

July 2011

Highland Park

Community Council Newsletter

IN THIS ISSUE:

2 A Letter from
the President

4 June
Meeting
Minutes

5 Cover Story:
Billy Eckstine

7 Around
St. Andrew's

8 It May Pay
to Find Out
if You Have
Unclaimed
Property

9 A Letter From
Mayor Luke
Ravenstahl

10 St. Raphael
Church
Celebrates
100th
Anniversary

BILLY ECKSTINE
(1914 - 1993)

African-American jazz
balladeer and bandleader
whose innovative style
and sponsorship of new
talent helped revolution-
ize jazz in the 1940s.
One of the nation's most
popular vocalists, he
had 11 gold records. He
grew up in this house.

PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL AND MUSEUM COMMISSION 1994

BILLY ECKSTINE

By Pat Miller and Al Mann

Billy Eckstine, the world famous band leader and singer, grew up on Bryant St. in Highland Park in the late 1920s and early 1930s.

Continued on page 4

A Letter from the President

This week, as I write to you, I am mentally preparing for one of the “major life events” of any neighborhood experience - a new next-door neighbor. Sue and I live in half of a charming twin house on Avondale Place, and for the last several years we have been blessed to have Jason and Dulci Brubaker as our...what do you call them, anyway? They live in the other half. I’ve tended to call them our “hip-neighbors” (as in joined at the hip, though they are also cool people), but other names could apply just as well. Housemates? Evil twins? The funny part is catching myself telling other people that they live in the other half of “my” house, though we each own our respective half and they could just as rightly state that we live in the other half of theirs. The potential puns are endless - any visit over to their house can be billed, for example, as a trip to see how the other half lives.

They haven’t just been neighbors, but friends - part of our community and part of our family’s world. And they have been great. For a time, the Brubakers attended our church, where Dulci sang on the praise team. I play guitar there, and our down-street neighbor Yvonne is also on the praise team, so there was lots of carpooling to practice (or, on some occasions, practice at Dulci’s since she has a piano). Jason and Dulci also came to our bible study, where we got to know them better. They love to play games and have been over to our house a number of times for game nights. Dulci got pregnant with their oldest, Sylvie, around the same time Sue got pregnant with our youngest, Cleo.

Their dog Louis always gets excited when I get home from work, leaning up over the back fence to lick my hand (I am not a dog person - I have allergies - but Louis has eventually won me over with his charm. He seems to like me telling him, as I scratch his ears, that he’s the best dog ever).

Over the years our two families have sent tools, tasty treats, car keys, house keys, eggs, sticks of butter, cups of sugar, and children back and forth, endlessly. I’ve listened to Dulci’s piano playing through our shared wall, or outside on warm days; we’ve dealt civilly with excessive noise issues (power tools from them, hyper kids from us); we’ve picked up each other’s mail when the other’s been out of town; and, famously, the week I was out of town and the day that the First Lady of Highland Park drove our older kids to an outing and accidentally left Cleo strapped in her car seat on our dining room floor, Dulci swooped in to save the day.

I’ve lost track of how many times Jason and I have manfully wrestled some obscenely heavy piece of junk into or out of one of our houses. My boys Alex and Ben, having observed my gas grill and Jason’s charcoal one, once solemnly declared that Jason’s fire was, in fact, more manly. Dulci has revealed to me the mysteries of grass seed; I, to her, the absolute necessity of child-free getaway weekends. Cleo and Sylvie, both two now, play daintily together in their cute summer dresses. Neither of them really understands that Sylvie and her nice adults and her huge doggie will soon be moving away, closer to Jason’s and Dulci’s parents; that Dulci’s growing tummy will soon provide a delightful new playmate for Sylvie; that her parents have been toiling endlessly to fix up the house before putting it on the market; that a whole life can be packed into boxes, loaded onto a truck and moved almost anywhere.



I understand all of these things, but two-year-olds have such limited attention spans and I am not sure I can fully articulate my impending sense of loss to myself or to you, much less to them.

I love the Brubakers and I am sad to see them go, though I am happy to see them happy to be moving closer to their parents. I wish them well, and can easily see why such a move is important to them. Sue and I both hail from the Philly area and came out to Pittsburgh for college; after graduation, I looked for jobs in both places, and found one here first. We seriously considered moving back about twelve years ago, when my father was diagnosed with terminal cancer; while I was in the process of interviewing for a transfer east, he died. The job offer went to someone else, and we ended up staying here. Since then, my mother and Sue's father have also passed away, and moving back seems harder and harder to imagine. We have built a life here - 20 years this summer - a precious one filled with caring friends, great neighbors, a wonderful church, meaningful work, adorable kids and a house that is perfect for us... as perfect, of course, as a 90-year old home with a lifelong list of to-do projects can be.

By the time you read this article, the Brubakers will be gone and my new neighbor will have moved in. I think her name is Michelle; the Brubakers said she seemed pretty nice and excited about the house. And right now, that's about all I know. But I plan to welcome her heartily, to become friends if she has the time and energy to put up with me and Sue and three crazy kids. At the very least, she won't have much grass in her backyard that my kids could destroy - something my other next-door-neighbor, Melita, could tell you a thing or two about. But that's a story for another day. (The boys play in the back alley now.)

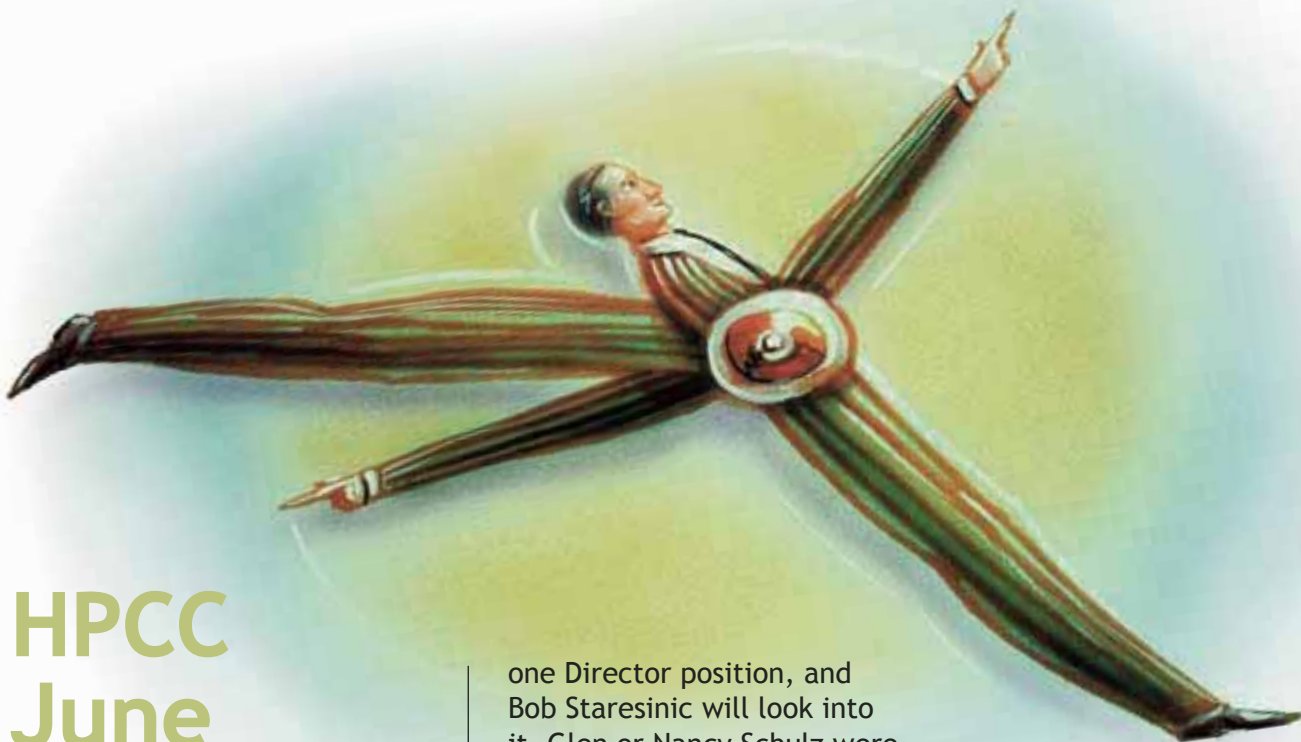
The HPCC newsletter crew takes a break each year after the July newsletter, so I won't be talking to you for a while. Be sure to enjoy your summer to the hilt! Hang out on your porch, chat with your neighbors, enjoy watermelon

and ice cream and fried chicken and tall glasses of lemonade or sweet tea. Be on the lookout for listserv announcements about the upcoming Reservoir of Jazz concerts in August. Use sunscreen. Have fun swimming. Until I get to see you again, take care.

And goodnight, Jason and Dulci and Sylvie and baby-to-be and Louis, wherever you are. Are you the best dog ever? Yes, you are!

"P.S. Congratulations to Mavis Close, who won the HPCC's contest to develop a tagline for our new website. Her winning entry was 'Highland Park - Big City Appeal, Small Community Feel.' Mavis won a \$50 gift certificate to E2. You can see this new tagline displayed prominently at www.highlandparkpa.com. Thanks Mavis!"





HPCC June Meeting Minutes

by *Bob Staresinic*

Eric Randall, HPCC President, called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm, with a quorum present.

Eric announced that Allegheny CleanWays was leading a group of visiting teenagers, who will be cleaning trash out of Heth's Run. The area of Heths Run to be cleaned is between the playground at Hampton and Heth, and the Zoo parking lot. Volunteers are needed to represent the Highland Park community on July 5-8 from 1-4 pm. Glen and Nancy Schultz, Al Mann, Paul Miller and Bob Staresinic volunteered.

The month of June is when nominations to the Officers and Director positions are to be made. There was discussion about if a couple could share

one Director position, and Bob Staresinic will look into it. Glen or Nancy Schulz were nominated for one Director position. Paul Miller was nominated for the Treasurer position. Any additional nominations can be made at the September Members meeting.

A meeting was held about the Pgh Police firing range, and the impact it has on the community. The participants of the meeting felt that a larger part of the community needs to be involved and giving input, so a meeting is tentatively scheduled for July 14th, with details to follow.

Lynn Banker-Burns, Public Safety Chair, introduced Commander O'Connor, who spoke about the recent criminal activity in the area. The Police have suspects for the recent break-in crime spree, and are gathering information to make arrests. He encouraged everyone to call 911 to report any suspicious activity.

Susan Rademacher from the Pgh Parks Conservancy spoke about the Master Plan for Highland Park,

various completed projects, and upcoming projects for the park. Ecological restoration is planned for the area below the swimming pool and the reservoir embankment. Benches are planned for the area around the upper reservoir. There has been a lot of tree loss around the City due to the emerald ash borer and oak wilt, and the Conservancy has been working to control the spread of both of these.

The winner of the tagline contest for the website was Mavis Close, who submitted "Highland Park, Pittsburgh - big city appeal, small community feel".

There will be no July board meeting. The next meeting is the annual Members meeting, where elections to the Board will take place. The meeting is August 18, 2011 at 7:00 pm, at St. Andrews Church, 5801 Hampton Street.

The meeting adjourned at 8:42 pm.



continued from cover

Billy, his parents and his two sisters lived at 5913 Bryant Street. The State historic marker on the front cover sits in front of the house today. He was born in Pittsburgh on July 8, 1914. His name then was William Charles Eckstein. His father, also William, was a driver for the Pittsburgh Press and his mother, Charlotte, was a seamstress. Beth Middleton, a long-time East End resident, recalls her mother using the services of Charlotte Eckstine.

We had the opportunity to interview Sid Sclarsky, a man now 90 years old, who grew up around the corner on North Euclid Street. Sid shared with us his priceless memories of Billy when they were both growing up. The Eckstine family, along with the Keyes and the Bullitts, were the only three black families in the neighborhood at that time. These families had been living in nearby houses that became part of Highland Park when Edward M. Bigelow, the Pittsburgh Public Works Director and a powerful political figure, decided he wanted to get rid of those and a few other houses in the neighborhood and create a park. He did so by “giving” families a different house in exchange for their old one. Billy’s family got the Bryant Street house in exchange for their original house and they found it to be a great improvement so they were happy with the move.

It was a racially segregated world at that time, but Sid said Billy’s family was readily accepted on Bryant Street. The neighborhood had Italians, Jews and now three black families, but everyone got along. The children—black, Italian, and Jewish—happily played

Billy ECKS TINE

baseball and “boxball” together. In those days they could safely play right in the middle of Bryant Street because, although there were stores in the area as there are now, there were few cars parked on the street and almost no traffic, so the kids were safe.

They also played football on Heths Field and by the Negley farmhouse on Heberton Street. Sid said that Billy, who was four years older, participated regularly and was a very good athlete. That is not surprising since Billy had aspired to a football career until he broke his collarbone in the 1930s and was forced to switch to a career in music.

This diverse neighborhood was so congenial that the kids—black and white—all went together on Saturday afternoons to what Sid remembers as the only racially integrated theater in East Liberty. In the summer they went swimming together in the Allegheny River because the Highland Park swimming pool cost ten cents and was racially segregated.

Sid reported that, since his Orthodox Jewish family was not allowed to do physical labor on the Sabbath, they paid Billy 25 cents to come every Saturday during the winter to shake out the ashes and feed coal to the furnace, which he did faithfully.

Sid knew nothing about Billy’s musical interests during their childhoods—probably because it was not discussed at their ball games. However, Billy had a musical life even as a small child. His father brought home a piano for his daughters but they were not interested. Billy was, and he started singing when he was very young. At age 11 he gave a



singing performance at a church bazaar, even though at that point his primary interest was still sports, especially football. In 1933, when he was 19, he won a ten dollar first prize for singing in an amateur show.

Billy's family left Pittsburgh and he went to high school in Washington D.C. Then he attended the St. Paul Normal and Industrial School in Virginia where his major was not music, but physical education.

In the late 1930s and early 1940s he sang with Earl (Fatha) Hines' band and learned to play the trumpet. He formed his own band in 1944, but in 1947 he returned fulltime to singing. He had a long and illustrious career, but Pittsburgh must have been "home" to Billy because he came back here and later passed away at Montefiore Hospital on March 8, 1993 at the age of 78.

Sid Sclarsky

We enjoyed hearing Sid Sclarsky's stories about growing up in Highland Park. Sid's father, a tailor, emigrated from Russia in 1904, settling in Pittsburgh's Hill District. Sid was born on January 5, 1918.

About 1928, the family moved to 1119 North Euclid Street. Sid remembers seeing Charles Lindbergh flying over the city in 1927 after his famous solo transatlantic flight. As a resident of the neighborhood, Sid attended Fulton Elementary School and Peabody High School.



At the age of 11 or 12, Sid would walk from his home to Sander's Market, which was at the corner of Penn and Highland Avenues. There he would buy a 25-lb sack of sugar and a 24-lb sack of flour, for \$1 each, hoist them on his shoulders and walk home. This enabled his family to save the 10-cent trolley fare.

In his career, Sid Sclarsky worked primarily in sales of furniture and appliances, with much of his time spent affiliated with the May-Stern Company. Old-timers will

remember the May-Stern store at Penn and Highland Avenues, in the same building earlier occupied by Sander's Market. Sid retired as manager of May-Stern's Monroeville store in 1980.

Sources

Pittsburgh's East Liberty Valley, East End/East Liberty Historical Society, Inc., 2008.

Reservoir of Jazz

FREE CONCERTS

Sundays in August
5:00 - 7:00 p.m.

Highland Avenue & Reservoir Drive

Every Sunday in the month of August, the Reservoir of Jazz series offers the community **FREE** jazz concerts in the Park. Come, relax on the lawn at the entrance to the Park and listen to the sweet sounds of jazz performed by some of Pittsburgh's finest. For more information about the Reservoir of Jazz Concert Series, call 412-255-2493.

Reservoir of Jazz is sponsored by the Highland Park Community Council, BNY Mellon and State Representative Joe Preston.

Reservoir of Jazz 2011 Schedule

August 07	Boilermaker Jazz Band
August 14	Alton Merrell and Friends
August 21	MCG Jazz: 21st Century Swing Band
August 28	The Pogie Bell Band

Around St. Andrew's

By Bruce Robison



Sunday services at St. Andrew's during July and August shift to the "summer schedule", with services at 8:30 a.m. and 10 a.m. (The regular 9 a.m./11 a.m. schedule resumes on the first Sunday of September.) While our Choir is officially "on vacation" during these months, the 10 a.m. services each Sunday will include the singing of service music and hymns and musical offerings by a variety of vocal soloists, choral ensembles, and instrumentalists.

During July and August our Church School will be gathering on several Sunday mornings with a special seasonal program, "The Abundant Life Garden Project," which will engage children with Bible stories focused on water, seeds, soil, animals, and harvest. The goal of the Abundant Life Project (a curriculum developed by Episcopal Relief and Development)

is for children to become more aware of the needs of others in the world and to link those needs to the Biblical story as we find ways as Christian people to respond. All are invited to join us as we gather for this program at 10 a.m. on July 10, July 17, August 21, and August 28.



St. Andrew's will also be hosting our first annual "St. Andrew's Chorister and Music Camp" for children ages 7 and above, Monday through Friday, July 11-15, 9 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. A program of singing, musical exploration, and visits with professional musicians and much fun through the week. There is no fee, thanks to the generous support of the St. Andrew's Friends of Music. Parents interested in learning more should contact Peter Luley through the St. Andrew's Church Office or at peterluley@aol.com.

After the midsummer has passed, our life around St. Andrew's - with our Choir, Choristers, and Troubadours offering opportunities for learning and expression in sacred music for children, youth, and adults, and our highly regarded Children's "Godly Play" and Youth Group programs - will resume our regular fall schedule on "Round Up Sunday, September 11 - a day traditionally celebrated with a Parish Picnic in the Hampton Street Churchyard. All are invited!

St. Andrew's has been on the corner of Hampton Street and North Euclid Avenue, at the heart of the Highland Park neighborhood, for more than a century. If there is a pastoral need that we can help with - a baby to be baptized, a wedding to celebrate, a sick or shut-in friend or neighbor to be visited, a family to support at the time of a death - please feel free to be in touch. Or if you need to find some space for a meeting or family gathering, or to borrow a few chairs: we'll be glad to help if we can. Call us at 412 661-1245, or check us out on the web:

www.standrewspgh.org



It May Pay to Find Out if You Have Unclaimed Property

By State Rep. Joseph Preston

In these tough economic times, it is my goal to help families in as many ways as possible, and I want to help you put your money back in your wallet. The Pennsylvania Treasurer's Office is currently seeking the owners of more than \$1.5 billion in unclaimed property.

In 2010 alone, the treasury returned \$99 million to more than 72,000 owners.

What are examples of unclaimed property? Each year, the Treasurer's Office receives millions of dollars in unclaimed property - abandoned savings or checking accounts, forgotten stocks and dividends, checks that have not been cashed, certificates of deposit, unclaimed insurance benefits, unused gift certificates, and items abandoned in safe deposit boxes or held in police department stolen-property files.

By law, holders must transfer abandoned property to the state Treasurer's Office, which works to return it to its rightful owners.

What does treasury do with unclaimed property? There is no time limit to claim unclaimed property. After you provide proof of ownership to treasury, their return team will work with you to put your money back in your wallet - for **FREE**.

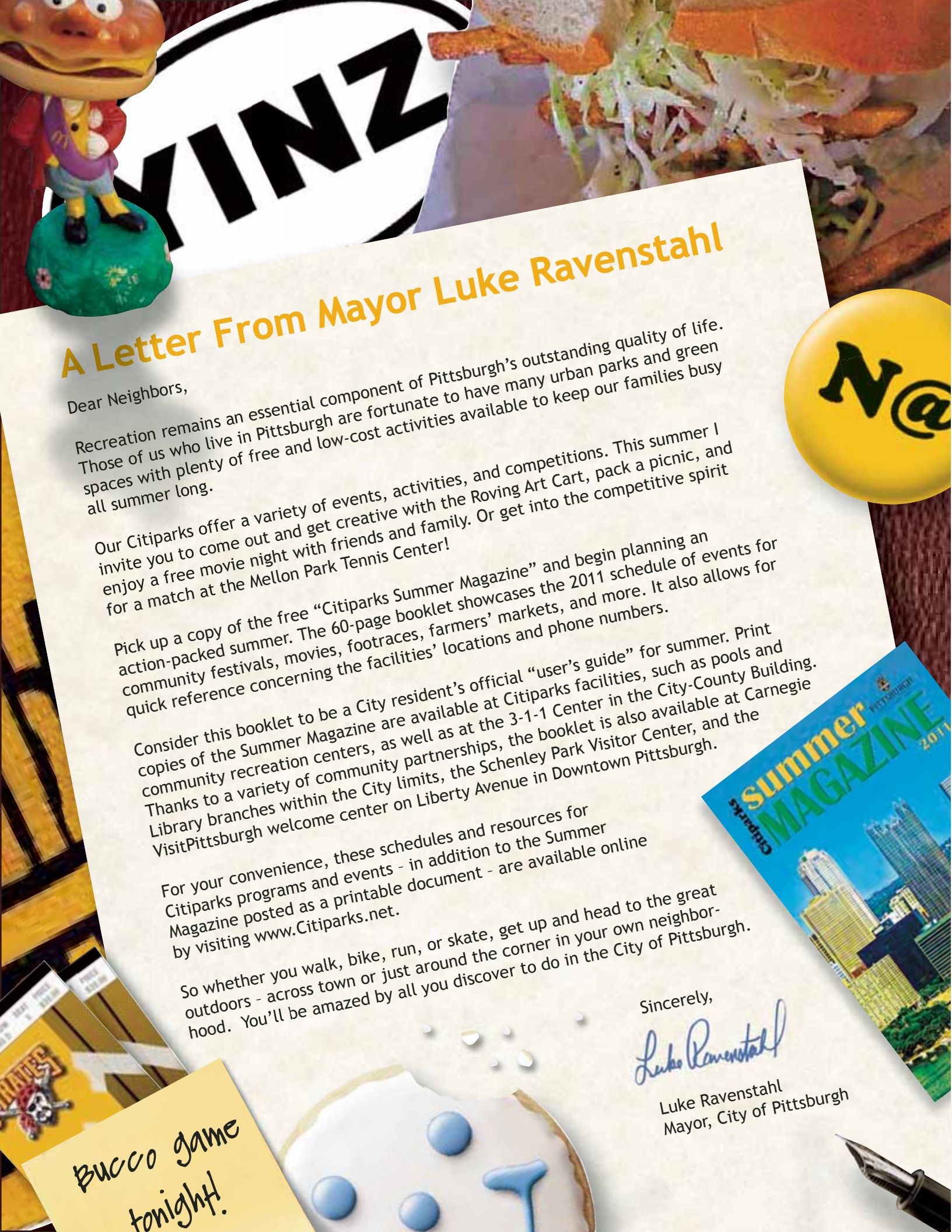
The Treasurer's Office's Bureau of Unclaimed Property is an example of a "good government" program in action. Since January 2009, the treasury has returned nearly \$200 million in unclaimed property to approximately 150,000 rightful owners. The program also generated \$115 million in net revenue for Pennsylvania's General Fund in fiscal year 2009-10, or more than three times the amount appropriated to fund Treasury's general government operations.

To find out if you have unclaimed property, you can visit www.patreasury.org and search your name and the names of your friends and family in the Unclaimed Property database, or call 1-800-222-2046.

My constituent service office - 208 N. Highland Ave.; 412-361-3692 - can also help you determine if you have unclaimed property being held by the Treasurer's Office.

State Rep. Joseph Preston Jr. serves the 24th Legislative District which comprises Aspinwall, Wilkinsburg and portions of Pittsburgh.





A Letter From Mayor Luke Ravenstahl

Dear Neighbors,

Recreation remains an essential component of Pittsburgh's outstanding quality of life. Those of us who live in Pittsburgh are fortunate to have many urban parks and green spaces with plenty of free and low-cost activities available to keep our families busy all summer long.

Our Citiparks offer a variety of events, activities, and competitions. This summer I invite you to come out and get creative with the Roving Art Cart, pack a picnic, and enjoy a free movie night with friends and family. Or get into the competitive spirit for a match at the Mellon Park Tennis Center!

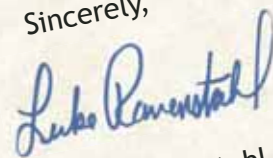
Pick up a copy of the free "Citiparks Summer Magazine" and begin planning an action-packed summer. The 60-page booklet showcases the 2011 schedule of events for community festivals, movies, footraces, farmers' markets, and more. It also allows for quick reference concerning the facilities' locations and phone numbers.

Consider this booklet to be a City resident's official "user's guide" for summer. Print copies of the Summer Magazine are available at Citiparks facilities, such as pools and community recreation centers, as well as at the 3-1-1 Center in the City-County Building. Thanks to a variety of community partnerships, the booklet is also available at Carnegie Library branches within the City limits, the Schenley Park Visitor Center, and the VisitPittsburgh welcome center on Liberty Avenue in Downtown Pittsburgh.

For your convenience, these schedules and resources for Citiparks programs and events - in addition to the Summer Magazine posted as a printable document - are available online by visiting www.Citiparks.net.

So whether you walk, bike, run, or skate, get up and head to the great outdoors - across town or just around the corner in your own neighborhood. You'll be amazed by all you discover to do in the City of Pittsburgh.

Sincerely,



Luke Ravenstahl
Mayor, City of Pittsburgh

Bucco game
tonight!

St. Raphael Church Celebrates

100th Anniversary

St. Raphael Parish in Morningside will celebrate their 100th anniversary on Saturday, September 24, 2011 at 6:00 pm, with a banquet at the Churchill Valley Country Club, 800 Beulah Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15235.

A Centennial Mass will be held at St. Raphael Church on Sunday, September 25, 2011 at 11:00 am, with Bishop David A. Zubik presiding. The church is located at 1118 Chislett Street, at the intersection of Chislett and Hampton Streets. For further information, contact Mary Exler at 412-361-5837 or at anniver100@verizon.net.



HPCC Officers

President

Eric Randall (412) 661-1176

Vice President

Monica Watt (412) 361-7902

Treasurer

Kelly Vitti (412) 361-7669

Secretary

Bob Staresinic (412) 441-8972

HPCC Directors

Dave Atkinson

Lynn Banker-Burns (412) 361-8863

Jana Finder (412) 370-3778

Al Mann (412) 661-5947

Rachel Matos (412) 361-3802

Paul Miller (412) 365-0675

Mike Nadler (412) 363-3483

Nancy Levine-Arnold

Sarah Trbovic

HPCC Committee

Beautification -

Monica Watt (412) 361-7902

Children's Events -

Teri Rucker (412) 482-2533

Education - Dave Atkinson

House Tour - OPEN

Finance - Dell Ziegler (412) 363-0742

Membership - Kelly Meade (412) 362-0331

membership@highlandparkpa.com

Newsletter - Monica Watt (412) 361-7902

editor@highlandparkpa.com

Nominating - Bob Staresinic (412) 441-8972

Public Safety -

Lynn Banker-Burns (412) 361-8863

public-safety@highlandparkpa.com

Reservoir of Jazz -

Ethan Winograd (412) 352-2767

Super Playground -

Monica Watt (412) 361-7902 &

Vernon Simmons (412) 661-1366

Yard Sale - Paul Miller (412) 365-0675

Welcoming - Bob Staresinic (412) 441-8972

Zoning - Dell Ziegler (412) 363-0742

Join

Councilman Patrick Dowd
at Council to Go, his mobile district
office, to voice your concerns,
ideas, and questions about local
government and services.

Thursday, July 28, 7pm
at Enrico's Tazza D'Oro



St. Andrew's Episcopal Church

*The Rev. Dr. Bruce Monroe Robison, Rector
The Ven. Archdeacon Jean D. Chess, Deacon
Peter J. Luley, Organist & Choirmaster*

At St. Andrew's

*Sunday Morning Services
9 a.m.*

*In the Chapel
11 a.m.*

Choral Service in the Anglican Tradition

*Nursery Care: 8:45 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.
Church School, Youth, and Adult Programs,
Sunday Mornings, 9:45 – 10:45 a.m.*

*Wednesday Morning Service
Holy Communion 10:30 a.m.
Rector's Bible Study 11:15 a.m. – Noon*

*Choral Evensong
First Thursday of the Month, 8 p.m.
Third Sunday of the Month, 4:30 p.m.*

*Check our Website for Special and Holiday
Services and Activities*

You Are Welcome Here

5801 Hampton Street, Highland Park, Pittsburgh
412 661-1245 www.standrewspgh.org

DUBLEBEEES
Dog Grooming

945 Mellon St.
Pittsburgh, PA 15206
Ph: 412-361-4681

The logo for Dubblebees Dog Grooming features the word 'DUBLEBEEES' in a stylized, bubbly red font with blue outlines and paw prints. Below the logo are three dogs: a black and white dalmatian, a white dog, and a brown dog. The background is a light, textured surface with a decorative border of small paw prints at the bottom.

Kelly Meade
Associate Broker

5501 Baum Boulevard
Pittsburgh, PA 15232
www.howardhanna.com

Office: (412) 361-4000
Cell: (412) 389-2175
Home: (412) 362-0331
E-Mail: kmeade@howardhanna.com

Real Estate Mortgage Title Insurance
#1 Real Estate Company in PA, OH, WV and NY

A portrait of Kelly Meade, a woman with short blonde hair, wearing a dark jacket. To the right is the Howard Hanna logo, which consists of the words 'Howard' and 'Hanna' in a stylized font inside a green and yellow border. Below the logo is the text '#1 Real Estate Company in PA, OH, WV and NY'.

6223 Meadow St.
Pittsburgh, PA 15206
phone: 412.362.0100
fax: 412.441.5678

Mikes
AUTO BODY

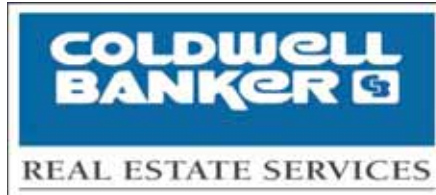
Pittsburgh's Leading
Direct Repair Collision Specialists

Check the status of your car at
www.MikesAutoBodyPGH.com

Mike Fiore
Owner

email: fiore2001@aol.com

The logo for Mikes Auto Body features the word 'Mikes' in a stylized, cursive font with a yellow and red gradient, and 'AUTO BODY' in a bold, sans-serif font below it. To the right of the logo is a photograph of a silver car on a lift. The background is a light, textured surface.



Shadyside Office
 5857 Ellsworth Avenue
 Pittsburgh, PA. 15232
 412-363-4000 Ext. 736

LISA SOLOMON & JESSICA ALLEN

Cell: 412-849-9983

lisa.solomon@pittsburghmoves.com

Cell: 412-337-4081

jessica.allen@pittsburghmoves.com

We Get Homes Sold!
2 Heads are Better than 1
Contact Us...We Are Available!!



Daniel J. Landis

Sales Associate

"I Make House Calls!"



Prudential

Preferred Realty

5801 Forbes Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15217
 Bus 412 521-5500 #215 Res 412 421-5138
 Fax 412 521-4854 Cell 412 608-2620
 E-mail danlandis@prudentialpreferred.com



An independently owned and operated member of The Prudential Real Estate Affiliates, Inc.