brown sugar in a large bowl on medium speed until light and fluffy. Add molasses, egg, and vanilla. Mix well. Gradually beat in flour mixture on low speed until well mixed. Press dough into a thick, flat disk. Wrap in plastic wrap. Refrigerate four hours to overnight.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Roll out dough to ¼-inch thickness on lightly floured work surface. Cut into gingerbread men with 5-inch cutter. Place one inch apart on ungreased baking sheets. Poke hole in each cookie about 1/2 -inch from top. Bake 8 to 10 minutes or until edges of cookies are set and just begin to brown. Cool on baking sheets 1 to 2 minutes. Remove to wire racks, cool completely.

**Food For Thought**  
 by April Lisante



It sounds daunting, or at least it sounded daunting, until I spoke with Night Kitchen Bakery owner Amy Edelman. After nearly three decades as a baker and pastry pro, Edelman told me a story that made me feel like I could nail this cookie tree thing.

"Back in the late 90s, I was working at the Disneyland Hotel in Euro Disney, and we made a cookie mobile hanging from the ceiling of the hotel foyer," Edelman recalled. "It was monstrous."

The mobile featured hundreds of cut out, iced, and strung holiday cookies.

"It was amazing," she said. It seemed I came to the right place. I asked her to share some tips for creating and stringing cookies for a tree.

"First of all, stay away from choco-

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# Lyft driver/life coach in high gear with ‘Focus of Love’

by Len Lear

One never knows where stories will come from. A freelance writer whose articles have appeared periodically in the Local contacted me last week and said, “I took a ride with a Lyft driver today, and she had quite a story. It turns out that she is a life coach and has just written a book that is very interesting.”

The Lyft driver is Focus Tanikia James, 47, author of a new book titled “What is the Focus of Love?” I don’t think you can interview her without asking the obvious question, “Is Focus your real name?”

The answer: “I acquired the name ‘Focus’ after I performed a spoken word poem called ‘Deeper Deeper’ at Temple Ambler with an audience of about 150 people.

“As a Broadcast Telecommunications Mass Media and Theater major with a minor in Women’s Studies, I took on that name and started a radio show the following semester called ‘Focus on Relationships.’ It was well received, and I knew I had something but did not know to what extent.

“My birth name is Tanikia Melissa James. According to a user from Jamaica on the name.org website, the name Tanikia is of English origin and means ‘Guarded by God, loving heart and soul and forgiving.’”

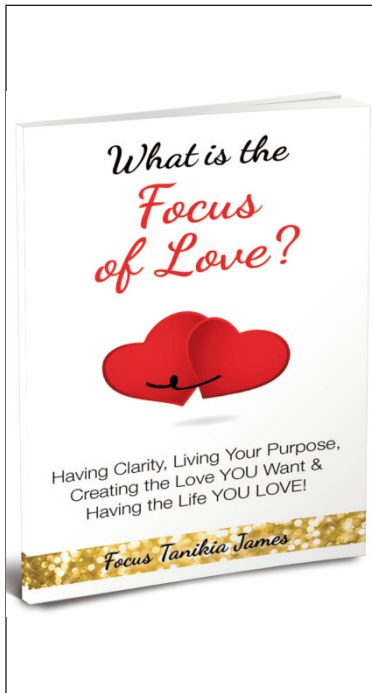
Focus, who now lives in Plymouth Meeting, was born and raised in North Philly. She attended Franklin Learning Center for high school, where she played volleyball, basketball and softball.

Focus received a two-year “King Scholarship” to attend Community College of Philadelphia with a dual enrollment at Temple University. “It took me six years to acquire my degree because I was married and trying to start a family simultaneously. I took classes off and on; I suffered through the still-birth of my baby girl before successfully giving birth to my son, but I persevered.”

When she had her son, Focus owned and operated a home day care, and her first degree was in Early Childhood Education, which helped her become a certified pre-school teacher for seven years.

It was not until after her divorce from a church pastor that Focus completed the dual degree at Temple University in 2004.

She traveled over 37 states with several companies, working and studying business/leadership and network marketing. “I interviewed hun-



Focus’ new book is designed to help readers “live their purpose, create the love they want and have the life they love!”

dreds of singles and couples about relationships.” She also worked for a local cable/communication company for seven years in customer service, retention and sales.

Since July of this year, Focus has been a part-time Lyft driver. “It serves its purpose for quick cash during the hours my daughter is at school from 9 a.m. to about 1 p.m. to fund my purpose and still gives me three hours to build thefocusoflove.com. It’s a win-win.”

Last month Focus was a guest speaker at the Blue Bell Country Club during a Women’s Empowerment Spa Day. Her topic was: “Keeping the Spark Alive.” She was at the Germantown Cricket Club as a guest speaker at a Wine Classic Soiree. Her topic: “Heal or Repeat The Pain.”

Focus’ next project is the 2020 Creative Calendar by Run Boy Run Productions of Culture Works of Greater Philadelphia. It is a calendar that will feature creative artists from all walks of life in Greater Philadelphia. A portion of the proceeds will be donated to organizations that support and educate children in the arts.

Focus has become an in-demand public speaker. “She is a powerhouse speaker,” said Majet Reyes, founder of DivaGirl Philly. “She shared some raw experiences in her life and in her relationships, which helped the audience resonate with her.”

Focus also received her official certification as a life coach, teacher



Focus is a Lyft driver and life coach in addition to being a new author.

trainer and speaker from the John C. Maxwell Academy in August, 2018, in Orlando Florida.

Since then she has coached many people internationally in multiple venues and individuals via zoom.com.

“The hardest thing I ever had to do,” she told us, “involved the passing of my mother. She woke from a coma cringing and reaching for my face to hug me. It was a sweet embrace ... She taught me that integrity is doing the right thing even when no one is looking.”

If Focus could live anywhere on earth, she would “live in Ireland to study my heritage. My great grandfather, Alexander O’Connor, was a merchant seaman who traveled from Ireland to the south, fell in love with my great-grandmother, Ms. Milligan, and had nine children.”

Focus would like to take this opportunity to publicly “thank my brother, Maurice James ... His calm and protective demeanor created a beautiful transition for our mother and a space for me to transform our relationship, which later produced my first book and LLC.”

For more information, visit thefocusoflove.com. Len Lear can be reached at lelear@chestnuthilllocal.com

DEC 7 TRADITIONS OF THE SEASON	DEC 8 FLAVORS OF THE SEASON	DEC 14 SOUNDS OF THE SEASON	DEC 15 CRAFTS OF THE SEASON
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**CRITICAL MASS**

# ‘The Post’ tells an old story that still matters today

Each week, veteran film critic Bill Wine will look back at an important film that is worth watching, either for the first time or again.

It's Spielberg, Streep and Hanks – with icons like these, first names are hardly necessary – together again for the first time.

And Steven, Meryl and Tom were not only making a 2017 movie, but making a statement about the Trump administration's attack on the press of late and perhaps even making a little noise during awards season.



Tom Hanks and Meryl Streep in "The Post."

the report who had been a State Department analyst and was now working for the Rand Corporation, initially leaked to the New York Times. It clearly demonstrated that the war was not winnable. And yet the war effort continued. But the Nixon administration's blocking of any further publication left it up to the Post, and Ellsberg agreed to leak the papers to assistant managing editor Ben Bagdikian (Bob Odenkirk).

Storyteller Spielberg is his usual deft overseer, conjuring considerable suspense, compelling and inspiring us even though we know the outcome in advance. But the emotional narrative spine is delivered by Streep's Graham, who had unexpectedly taken over management of the paper after her husband committed suicide.

It is she who finds her voice along the way in a thrust that resounds deafeningly in this particular year of the woman.

The courageous Graham-Bradlee decision to publish not only threatened the paper's very existence, but could have meant a prison term for the two of them.

And while Hanks provides an effective alternative reading of gritty crusader Bradlee, so memorably delivered by Oscar winner Jason Robards in "All the President's Men," Streep is her usual magnificently-nuanced-and-yet-underplaying self, essaying a character who comes into her own in a beautifully calibrated performance that suggests an alternative title: "Some of the President's Men – and a Woman."

As for maestro Spielberg, he pretty much ignores technical flourishes – certainly an appropriate approach – and lets the loaded subject matter speak for itself, which it does by delving into moral, ethical, and legal nooks and crannies.

"The Post" is, among other things, a political rejoinder by a supremely talented triumvirate. And it's as robust and splendid as it is timely.

Bill Wine is an Emmy-winning film critic who served in that capacity for WTXF and KYW Newsradio. He lives in Chestnut Hill.

2016 memoir, "Personal History," concentrates on the risky road traveled by Graham and Bradlee, sets itself up as a Watergate precursor, dramatizes the transformation of the titular newspaper from a regional publication to a national one, and ends up representing itself as a virtual prequel to "All the President's Men."

So, yes, it's a love letter to principled print journalism. And why shouldn't it be?

For Spielberg ("Jaws," "Close Encounters of the Third Kind," "E.T. the Extraterrestrial," "Schindler's List," "Jurassic Park," "Lincoln," "Saving Private Ryan") it's his hum, another keeper. But you can feel the film's convictions in every frame, part of the reason why it was nominated for the Best Picture Oscar and the Best Actress Oscar for Streep.

The Pentagon Papers comprised a secret study initiated by Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, played by Bruce Greenwood that chronicled the United States involvement in Vietnamese politics since the 1950s. It made it obvious that a succession of political administrations from both parties – going all the way back to the Truman administration – lied about the progress being made in the conflict and the prospects for any kind of real American victory.

That was what Daniel Ellsberg (Matthew Rhys), a contributor to



by Bill Wine

"The Post" – as in The Washington Post – is a historical biodrama and newspaper melodrama that finds master-class director Spielberg addressing the paper's role in exposing the Pentagon Papers in 1971.

And it immediately takes its place among such restrained cinematic classics about journalism as "All the President's Men" and "Spotlight," yet another resonant reminder of the importance of freedom of the press.

The focus is on Post publisher Katharine Graham (the first female newspaper publisher), played by Streep, and Hanks' executive editor Ben Bradlee, the two of whom decided to go ahead and publish after a federal judge had already short-circuited the similar efforts of the New York Times, which was challenging the federal government on the issue of their right to publish, given that they were exploring a cover-up that spanned four United States Presidents.

And period piece that it is, don't think for a second that today's political climate – and all the parallels that the very existence of this project suggests with respect to the adversarial relationship between the Trump administration and the press – is lost on screenwriters Josh Singer and Liz Hannah or on the film's three primary movers and shakers.

File it under "Movies That Matter."

The script, which draws upon Graham's Pulitzer Prize-winning

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## CRITICAL MASS



### The Discredited Language of Angels by Gabi Garbutt and the Illuminations

To the impressive list of fantastic records by women in 2019, please add "The Discredited Language of Angels," the debut album by Gabi Garbutt and the Illuminations. I'm a little late to this one – it came out in mid-November – but it hasn't garnered nearly the attention it deserves.

#### Liner Notes



by Pete Mazzaccaro

Garbutt, a pixie-cut wearing, guitar playing dynamo of sonic, British energy, has carved out a striking sound that recalls some of the greatest rock acts of her home island since the late 70s. There are strong ties to the pub rock and mod scene of the late 70s. Think particularly of The Jam's "Town Called Malice." There's also no small current of the early 90s Brit Pop, with hints of Pulp, Blur and Sleeper.

Like any really good rock act today, there are references to

what came before, but there's no slavish, copy-cat songwriting here. Part of the album's polish is due in no small part to the production of Sean Read who was part of the early 80s Birmingham band Dexy's Midnight Runners, whose 1982 hit "Come on Eileen" is a timeless hit.

The album kicks off with its first single, "Fool," which opens to a brisk pace, a whirl of organ that immediately makes one think of Elvis Costello and the Imposters. A healthy horn section adds a bit of Northern Soul flavor, and we're off to the races. By the fantastic opening to the next track, "This Higher Place," if you're not hooked, there may be something wrong with you.

"The Discredited Language of Angels" is a promising debut by a terrific songwriter. We can only hope she has plenty more in store for us.

Key Songs: "This Higher Place," "Heat of the Machine," "Lady Matador"

Liner Notes is a regular column on music from an admittedly Gen X point of view. Feedback on the column can be sent to [pete@chestnuthilllocal.com](mailto:pete@chestnuthilllocal.com)

## Hill director's 5th feature film

(Continued from page 13)

Day and Fourth of July. They tend to enter the culture because they are perennial and part of this greater, inescapable social ritual. And re-watching these perennial movies each holiday is like catching up with an old friend."

The producer brought McElhinny on in late April, 2012. They wrote the script, partnered with a CGI (computer-generated imagery) firm and started shooting July 6 of that year, all on sound stages, and wrapped up by the end of August. McElhinny and his team then spent 33 months in post-production because every shot of this movie involves some level of CGI.

"The CGI was a great experience," said McElhinny. "I am excited that CGI is now a relatively affordable technology, even to independent filmmakers. It's been exciting to watch the technology evolve. It gets smaller and more light weight and cheaper ... What is possible now with an iPhone or a GoPro is unbelievable!"

In "Christmas Dreams," there is a Nativity scene that includes Andrew's mother, Suzanne Repasky (as St. Anne, Jesus'



A charming shot from a scene in McElhinny's new movie, "Christmas Dreams."

grandmother), his writing partner, Greg Giovanni (as one of the Wise Men), and his lawyer, Mike Zaleski (as Joseph), as well as an entire biblical petting zoo complete with a camel.

McElhinny holds advance degrees from The New School for Social Research (New York City) and The European Graduate School (EGS) in Switzerland. In 2011, McElhinny defended his PhD dissertation, "Second Takes — Remaking America: A Psychoanalytic Reading of English Language Cinema, 1931–1998,"

which was subsequently published by McFarland and Company as "Second Takes: Remaking Film, Remaking America." He has been an instructor at Rutgers, Rowan and Temple Universities, among others, teaching Screenwriting, Cinema and American Studies. His cinema work is in the permanent collection of MOMA: The Museum of Modern Art in New York City.

For more information, visit [ARMcinema25.com](http://ARMcinema25.com). Len Lear can be reached at [llenlear@chestnuthilllocal.com](mailto:llenlear@chestnuthilllocal.com)

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# Hill resident stars in murder mystery at Stagecrafters

By Rita Charleston

In Agatha Christie's "Witness for the Prosecution," Leonard Vole is arrested for the murder of Emily French, a wealthy older woman. Unaware that he was a married man, Miss French made him her principal heir, casting suspicion on Leonard after the murder. When his wife, Romaine, agrees to testify, she does so, not in Leonard's defense but as a witness for the prosecution.

Originally written as a short story, Christie adapted her work to a play which first premiered in London in 1953. It was later turned into a film in 1957, starring Tyrone Power as the affable Vole.

The play is now being presented by Stagecrafters. Directed by Yaga Brady, it continues through Dec. 8, with Mark Sherlock in the lead role. Born in Haddon Township, N. J., Sherlock made the move across the river to obtain his B.A. degree in Theater at Temple University. He also graduated from Purdue University with an M.F.A. degree in Acting.

"Over the years I found a lot of passion and fulfillment every time I got a chance to do a school play and get up on stage," Sherlock explained. "In high school I got really involved, and it was something I decided to do as a career. Later I got married, and

when my wife, Jessica, wanted to move to Orlando to get her master's degree at the University of Central Florida, of course I went with her. And when she had completed her studies, we decided to move back to Philly. We wanted to be closer to home and our family and friends."

Coming back to the area, the couple looked around for the perfect place to put down roots and settled on Chestnut Hill. "We fell in love with the whole area and are enjoying our time here," Sherlock remarked. "We were familiar with Chestnut Hill, Mt. Airy and the whole area. We had friends who lived there, and every time we were in this area, we fell in love with all the old, beautiful houses. It was green with big, beautiful trees. And it definitely felt like a community and home to both of us."

What's more, Sherlock added, while walking around the area one day, he discovered Stagecrafters not far from his home. Hearing about auditions, he decided to try out, got this role and is now making his debut at the theater.

"I've played in many other theaters and had heard about Stagecrafters," Sherlock, 31, said. "People had told me about it. It has a very strong, very good reputation. I was eager to connect with the theater community in this area and this play.



Mark Sherlock has the lead role in Agatha Christie's classic mystery, "Witness for the Prosecution," now being presented by Stagecrafters through Dec. 8.

Now here I am.

"The play follows Leonard, who is an impulsive dreamer. He's very intense and passionate. He's the type of person who has lots of ideas and plans all the time. He fought in World War II, and when he came back, he struggled to try to clarify what he wants to do. Let's just say he's searching for something."

Today, the actor said, "I love working at Stagecrafters and I love what I do. And hopefully I can help heighten the tension in the room and give audiences exactly what they came looking for."

Stagecrafters is located at 8130 Germantown Ave. For tickets call 215-247-8881.

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**When:** Please drop off books from Monday, December 2nd through Tuesday, December 31st during weekday business hours

**Where:** Donation Box in Town Hall building front door at 8434 Germantown Avenue in Chestnut Hill

**What to Donate:** Children's board books, children's picture books and "G" Rated Graphic Novels

For information about Reading Recycled visit their website [readingrecycled.org](http://readingrecycled.org) Donation site questions call the Chestnut Hill Local at (215) 248-8816.



## Caruso column

Michael Caruso's classical music column, "Noteworthy," is not in the paper this week, but it can be found online at [www.chestnuthilllocal.com](http://www.chestnuthilllocal.com) Caruso can be contacted at [michael-caruso@comcast.net](mailto:michael-caruso@comcast.net)



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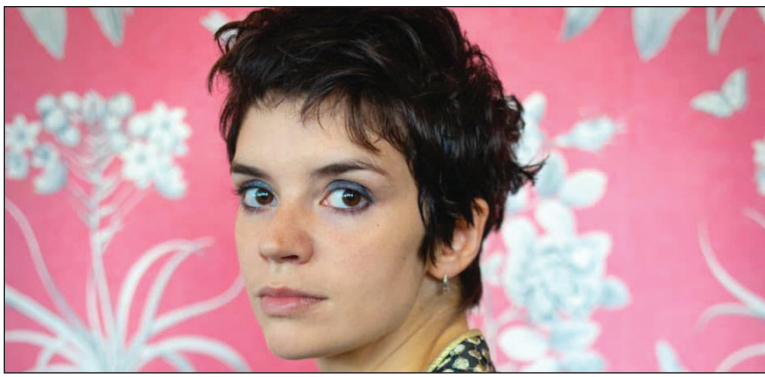
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# CRITICAL MASS



## The Discredited Language of Angels by Gabi Garbutt and the Illuminations

To the impressive list of fantastic records by women in 2019, please add "The Discredited Language of Angels," the debut album by Gabi Garbutt and the Illuminations. I'm a little late to this one – it came out in mid-November – but it hasn't garnered nearly the attention it deserves.

**Liner Notes**



by Pete Mazzaccaro

Garbutt, a pixie-cut wearing, guitar playing dynamo of sonic, British energy, has carved out a striking sound that recalls some of the greatest rock acts of her home island since the late 70s. There are strong ties to the pub rock and mod scene of the late 70s. Think particularly of The Jam's "Town Called Malice." There's also no small current of the early 90s Brit Pop, with hints of Pulp, Blur and Sleeper.

Like any really good rock act today, there are references to

what came before, but there's no slavish, copy-cat songwriting here. Part of the album's polish is due in no small part to the production of Sean Read who was part of the early 80s Birmingham band Dexy's Midnight Runners, whose 1982 hit "Come on Eileen" is a timeless hit.

The album kicks off with its first single, "Fool," which opens to a brisk pace, a whirl of organ that immediately makes one think of Elvis Costello and the Imposters. A healthy horn section adds a bit of Northern Soul flavor, and we're off to the races. By the fantastic opening to the next track, "This Higher Place," if you're not hooked, there may be something wrong with you.

"The Discredited Language of Angels" is a promising debut by a terrific songwriter. We can only hope she has plenty more in store for us.

Key Songs: "This Higher Place," "Heat of the Machine," "Lady Matador"

Liner Notes is a regular column on music from an admittedly Gen X point of view. Feedback on the column can be sent to [pete@chestnuthilllocal.com](mailto:pete@chestnuthilllocal.com)

# Hill director's 5th feature film

(Continued from page 13)

Day and Fourth of July. They tend to enter the culture because they are perennial and part of this greater, inescapable social ritual. And re-watching these perennial movies each holiday is like catching up with an old friend."

The producer brought McElhinny on in late April, 2012. They wrote the script, partnered with a CGI (computer-generated imagery) firm and started shooting July 6 of that year, all on sound stages, and wrapped up by the end of August. McElhinny and his team then spent 33 months in post-production because every shot of this movie involves some level of CGI.

"The CGI was a great experience," said McElhinny. "I am excited that CGI is now a relatively affordable technology, even to independent filmmakers. It's been exciting to watch the technology evolve. It gets smaller and more light weight and cheaper ... What is possible now with an iPhone or a GoPro is unbelievable!"

In "Christmas Dreams," there is a Nativity scene that includes Andrew's mother, Suzanne Repasky (as St. Anne, Jesus'



A charming shot from a scene in McElhinny's new movie, "Christmas Dreams."

grandmother), his writing partner, Greg Giovanni (as one of the Wise Men), and his lawyer, Mike Zaleski (as Joseph), as well as an entire biblical petting zoo complete with a camel.

McElhinny holds advance degrees from The New School for Social Research (New York City) and The European Graduate School (EGS) in Switzerland. In 2011, McElhinny defended his PhD dissertation, "Second Takes — Remaking America: A Psychoanalytic Reading of English Language Cinema, 1931–1998,"

which was subsequently published by McFarland and Company as "Second Takes: Remaking Film, Remaking America." He has been an instructor at Rutgers, Rowan and Temple Universities, among others, teaching Screenwriting, Cinema and American Studies. His cinema work is in the permanent collection of MOMA: The Museum of Modern Art in New York City.

For more information, visit [ARMcinema25.com](http://ARMcinema25.com). Len Lear can be reached at [lenlear@chestnuthilllocal.com](mailto:lenlear@chestnuthilllocal.com)

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4. Go to [chestnuthilllocal.com](http://chestnuthilllocal.com), click on the Holiday House Lights ad and follow the directions for uploading your picture
5. Vote for you favorite holiday house. You can vote once per day for the duration of the contest.
6. Tell your friends and neighbors to vote online as well.
7. Share the link to the contest on your social media accounts.
8. Enjoy the holidays!

You can post photos starting now through Sunday, December 15th. Voting will take place through December 19th.

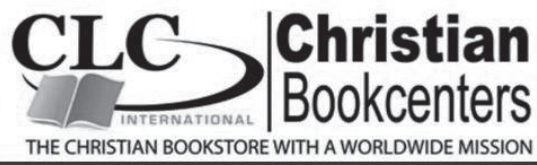


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## Boxly: A botanical legacy survives in Chestnut Hill

Digging around in the rich history of Chestnut Hill and vicinity sometimes takes us on unexpected journeys. That is certainly the case with Boxly, the prominent local estate that survives today in engaging ways.

The most visible surviving part is the house that can be partly seen from either West Gravers Lane or Rex Avenue, grandly overlooking



The garden façade of Boxly, designed by Mantle Fielding, overlooking the relocated box hedges. Only part of the house survives today.



the Wissahickon valley. It is but a fragment of a far larger house built in 1903-4 by Frederick Winslow Taylor and designed by architect Mantle Fielding, with spreading wings of white stucco and a massive low-slung central portico.

Frederick Winslow Taylor was a mechanical engineer who became the father of “scientific management.” His consulting advice contributed to the successes of such local industrial giants as Midvale Steel and Bethlehem Steel. He became rich and retired early to his

(Continued on page 25)

## Photo duo specializes in making dogs part of the big day

by Brenda Lange

What do you do when you’re planning your wedding and would love your dogs — who are really more like your children — to be a part of the big day? How will you get them there? How will you get them home? Who will handle them for you at the venue while the photographer snaps away?

Enter Ashley Holt, 30, and Ashley Summa, 29, and their new business, Here Comes the Pup, a service for “obsessive dog lovers” — like them — who want their special pets to be part of their special day. “For us, our pets (each woman has two dogs and were both raised with pets) are family, and we understand and want to alleviate pet owners’ worries about their canine children and help them be part of the big day,” they told us last week.

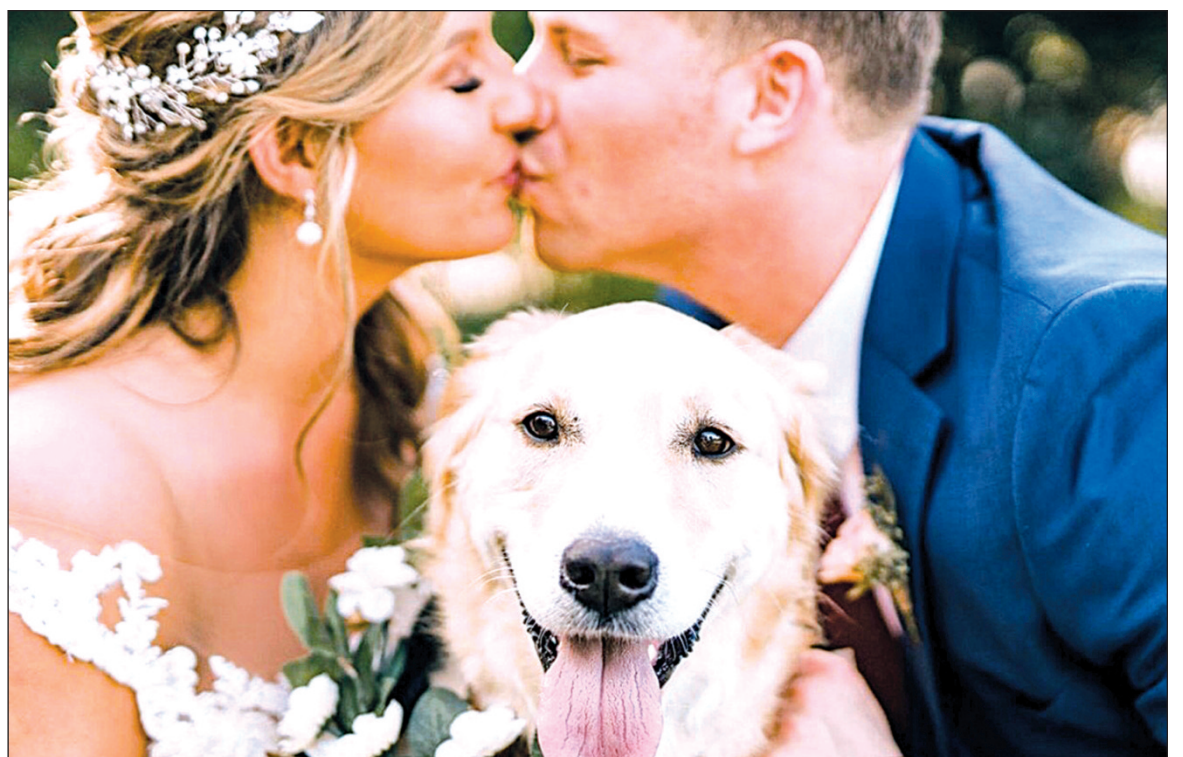
The duo provides transportation, water and potty breaks,

helps the photographer when it comes time to pose the pets and offers constant love and care. The Conshohocken residents didn’t know each other when they studied at St. Joseph’s University, but they met and became friends after graduation through their then-boyfriends who happened to be good friends.

The co-founders of Here Comes the Pup do everything together in growing their fledgling business, which began last summer. Holt, who has a black lab/Bernese mountain mix named Griffey and a Cavalier King Charles spaniel, Buddy, owns a pet care company named Paws Up, also based in Conshohocken.

It was her experience with Paws Up (and various veterinarians and a wide variety of dogs) and her May wedding that inspired the new business. “I wanted to have my dogs in my wedding, but

(Continued on page 24)



Danny and Sara Rosenbaum, King of Prussia, celebrate their marriage with their Golden Retriever, Harper.

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# Tips to declutter a child's room to make way for play

by StatePoint Media

While all the gear, clothes and toys your kids possess are signs of a joyful childhood, keeping it all organized is essential for health, safety and even fun.

"Too many toy choices that are unorganized can make it difficult to find a toy to play with at all," says Keri Wilmot, pediatric occupational therapist and an expert contributor to TheGeniusofPlay.org. "What's more, the chaos can pose various safety hazards."

Organization is more conducive to playtime, which is why Wilmot and The Genius of Play, an initiative whose mission is to raise awareness about the importance of play and help parents make it a critical part of raising kids, are offering eight tips to clean up the inevitable clutter:

- **Provide Bins:** Use bins to help kids organize toys, art supplies and games, keeping size in mind -- the bigger the bin, the harder it is to locate specific toys or objects. While clear bins are great for closets by making it easy for kids to identify their contents, color-coded or decorative bins are more visually appealing options for the playroom.

- **Make Smart Furniture Choices:** Shelving lets children see what's available to play with, however toys that require adult assistance are best stored in closed bins inside a cabinet or closet that's inaccessible to kids. Closed cabinets have the added benefit of reducing the appearance of clutter. Make sure to secure shelves or furniture to the wall for safety so they can't tip over.

- **Rotate Toys:** Rotating toys' placement inside storage areas will remind kids of all the fun toys they have, and is an excellent boredom-prevention tool.

- **Donate:** Before holidays, birthdays or other occasions when kids are showered with gifts, talk to your child about what toys are no longer used and give them a second life by passing them on to a neighbor or friend with a younger child or by donating them to a charitable organization. Throw away any toys that are broken, hazardous or recalled.

- **Use Space Wisely:** While big toys like kitchens and playhouses offer up fun, they can take up a lot of playroom real estate. Opt for alternatives that can be taken down when not in use, like pop-up tents, tunnels and playhouses.

- **Schedule Clean-Up:** Set a clean-up schedule that gives kids a role in sorting and putting items back into their correct places. Make a game of it by turning on tunes and seeing who's the fastest.

- **Get Toys off the Floor:** Stepping on certain toys can be painful. A child-sized table offers a stable surface for building brick structures and other creations, plus it gets small toys off the floor.

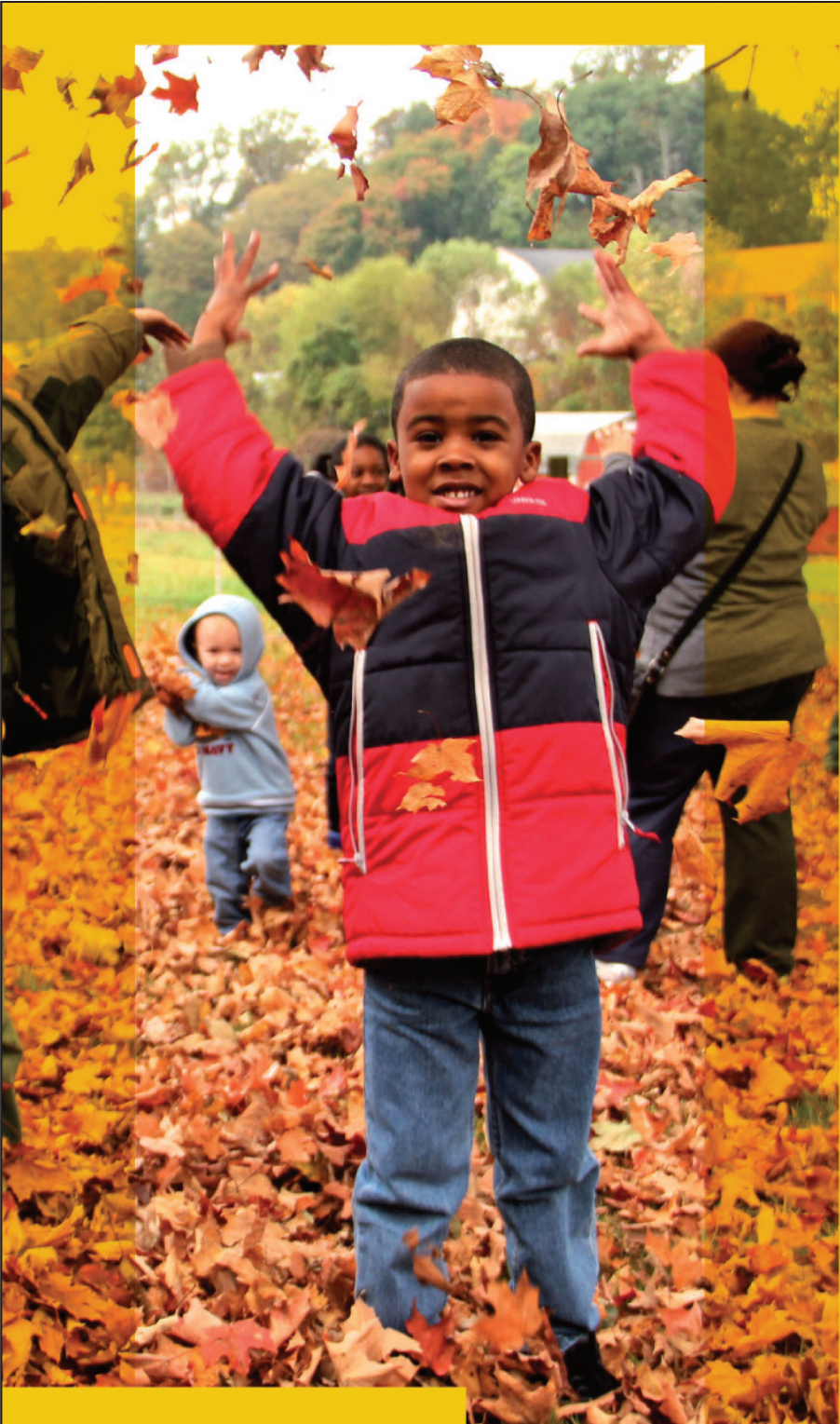
- **Use Walls:** Maximize space and creativity by installing a whiteboard or chalkboard to use as an art surface. Walls are also a good place to store shelving for books.

Decluttering play areas pays off, giving kids more opportunities to play and learn safely.

Parents searching for more play ideas and expert tips like these can visit [TheGeniusofPlay.org](http://TheGeniusofPlay.org) or follow [@GeniusofPlay](https://www.facebook.com/GeniusofPlay) on Facebook and [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/GeniusofPlay).



(Photo: AnnaNahabed / iStock via Getty Images Plus)



## JUMP INTO PHILLY'S FALL LEAF RECYCLING PROGRAM

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During the six-week program, bagged leaf drop-off will be offered city-wide on Saturdays only (except for November 16th and 30th) from 9 AM to 3 PM at the 13 locations listed. Mechanical leaf collection will be offered in areas with a high concentration of leaves.

### Bagged leaf drop-off collection tips:

- Leaves must be placed in large brown biodegradable paper bags.
- Never mix trash or other recyclables with bagged leaves.

### Mechanical collection area tips:

- Have leaves ready for collection by 7:00 AM Monday for each week of mechanical collection.
- If possible, move your vehicle to an off-street location on your scheduled collection day.

### Drop-off Locations:

- Pennway St. & Cottman Ave. (Jardel Rec.)
- 15th St. & Bigler St.
- 43rd St. & Powelton Ave.
- 4800 Wayne Ave. (Happy Hollow Rec. Ctr.)
- 54th St. & Woodbine Ave.
- 7901 Ridgeway St. (Fox Chase Rec.)
- American St. & Thompson St.
- Broad St. & Christian St.
- Castor Ave. & Foulkrod St.
- Cathedral Rd. & Ridge Ave.
- Corinthian Ave. & Poplar St.
- Graver Ln. & Seminole St.
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## Photo duo specializes in making dogs part of the big day

(Continued from page 21)

Ashley [Summa] was a bridesmaid, and I had no one who could handle them without missing part of the wedding," she said.

And Summa, who is getting married in October of 2020, knows she will be including her pets, Penny, a black lab, and Louis, a shih tzu, in the event, although she is still figuring out the logistics because the wedding will be held in Cape May, New Jersey.

Conshohocken is such an animal-friendly town, and dogs are welcome almost everywhere. Some restaurants even have dog menus, they said. Including one's pooch in one's nuptials just seemed like a natural extension. And word is spreading quickly. The women have participated in two bridal shows so far, and they said the feedback they're getting has been all positive.

"The brides love it," said Summa, who added that they are building the business slowly. Cur-

rently, Here Comes the Pup offers hourly packages and custom fees, with additional pricing for more than one dog. Every quote is customized on top of the hourly base rate. They will travel as far north as Scranton and east to the Jersey shore.

"With every package, we meet and greet the bride and groom and the dog or dogs," said Holt. "We pick up and transport to the wedding and home again, usually for the photos beforehand." During the event and once home, they will walk the pet(s) and make sure they have water breaks. Although weddings are the most popular event they cater, the two are also available for engagement shoots, birthday parties, bar mitzvahs and more.

Their first wedding dog was Remmy, a labradoodle, who wore a classy bandana proclaiming, "I do too!" He was well-behaved, but not all pups are calm during something so stressful as a wedding ceremony and all the atten-

dant managed chaos.

Recently, a client wanted Holt to walk her dog down the aisle, but she declined because she knew the dog, a client of Paws Up, might be spooked by all the people.

"Every dog is different, and it's important to know the dog's personality and level of training," stressed Holt. "There are crowds at a wedding, and it's exhausting for them. If you know your dog likes to jump and is maybe not great with commands, just remember that you'll be wearing a wedding dress!"

Here Comes the Pup's website (hercomesthepuppa.com) is still under construction, but the Ashley can be reached at hercomesthepuppa@gmail.com. You can also visit them on Facebook at facebook.com/hercomesthepuppa

*Brenda Lange, an area freelance writer, was the editor of the Chestnut Hill College magazine.*



## Help make your poinsettias last longer

Poinsettias are synonymous with the holiday season. These colorful plants brighten up homes with their vibrant hues in variations of red, white and pink, making them a holiday decoration many people cannot live without.

While they're most visible during the often-chilly holiday season, poinsettias prefer warm weather. Poinsettias are native to Central America and originally flourished in an area of southern Mexico. The Aztecs used the plant for decorative and medicinal purposes.

The poinsettia may have remained a regional plant if not for the efforts of Joel Roberts Poinsett, who was the first United States Ambassador to Mexico under President James Madison. Poinsett, who would later found the Smithsonian Institution, had a love of botany and became enamored with the brilliant red plants he saw in Mexico. Eventually, Poinsett began growing the plants at home in South Carolina, and friends and others soon coveted them.

Poinsettias are beautiful and the bracts (modified leaves) can be vibrantly colored. That signature vibrancy is why many people would like to preserve their poinsettias to last beyond the New Year, which is possible with the right care. The following are some tips, courtesy of Mother Nature's Network, Habersham Gardens, Oregon Live and Phoenix Flower Shops, to keep poinsettias thriving past the holiday season.

- Start with healthy plants that

have full leaves, bracts and deep colors.

- Poinsettias do best when the temperature is between 65 and 75 F. Temperatures below that or drafts from cold windows can cause leaves to drop.

- Position the plant in a room that gets indirect sunlight for at least six hours per day. If direct sunlight can't be avoided, diffuse the light with a sheer curtain.

- Poinsettias need well-drained soil. Overwatering or allowing roots to sit in wet soil can cause the leaves to fall off prematurely. Water thoroughly only when the pot looks dry. In households with temperatures around 70 F, the plant should be watered about once a week.

- Fertilize the plant after the blooming season with a balanced, all-purpose fertilizer.

- Try placing poinsettias in or near a bathroom, as they prefer high humidity.

It may be possible to get poinsettias to rebloom next season. Allow the poinsettias to dry out a little more in the spring. In May, cut about four inches from each stem to produce a lush, full plant during the winter. The plants can be moved outside in June and during the summer, but keep them away from direct sunlight.

Return the poinsettias indoors beginning around October. Make sure the plants get at least 12 hours of darkness per day for around eight weeks in October and November. This will help them develop a deep hue and bloom on time for Christmas.



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# Boxly: A botanical legacy survives in Chestnut Hill

(Continued from page 21)

estate in Chestnut Hill.

His chosen architect, Mantle Fielding, a graduate of Germantown Academy, had modest architectural training but became a prominent architect, designing such local landmarks as the Germantown Cricket Club and houses in Germantown, Chestnut Hill and on the Main Line. His designs for Boxly were in a subdued, Anglo-American colonial style well-suited for a resourceful Gilded Age entrepreneur in austere Quaker Philadelphia.

Much of that house was later demolished, but a lovely section remains as a private house, with a range of gardens, walls and out-buildings, including the now separately owned house that was originally constructed as the Grape House.

But we must go back to the early 19th century to understand how those pieces connect.

In 1803, John Du Barry, a Frenchman escaping the confusions of the Napoleonic Wars, bought what was then a large tract of land on the west side of Chestnut Hill. He planted numerous mulberry trees in order to participate in the expanding silk industry.

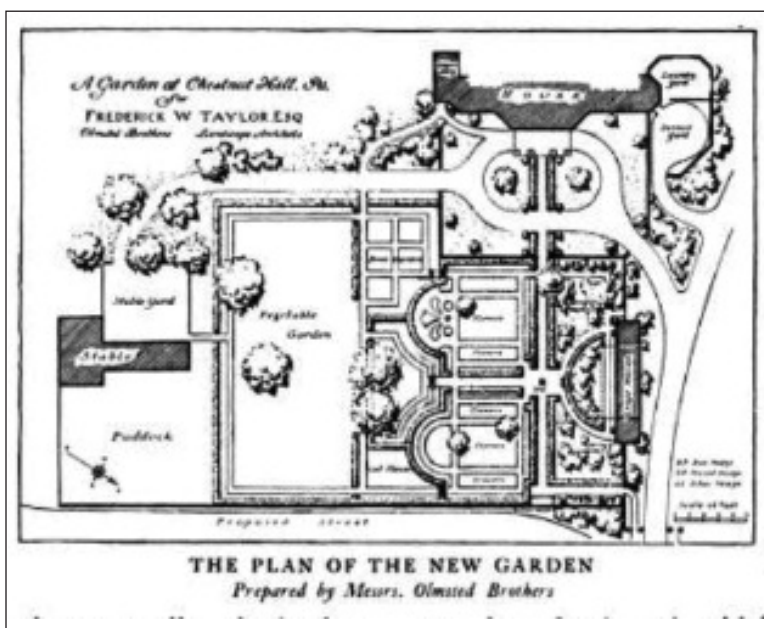
That silk industry began in China several millennia before Christ, but gradually spread west along the Silk Route to new markets, including India, the Middle East, Italy and eventually, of course, luxury-loving France. Each market in turn struggled to protect its trade in the precious substance but inevitably lost control.

The French, notoriously monopolistic, established Lyon as their center for silk production in the 16th century, but then lost control with the disastrous revocation of the Edict of Nantes by Henry IV in 1685, which scattered hundreds of thousands of French (Protestant) Huguenots to England, the Low Countries and The New World. (Religious zealots please take note.) A number of the Huguenots refugees were in the silk industry, and they re-energized the silk business that had been launched by King James I in both England and its colonies earlier in that century.

Industrious Philadelphia farmers and merchants had periodically promoted the local silk trade, including James Logan (of Stenton), Benjamin Franklin and Robert Morris, best known as the financier of the Revolution. Du Barry's mulberry trees in Chestnut Hill continued that tradition and many survived through the 19th century as the local silk industry grew.

But unexpectedly, it was his planting of box bushes that created another legacy at Boxly.

Box bushes originated around the Mediterranean and were reputedly spread to Western Europe by the Romans. They became



Design by Olmstead Brothers of the re-organized gardens at Boxly, showing the main house (upper right corner) and the Grape House (lower right corner).

favorites in Italian and French formal gardens of the Renaissance and Baroque periods, including famously at Versailles. Box had little commercial value, but Du Barry was following his native tradition by planting generous box gardens at his estate in Chestnut Hill.

Those box bushes grew over the century through the subsequent owners. In 1903, when Taylor bought that estate, he engaged the noted New York firm of Olmstead Brothers to redesign his pleasure gardens, including moving those fully-grown and unruly box hedges.

Volume 4 of the "House & Garden" book series, produced by Conde Nast Publishing in 1903, describes at length the transformation of Du Barry's gardens for Taylor, including the wholesale

moving of mature box hedges to better align with Fielding's impressive new house. The accompanying text and photographs explain that "all of this design was to be with an acre of box, beautifully manicured but of wildly crooked growth."

The text describes that a "pandemonium of labor now prevails amid a confusion of green verdure, men and horses, freshly turned earth, scaffolding and gear in which only a sharp observer can picture the new garden which is in the making."

The workmen dug trenches to enclose the huge mature box hedges and their accompanying root balls in rectangular wood frames that were hoisted and moved by horses to the desired new

positions. It was a very ambitious (and likely expensive) process that reused those over grown box bushes in a newly created garden. Taylor was clearly proud of his rearranged box hedges and named his new house "Boxly" in their honor.

Taylor died in 1916 and his dream gardens were then divided. The main house survived for several decades, but was eventually reduced in size.

The nearby eponymous Grape House, built by Du Barry in the early 19th century, featured a long central greenhouse framed by a pair of two-story pavilions perhaps modeled on magnaneries (French sericulture buildings). Descriptions from the 19th century mention that the front of the ensemble was beguilingly overgrown with French climbing roses.

That part of the Boxly estate was later bought by noted landscape designer Frederick W.G. Peck. Peck earned a Bachelor of Landscape Architecture from the University of Pennsylvania in 1933 and went on to design numerous gardens in the mid-Atlantic

region, including those at Pastorius Park, Chestnut Hill Hospital and the Kahn-Esherick House. A particular favorite is his design of the famed Azalea Gardens to the west of the Philadelphia Museum of Art. The Chestnut Hill Conservancy honored his legacy in 2012 by organizing a day of tours of his nearby gardens.

He converted the Grape House into a charming residence for his family, overlooking parts of the formal gardens that were reorganized from Du Barry's original layouts by Olmstead Brothers for Taylor. Peck's son, noted naturalist, writer and historian Robert McCracken Peck, continues to live there with his family.

We are blessed to live surrounded by such rich natural and man-made landscapes. Winter, when the leaves are down, is an excellent time to explore and admire both architecture and such landscape designs that may normally be hidden from view.

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For information on posting your call for volunteers here, call 215-248-8813 or email [leisha@chestnuthilllocal.com](mailto:leisha@chestnuthilllocal.com)

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# BERKSHIRE HATHAWAY | Fox & Roach, HomeServices REALTORS® *Presents ...*



**58 E. ABINGTON AVE.**  
**CHESTNUT HILL** **OPEN SUN 2-4** **\$360,000**  
 Move right in to this three-bedroom home in the heart of vibrant Chestnut Hill. Warm, welcoming and thoughtfully updated. Renovated kitchen, finished basement with new half-bathroom, large rear deck, off street parking, and much more. Perfect for someone seeking a quiet and friendly community while still just steps from parks, restaurants, shops and transportation. Don't miss it!



**DRESHER** **\$975,000**  
 You will be hard pressed to find such an attractive four-acre homestead. Already subdivided, it includes a five bedroom 18th century farmhouse, a large renovated barn/carriage house with two bedrooms, a nature pond full of frogs and birdsong, several outbuildings for storage, and even a separate lot with an older swimming pool. All this across from neighboring Mondauk Common and within minutes of Route 309 and the shopping and dining in Ambler and Montgomeryville.



**COLLINGDALE** **\$169,900**  
 This renovated 4 bedroom 1.5 bath. Featuring hardwood floors and recess lighting throughout. New eat-in kitchen with stainless steel appliances, granite countertops, cabinets, ceramic tile flooring, and marble wall tiling. The master bedroom with a spacious closet and recess lighting. This home features upgraded 200 amp electric, new windows, and central A/C and much more.



**CHESTNUT HILL** **\$1,295,000**  
 Gorgeous, fully restored Chestnut Hill Colonial with 5 bedrooms and 3.5 baths on a large corner lot. First floor guest room with full bath, first floor office, gourmet kitchen with butler's pantry, Sub-Zero refrigerator and Wolf range, all bedrooms with large closets, covered front porch, finished basement with wine cellar and 2-car attached garage. Walk to the shops of Chestnut Hill, as well as 2 train stations for an easy commute to Center City.



**FLOURTOWN** **\$3,350,000**  
 Presenting Willow Dam, an extraordinary property that has been thoughtfully expanded and updated for the discriminating buyer. Set on over 3 acres, the house features 8 bedrooms, 5 full and 3 half baths, original fireplaces, high ceilings, hardwood floors throughout, spectacular gourmet kitchen, sunroom with flagstone floor, master suite with walk-in closet and spa-like bath, wine cellar, pool, and so much more. All just a short drive from the shops and dining of Chestnut Hill.



**ROXBOROUGH** **\$409,900-539,990**  
 Roxborough Reserve is made up of 30 single family homes and 10 attached twins in this thoughtfully laid out new home development brought to you by the award-winning Riverwards Group. Now is the time to pick your lot, upgrades and finishes. Conveniently located close to Ivyridge Shopping Centre, Shoprite, YMCA, local restaurants and public transportation. Just minutes from Main Street in Manayunk! Spring 2020 delivery.



**ELKINS PARK** **\$550,000**  
 With over 4,000 square feet of living space, 807 Spring Avenue offers large, sun-filled rooms, a to-die-for, newly renovated master suite and an entertainer's pool paradise in the backyard.



**WYNCOTE** **\$374,900**  
 Coming soon! This spacious mid-century split level has been lovingly improved while retaining many of its charming vintage features. Three bedrooms, three full baths, updated kitchen, sprawling patio, large owner's suite with balcony and dual closets.



**W. MT. AIRY** **\$899,000**  
 A rare opportunity to rehab this stunning Bi-Level mid-century stone home across the street from Carpenter's Woods. 4 bedrooms, 3.5 baths. The home sits on a gorgeous landscaped 3/4 acre lot with attached 2 car garage. Walk to the Wissahickon and enjoy the nearby picturesque villages of Mount Airy and Chestnut Hill, shopping, restaurants and a short commute by 2 train systems to Center City. This home has it all so bring your contractor and design your dream home! This property is being sold as is.

## Philadelphia's Market Leader in Chestnut Hill Since 1925

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