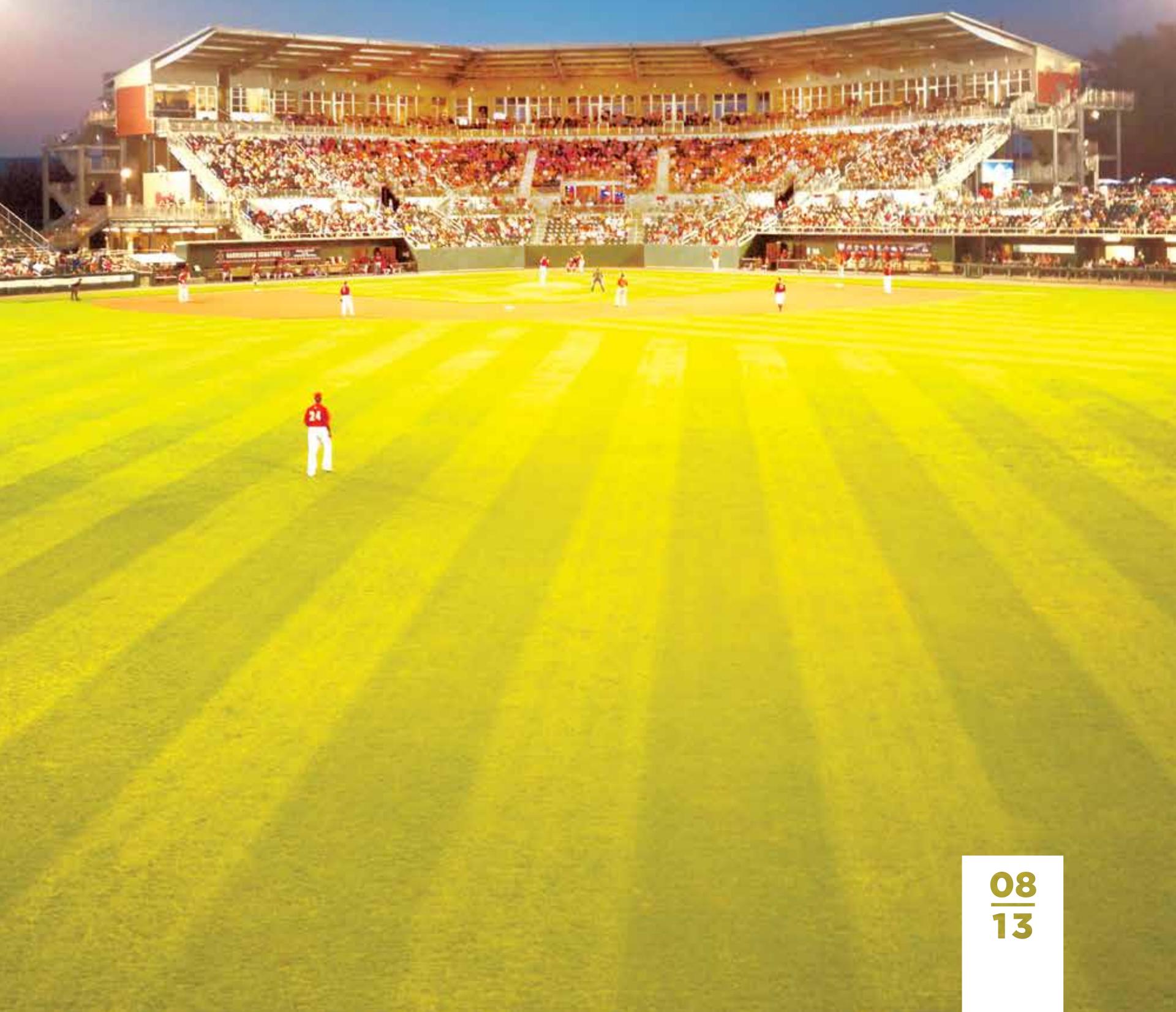


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COVER ART BY: MEGAN DAVIS

### LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

What makes up our community?

If you were to watch the TV news or read the non-daily newspaper, you'd think that the exception is the rule. That our lives are overrun with tragedy, criminality and conflict.

At TheBurg, we think that's ridiculous.

Our readers know that the Harrisburg area is comprised, for the most part, of good people simply living their lives, with a fair number of exceptional individuals who work hard to improve the community. As our publisher has said: We focus on the 95 percent of life given little attention by other news sources.

That 95 percent includes things like young entrepreneurs turning their artistic passions into businesses; two beer-lovers who want to open a brewery; a minor league ballplayer striving to make it to the Big Leagues; as well as local schools, music, restaurants, activities—all covered in this issue.

Yes, we write about unpleasant things, too. Regular readers know we spare no criticism if it's due, and it's often due at our elected officials who, over many years, have driven this city into a ditch. But, even when we write about the 5 percent that's bad, we try to offer greater context than other media with an eye towards solutions, not exploitation. We try to present negative news responsibly and even use humor when we can.

If you take the 95 percent that's generally good and add in the 5 percent that's not, well, that's a life. And that's what we hope we reflect in TheBurg.

LAWRANCE BINDA

*Editor-in-Chief*

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# THE BURG

### GENERAL AND LETTERS

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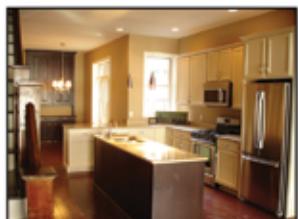
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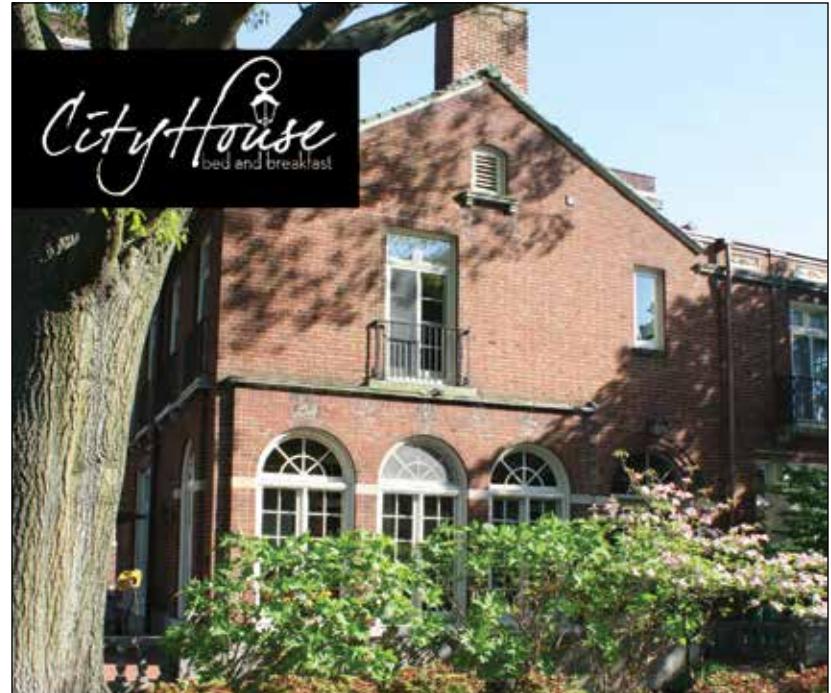
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# SAVE THE CYNICISM

*Harrisburg needs doers, not critics.*

BY J. ALEX HARTZLER

If you read or watch the local and national press, it is hard not to be a cynic. Our public discourse, like our politics, is polarized and shrill. On the rare occasion that I turn on Fox News or read the editorials in the Wall Street Journal, I am amazed at what appears to be a different reality from my daily copy of the New York Times or National Public Radio show, let alone my favorites, Lawrence O'Donnell and Rachel Maddow on MSNBC.

The cynic assumes that narrow self-interest drives all discourse. There is no objective “truth” in government, the cynic says, just a policy that helps or hurts my party or interest group or my personal finances. Thus, members of the state legislature or Congress cannot or will not break with leadership to vote for a bill proposed by the leader of the “opposition” party, even though a substantially similar bill supported by their party would gain overwhelming support. The recent failure of important bills on the state and federal level are evidence of this.

We are too often afraid to grant our “adversary” or really anyone who may disagree with us the basic courtesy of believing that their policy view is based on broad good intentions instead of only narrow personal benefit. The problem with distrusting intentions—beyond bad social manners of course—is that it provides an easy excuse to stop listening altogether.

I believe that this cynicism, particularly on a local level, is misplaced. In order to move our community forward, we need the honest and open participation of all stakeholders. Political labels or differences are unimportant to helping our city and region. Urban or suburban, liberal or conservative, we all have the responsibility to help our city move forward and be successful, and we all benefit from or are impacted by such success or failure. The perception and indeed the reality of our capital city is something that affects all of us in the region.

I am aware that my other business interest in real estate through WCI Partners leads some to believe that my political advocacy as chair of the Harrisburg Capital PAC is merely financially motivated and thus unworthy of support, as recent public arguments with the Patriot-News have demonstrated.

This viewpoint is wrong on two levels. First, we need more, not fewer, investors and stakeholders in the city who have a deep financial commitment to improving life here. As a community overall, we should want to attract more investors who want to build their business and real estate holdings in the city instead of somewhere else. Our population decline from almost 100,000 in 1950 to less than 50,000 today shows that we have lost many of those stakeholders and that we need them back. We should welcome any new business owner or resident who wants to join us in Harrisburg, while acknowledging that they are not likely to do so if it is not in their financial self-interest. The costs of municipal government will only continue to increase over time, and, if we don't grow our economic base to pay for it by incentivizing new investment today through tools like tax abatement (which actually increases municipal revenues), our fiscal problems will continue long into the future.

On another level, however, I know that there are many business and community people who want to build Harrisburg, regardless of their personal financial situation. The co-members of the PAC are a terrific example. For many of them, Harrisburg is a place where they, like me, spend their financial resources, not where they make them. There are numerous successful people from throughout the region who want to see Harrisburg adopt best practices that are successful in other cities. It is not because of any personal financial stake, but because they know that we all do better if Harrisburg does better.

So, save the cynicism, if you must, for national issues, but put it aside on the local level. Our city needs anyone who is willing to help, for whatever reason, to bring our city back. We need enlightened self-interest and, yes, even plain old self-interest, if we want to rebuild our city. Let's put in place policies that will attract them.

*J. Alex Hartzler is publisher of TheBurg.*



## FINANCIAL AGREEMENT NEAR

The major parts of a deal to resolve Harrisburg's financial crisis are nearly in place, receiver William Lynch announced last month.

These include sale of the city's incinerator, lease of the parking assets, negotiations with creditors and final agreements with the city's trade unions.

Lynch expects most of the remaining issues to be resolved this month, including the sale of the debt-laden incinerator to the Lancaster County Solid Waste Management Authority.

“All the stakeholders involved in the sale of the incinerator are in agreement,” said Lynch, who added that the city's creditors also finally understand that they must negotiate in earnest and might have to accept less than they're owed.

In addition, the city must finalize an agreement with the firefighter's union. The city's police union finalized a new contract in June.

The goal, Lynch said, was to pay off about \$600 million in debt, including \$350 million related to the incinerator, while allowing the city to regain fiscal solvency over the long-term.

“This plan will create important new revenue streams to help the city reduce its structural deficit and spur economic growth,” said Lynch. “The parking agreement may very well become a national model.”

Many aspects of a final plan must be OK'd by City Council and then approved by the Commonwealth Court, actions that should begin to take place this month.

## HUD FUNDS DISTRIBUTED

The Harrisburg City Council last month dispersed nearly \$1.8 million in federal funds designed to assist housing and community development.

In the annual distribution of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds, 13 social service organizations received a total of nearly \$500,000. Another \$550,000 went to various city housing programs.

Lastly, a large part of the funds were used for administrative/debt obligations. Debt service ate up \$367,567 of the CDBG grant, while \$353,826 was allotted for administration and “indirect” costs.

## MAYOR, TREASURER CLASH OVER FUND TRANSFERS

Harrisburg Mayor Linda Thompson last month asked for a significant increase in the amount of money her administration can reallocate without approval by City Council, a request that drew strong opposition from city Treasurer John Campbell.

Thompson asked for permission to transfer as much as \$50,000 within the approved budget without the consent of council, up from the current level of \$20,000.

The request prompted Campbell to write a strongly worded memo, urging council to deny the request.

"While this legislation may seem like an opportunity to allow for great flexibility in spending by the administration, it is my opinion that this legislation will only reduce the proper controls that are presently in place and exercised by City Council," Campbell wrote. "If this legislation were to be approved, budget transfers would begin to become more frequent and thus negate the importance of passing a proper and reasonable budget annually."

Every year, the council approves numerous reallocations, as some departments spend more or less than budgeted during the year. Campbell fears that increasing the reallocation threshold to \$50,000 would give the administration too much leeway to transfer large sums of money outside of the regular budget process and without proper oversight.

The administration's proposed ordinance was sent to the council's Budget and Finance Committee for further review and possible action.



### \$5 MILLION FOR FIRE PROTECTION, \$0 FOR REVITALIZATION

Harrisburg received a split decision from the state last month, as the legislature approved a record \$5 million in fire protection funds, but excluded the city from a new revitalization program.

City officials were pleasantly surprised—even shocked—by the \$5 million allocation in the 2013-14 budget, meant to offset the city's costs of protecting the Capitol complex from fire. That figure is double the amount allotted last year and far more than the \$496,000 that House Republicans had approved in their budget plan.

Harrisburg's state legislators were pushing for

\$4 million, but late lobbying by receiver William Lynch upped that amount by another \$1 million, said state Sen. Rob Teplitz.

The money technically goes to secure the state's 40 buildings from fire, accounting for the bulk of the Harrisburg Fire Bureau's \$8.4 million budget. However, it actually flows to the city's general fund, which frees up money for other uses by the highly indebted, insolvent city.

As the state was giving, it also was taking away, as it purposely excluded Harrisburg from participating in a just-launched revitalization program.

The new state budget funded a City Revitalization and Improvement Zone program, which will funnel money to small cities each year to assist in the redevelopment of distressed areas. However, language in the law prohibits any city under state receivership from participating, a designation that applies only to Harrisburg.



### KIOSKS, ONLINE PAYMENTS COME TO HARRISBURG

Harrisburg bill-payers have several new options available to them, as two computerized payment kiosks, as well as an online payment system, came online last month.

The two kiosks are located in City Hall outside the city treasurer's office and at the Giant Food Store in Kline Village, said Treasurer John Campbell, who added that a third kiosk would be located in a yet-to-be-determined location Uptown.

Denver-based EZ Pay Corp. is providing the kiosks at no cost to the city, said Campbell.

In addition, bill-payers now can pay online at [www.harrisburgpayments.com](http://www.harrisburgpayments.com) or by calling 888-243-3456. Campbell said he expected the online bill-paying portal to be integrated with the city's website soon.

Through these mechanisms, residents can pay most common bills, including for utilities, property taxes and traffic fines. A convenience fee will be added to each payment based upon the amount of the transaction, averaging \$3 for most utility bills and \$1 for most parking tickets, said Campbell.

Campbell expects the city, the Harrisburg Authority and the school district to save "at least" \$80,000 a year by not having to pay the credit card transaction fee.

## CITY TO RECEIVE STATE LOANS

Harrisburg last month was awarded state funding for two major infrastructure projects, including for utility repair at the Uptown sinkhole site.

Harrisburg received a \$900,000 low-interest loan through PENNVEST for repairing water and sewer infrastructure damaged by the sinkhole on the 2100-block of N. 4th Street, said state Sen. Rob Teplitz.

In addition, the Harrisburg Authority received a \$26 million low-interest loan, administered by PENNVEST, for upgrading the city's wastewater treatment facility, said Teplitz.

The improvements will bring the plant's ammonia and nutrient reduction requirements into compliance with U.S. Department of Environmental Protection regulations. This \$53 million project also will receive \$26.7 million in outside financing and a \$973,000 H2O PA grant, Teplitz said.



### MLK STREET RENAMING ON HOLD

Harrisburg's financial crisis seems to have doomed another proposal: the effort to supplement the name of N. 2nd St. downtown by adding "Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard."

Last March, the administration made the proposal, which the City Council then sent on to the council's Public Works Committee.

Committee Chairwoman Sandra Reid said she was in favor of the change, which would give the historic street both names from Chestnut to Forster streets. However, the \$6,000 to \$8,000 cost of replacing 63 street signs could not be justified, she said.

"We have an ongoing concern that our parks and waterways are not being maintained," she said.

Last year, park maintenance was transferred from the city's Parks and Recreation Department to the Public Works Department, which since has been criticized for lax maintenance, particularly in Riverfront Park.



Darnell Pemberton

## AUCTION PROCEEDS TALLIED

Harrisburg recouped about half of what was spent on museum artifacts following a weeklong auction last month on City Island.

Auction sales totaled about \$3.1 million for the 8,000 or so items, according to New York-based auctioneer Guernsey's. Minus the auction fee, the city kept about \$2.57 million, money that will pay off a loan taken out in 2006 that used the artifacts as collateral.

Harrisburg had received \$1.6 million during two previous sales of another 2,000 items, bringing the proceeds from museum artifacts to \$4.17 million. A follow-on auction of historic documents in September should increase that total some more.

Former Mayor Stephen Reed spent at least \$8.3 million in public funds on these artifacts in his dream to turn Harrisburg into a museum mecca. Most of the artifacts auctioned were for an "Old West" museum he wanted to build, while some were for a proposed African American history museum.

## ZONING BOARD REJECTS THREE PROJECTS

The Harrisburg Zoning Hearing Board last month turned down several proposals, all of which had generated neighborhood opposition.

Bethel AME Church had wanted to re-establish a surface parking lot at its site at the corner of N. 6th and Herr streets.

The historic church, located on the 1700-block of N. 5th St., long occupied the 6th Street site, but its building burned down in 1995. It then ran a commercial parking operation there until 2010, when its special exception, under challenge by the community, was not renewed.

The church's new pastor, the Rev. Micah Sims, pleaded with the board to allow it to resume renting out parking until it could execute a redevelopment plan. The board, however, sided with members of Fox Ridge Neighbors who argued in opposition, stating the church would have no incentive to sell or develop the property.

In other action, the zoning board:

- Rejected a variance/special exception request by developer Gary Wilson, who wanted to construct two two-family houses on vacant land at 1308 Green St. Neighbors testified in opposition, saying that four rental units were not in the best interest of the community.
- Rejected a variance request from developer Paul Peffley to locate a convenience store/deli on the ground floor of

an historic building he's redeveloping at the corner of N. 3rd and Hamilton streets. That application met with opposition from residents of Engleton, who feared a negative impact on their neighborhood.

- Approved a variance to turn the ground floor of the former Barto Building, at N. 3rd and State streets, into restaurant and retail space. Brickbox Enterprises would like a restaurant to locate in the former Barto Building, which the company is transforming into the LUX condominium building.
- Approved a variance to allow a church, Iglesia Pentecostal Jesucristo La Roca, to locate at 913 N. 2nd St., which once housed La Kasbah restaurant.



Josh Kesler

## FARMERS CO-OP DEBUTS

Harvest, a new farmers cooperative, opened last month in the brick building of the Broad Street Market, bringing fresh produce and other goods to Harrisburg from more than a dozen area farms.

The co-op is the brainchild of developer Josh Kesler and chef Matthew Hickey, who is managing the business on a day-to-day basis.

"Our commitment is to build a relationship between the farmers and local consumers, providing healthy, sustainable local food, as well as helping to revitalize the Broad Street Market, which we believe will regain its position as the breadbasket of our region," said Kesler.

The stand itself is unique for the Market, built from reclaimed lumber from the Stokes Millworks building across the street. Kesler recently bought that building and has begun renovating it for a farm-to-plate restaurant, which should open late next year.



## NEW SCHOOL IN STRAWBERRY SQUARE

This month, the nonprofit Aegis Education Endeavor (AEE) will open in Strawberry Square, offering a new cyber charter school that "combines art, athletics and industry."

The 2,800-square-foot facility will take space at 306 Market St. in downtown Harrisburg. Aegis is partnering with Achievement House Cyber Charter School, a public online school chartered by the state to serve students in grades 7 to 12.

In addition to an education program, Aegis will offer activities to cyber school students and to students learning at home, public or private schools, said founder Denni Boger.

"Strawberry Square is the perfect site for AEE because it is centrally located to be available to students from surrounding school districts who may wish to use public transportation to access the facility," said Boger.

Aegis will hold an open house and orientation at its new facility on Aug. 7, 1 to 7 p.m.

## CHANGING HANDS

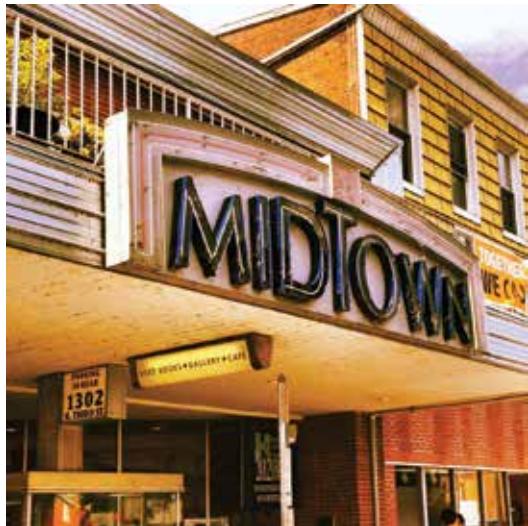
- Adrian St., 2256: Burner Properties LLC to B. Britton, \$57,000
- Bellevue Rd., 1921: A. & S. Jawhar to CNC Realty Group LLC, \$63,500
- Cumberland St., 114: B. Cohen to L. Larrieu, \$132,000
- Green St., 1925: F. Shannon to W. Gonzalez, \$215,000
- Mulberry St., 1158: E. Grill to S. Elazouni, \$59,900
- N. 3rd St., 1702: Fannie Mae to M. Mayhew, \$75,000
- N. 5th St., 1732: Freddie Mac to B. Harris, \$100,000
- N. 6th St., 2559 & 2561: Deutsche Bank Trustee & Company Americas Trustee to V. Acosta, \$31,500
- N. 20th St., 32: U.S. Bank Trustee & Pa. Housing Finance Agency to G. Carter & V. Diaz, \$52,400
- N. Front St., 1705: Rolleston Corp. to WCI Partners LP, \$400,000
- N. Front St., 2515: Centric Bank to 324 Mishika LLC, \$175,000
- Penn St., 1716: B. Andreozzi to D. Rhodes, \$131,000
- Reily St., 311: R. Heath to S. McLearn, \$85,500
- Rudy Rd., 2465: P. Lemmo to R. Harper, \$75,000
- Sayford St., 235: R. DeLong to JLS Rentals LLC, \$35,000
- Showers St., 612: D. & S. Hickethier to M. Murphy & V. Halchak, \$166,000
- S. Front St., 317: M. & J. Hankins to M. Homa, \$115,000
- Swatara St., 1321: D. & J. Boyle to J. Rodriguez & J. Vasquez, \$33,900
- Sycamore St., 1520: L. Miller Jr. to M. Brunner, \$97,500
- Wallace St., 1529 & 1531; 1513, 1515 & 1517 N. 6th St., \$144,100: Buonarroti Trust to U.S. General Services Administration, \$144,100

Source: Dauphin County, for sales exceeding \$30,000. Data is assumed to be accurate.

# LESSONS FROM RONN

*There's gloom and there's hope and there's Harrisburg.*

BY LAWRENCE BINDA



When I first came to Harrisburg, one of the first people to engage me in a serious conversation about the city was Ronn Fink, the long-time, greatly missed co-owner of the Bare Wall gift shop on Green Street.

Ronn had been around Harrisburg for almost 40 years and, as he himself said, "had seen it all": the decline, the floods, the porn theater/streetwalker years, the Reed era, the occasional sprigs of hope. Ronn had started out as an idealist—had even helped found the Historic Harrisburg Association—but, like many disappointed optimists, had become increasingly cynical in his later years.

On any halfway decent day, you could find Ronn perched on a folding chair just outside his shop, cigarette in hand, nose invariably buried deep in a pulp paperback. He knew everyone on the street, greeted passersby, laughed easily and welcomed good conversation.

Thus, he was eager to speak with me when, after a year or so of publishing *TheBurg*, I began to write more seriously about Harrisburg. I believe our talks began after I wrote a column praising a group of people who had started a new arts event called 3rd in The Burg. I could tell he thought I was naïve.

"I've seen Midtown on the verge of turning around so many times," he said, shaking his head, as if to give me fair warning of my own eventual disappointment.

Then his voice lifted a little, revealing that it really didn't take much to reach that underlying vein of hope that was his true nature.

"Who knows?" he said. "Maybe this time it will work."

I think of that conversation frequently when I walk up N. 3rd Street in Midtown—so much potential,

too many dashed hopes. Empty storefronts, a lot of great shops that never made it, and then some other dreamer shows up willing to give it a shot.

I've learned a lot about Harrisburg since that first talk with Ronn—some good, a lot not. But one important thing I have learned is that Harrisburg's condition or fate isn't the way it is just because it's the way it is. It's the way it is because people—individuals—make decisions that cumulatively add up.

Midtown is a great example.

Right now, Midtown is caught between two opposing forces—let's call them "old" Harrisburg and "new" Harrisburg.

Old Harrisburg is ghetto Harrisburg, dilapidated Harrisburg, a city that looks broken down—and the individuals who are happy to keep it that way.

They're the folks who own the rundown buildings that line N. 3rd, who seem fine with renting apartments cheaply as long as they don't have to put a penny more into their buildings.

They're the groups who run old-time social clubs with blocked-out windows, completely cut off from the world and community around them, prompting more than one person I know to ask, "What the heck goes on in there?"

They're the owners of troubled bars who seem to have no problem condemning entire neighborhoods to danger and blight so they can continue to sling cheap booze.

They're the commercial landlords who let yet another lottery ticket/cigarette/soda-and-chips joint open or, alternatively, who ask so much in rent for retail space that their buildings are always empty.

Old Harrisburg is deeply entrenched. They've survived, even thrived, for decades doing whatever it is they do, even as their buildings fall down around them. They're not going anywhere.

Unless squeezed out by new Harrisburg.

New Harrisburg is where the hope lies for the city in general. Almost without exception, new Harrisburg is made up of people who've arrived relatively recently to settle and open businesses. They come from places where it isn't acceptable to let your rental property go to rot or run a bar where there's a shooting every few months. And they're trying so hard to give Harrisburg something better.

They're folks like Josh Kesler, who is doubling—make that tripling—down on Midtown by opening a farmer's co-op in the Broad Street Market and renovating a long-vacant landmark building for a restaurant and art space; like Sri Kumarasingam, whose *Pastorante* may well be Harrisburg's best new restaurant; like Steph and Ammon Perry, whose amazing *Yellow Bird Café* has become a magnet both for the neighborhood and for outsiders; like Eric Papenfuse, who, whatever you might think of his politics, is a one-man Midtown improvement machine.

And therein lies the hope for Midtown and for Harrisburg.

If Ronn were still around today, he might say that he warned me, that the forward progress I cited a few years back couldn't be sustained, that we've returned to two steps forward, one step back.

I'd have to agree with him. Many of the interesting, creative new businesses that seemed to be transforming Midtown then are already gone.

But then he'd smile slightly, shrug his shoulders and say: "Who knows? Maybe this time, it'll work." And I'd have to agree with that, too. **B**

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Lawrence Binda is editor-in-chief of *TheBurg*.

# UP TO US

*It's time to begin thinking about our city, post-receiver.*

BY TARA LEO AUCHEY

The debt solution is imminent. That's what we in and out of the city of Harrisburg have been hearing for the past three months. While another month has come and gone with no official pronouncement, punctuated by grinning politicians posing in photo ops, there are declarations made here and there.

One was made on July 11 at the Harrisburg Regional Chamber of Commerce and CREDC Community Forum on Economic Development by outgoing Mayor Linda Thompson. She said, "In the next several months, there will be a solution that will not only take care of the incinerator debt, but will also leave no stranded debt on the backs of the taxpayers of this city."

Linda Thompson has also declared that the solution will include a plan to balance the city's budget and assure it stays that way over the next five years. Giving credit to her own administration, she said that whoever is next mayor "will find things in much better order than what I did when I took office."

We're not exactly sure if this is true because, for the most part, the public has been kept out of the loop. Key phrases like "agreement in principle" and other scuttlebutt trickle down to the street, but, overall, we don't know what's going on, when it will happen or what the terms of the solution will be.

That's the design of receivership, though. State takeover of the city's situation dictates there is really no room for public input. Our elected leaders, we are told, have failed us. Thus, the structure of authority has spoken and is setting up to fix the problems. The state law was written and swiftly implemented to account for the crisis. All the while, the people of the

city are stuck in the middle like children in a divorce, pawns in some conceptual game of power.

As a result of this alienation, there is a prominent attitude that the state, in its infinite wisdom, is failing the people of Harrisburg because it is neglecting to be sensitive to the citizens' sense of democracy and freedom. We the people of Harrisburg are being done to. This is happening to us under the guise of for us. The message implied is that this is unavoidable, that this is what must be done. Officials have flunked, so

a receiver needed to be put in their stead to fix the situation.

Indeed, there are some absolute challenges on the table that have nothing to do with the public and can't be solved by the public because the public was never consulted in the first place. "The public"

was used as collateral. "The public" was placated and made apathetic. "The public" didn't give enough input when it perhaps could have made a difference.

Thus, it's easier for many people to withdraw, shrug shoulders and say "c'est la vie."

Unfortunately, for Harrisburg residents, that seems a viable survival mechanism as so many feel they are being dragged along this ride of bureaucracy and politics. It's a challenge to understand what happened, what could happen or what didn't happen. Even more onerous is attempting to process it and develop a stance on it.

These macro issues may be the headlines and proclamations that grasp the most attention, but, if the city is to have true recovery, it will need the public to be aware, engaged and optimistic about the city's future. When it comes down to it, what's broken will not get fixed by the receiver, but by the people, not only those who live within the city's

limits, though. The people of the region will have to play a part in it, too.

We must keep in mind that the receiver is here for one thing and one thing only: to solve the city's debt problem. The other problems of the city—the deficient governance, the messy infrastructure, the lack of a community-based comprehensive plan, the social tensions, the distrust and the lack of collaboration to address all of it—that's on us.

The receiver will leave, and, hopefully, the story of the debt with him. Then the slate is left for us to do what we will with it.

If the Thompson administration foresees its own legacy, there's a better way to set it up than to give itself accolades for the upcoming debt solution that a state team will ultimately make happen.

Rather, in her final months in office, the mayor would do well to concentrate on the basic needs of Harrisburg. She is in a position to use her bully pulpit to educate residents and visitors alike on taking care of this urban core. Discuss ordinances about trash receptacles, vermin prevention, noise considerations and blight. Move beyond the podium at the press conference and travel around the city to talk about what's already on the books and what already exists as codified ordinances of Harrisburg. Educate the public on community responsibility, on residential duties whether a homeowner or a renter, a landlord or a business. Generate leadership, goodwill, action, attraction and hope.

Undoubtedly, the debt solution will be put before us soon. It will be a done deal given to us in its whole form no matter what we have to say about it. That doesn't mean there's nothing left for us to do. Once the solution is complete, it will be the people's turn to take over and fix this city. **B**

Tara Leo Auchey is creator and editor of *todaysthe day* Harrisburg. [todaysthe dayhbg.com](http://todaysthe dayhbg.com).



IN THE BURG

# NON- PROFIT PROB- LEM

NONTAXABLE PROPERTIES  
Data supplied by Harrisburg City  
Treasurer's Office.



# ABOUT HALF THE PROPERTY VALUE IN HARRISBURG IS NONTAXABLE. CAN ANYTHING BE DONE ABOUT IT?

BY REGGIE SHEFFIELD AND LAWRENCE BINDA

**F**orum Place. Harrisburg Hospital. The Farm Show complex. The state Capitol. Four places, four very different businesses, one thing in common—all are regarded as nonprofit entities, so pay no property taxes to their host city, Harrisburg.

According to the city treasurer's office, Harrisburg is home to 716 parcels that are tax-exempt due to their non-profit status. Making the situation even more difficult: more than 75 percent of those parcels belong to either the government or government-related entities, which by law cannot be taxed, according to the Harrisburg receiver's office.

So, what's a city to do?

For years, the answer was "not much," as the state did with Harrisburg pretty much what it wanted. Condemn and raze entire neighborhoods? Sure. Turn local streets into forbidding, perilous highways to accommodate suburban workers? Why not? Expand and take more properties off the tax roles? OK.

During the past century, the city has toggled between actively participating in its own destruction by facilitating the state's unquenchable thirst for more land and, more recently, lamely complaining in City Council meetings and mayoral press conferences that the state does not pay its fair share for the services it consumes.

Last month, the situation changed somewhat. The state passed a 2013-14 budget that gave Harrisburg \$5 million in "fire protection" funds, representing the largest-ever direct infusion of cash from the state as part of a regular budget process.

However, as it stands right now, that level of funding is a one-shot, one-year deal. Meanwhile, there are numerous other issues emerging that could affect the capital city's relationship with the many nonprofit entities that call Harrisburg home.

## STATE OF THE STATE FUNDING

To say that John Campbell was surprised would be an understatement.

"I'll be honest with you—I was shocked," said Campbell, Harrisburg's treasurer.

Campbell was speaking of the \$5 million the state coughed up to the city, double the amount allocated in the 2012-13 budget. His surprise was heightened by the fact that House Republicans, in their budget plan, had already slashed the allocation to \$496,000.

Most city officials, including Mayor Linda Thompson, expected the amount to increase once the budget bill was finalized. In the end, however, it surpassed nearly everyone's expectations.

"It's a figure we've never received before,"

Campbell said.

State Sen. Rob Teplitz said he and Rep. Patty Kim had worked hard to get funding restored, hoping to reach \$4 million, a figure most city officials had set their eyes on. Receiver William Lynch lobbied Gov. Tom Corbett and Republican legislative leaders for another \$1 million, which is how Harrisburg ended up with \$5 million for this fiscal year, said Teplitz.

"It really is a windfall," he said. "But we're not asking for extra payment. We're only asking for fair compensation."

That fair compensation is, technically speaking, for protecting state buildings from fire, thus the money is accounted for in the state budget's line item for fire protection. In fact, according to Teplitz, the city had to pledge the money would go only for that purpose.

However, it's a stretch to believe that 60 percent of the city Fire Bureau's \$8.4 million budget goes to safeguarding the 40 buildings that constitute the Capitol complex. The money, in fact, flows to the city's general fund, which does include the Fire Bureau, but also includes most other parts of the city government. So, money that goes into the Fire Bureau budget simply frees up funds elsewhere for the financially strapped, indebted city.

In the end, the state uses fire protection as a politically expedient way to compensate Harrisburg. It's simply easier to fund a single, existing line item for a specific use than to transfer money into the general fund of the much-criticized and ostracized city. Besides, firefighters have hero clout lacking in, let's say, the city's IT department.

Harrisburg is happy to go along with this process because the state has habitually underfunded the city for services rendered: use of its roads, its emergency services, its public works and sanitation staff. Each weekday, the population of Harrisburg doubles, largely due to the presence of the state government, with the small population of the largely poor city left to pick up the tab of this white-collar invasion.

Until this year, the state has never owned up to its obligation as, by far, the largest employer and landowner in Harrisburg. Exempt from having to pay property taxes, the legislature allocated whatever it wanted, with the amount bouncing around from year to year. So, under the Reed administration, the state often provided just over \$1 million. In 2010, that amount was cut to \$987,000 and then to \$496,000 in 2011. After the city's financial crisis hit full-on, the state used the line item to assist the city to the tune of \$2.5 million for 2012 and now \$5 million.

City officials seem satisfied with that level—that

\$5 million finally compensates the city fairly. The problem, however, is that the funding level is not guaranteed going forward. It's subject to the legislature's annual horse-trading extravaganza known as the budget process. So, will the state reduce funding again once the city's finances stabilize or when Corbett is no longer governor or Lynch is no longer receiver? No one knows.

Teplitz said he's introducing legislation in the fall that would stabilize Harrisburg's state funding, ensuring the city fair compensation in the fire protection line item that also would allow it to plan financially from year to year.

"The legislation would require the actual cost to get reimbursed," he said.

Teplitz acknowledged passing such legislation would be an uphill climb, but vowed to put in a strong effort.

"Then we wouldn't have to go begging every year," he said.

## PILOT PROGRAMS

In Harrisburg, after the state government, the next largest block of tax-exempt properties in the city belongs to PinnacleHealth System, one of the area's largest healthcare providers, which is listed as a non-profit 501(3), the IRS's designation for a tax-exempt organization. In the city, healthcare providers alone account for 11 percent of the non-taxable properties. If taxed, the PinnacleHealth parcels alone would bring in more than \$1.13 million in property tax revenue, according to the receiver's report.

But Pinnacle, like many other non-profits, instead makes Payments In Lieu of Taxes (PILOTs) to the city, amounting to more than \$120,000 a year. Pinnacle spokeswoman Kelly McCall said in an e-mail that a 1998 court settlement prevented her from discussing specifics.

"Our PILOT was established through the Settlement Agreement, and the Agreement contains a confidentiality provision. We do make PILOT payments to the City of Harrisburg, Harrisburg School District and Dauphin County," McCall's e-mail said.

PinnacleHealth provided more than \$14.8 million in community benefits and reached more than 2.1 million people through programs and services, such as free screenings, community health education and chronic disease management in fiscal year 2012.

In addition, PinnacleHealth has supported numerous initiatives within Harrisburg, including increasing access to healthcare for the underserved

through the Keystone Continuum, donating to maintain extracurricular activities and athletic programs in the Harrisburg School District and providing nutrition and physical activity education and meals to Harrisburg School District students," she continued.

Overall, Harrisburg received a total of more than \$420,000 in PILOTs in 2009, \$410,244 in 2010 and \$420,286 in 2011. According to city records, Harrisburg anticipates, in its 2013 budget, receiving about \$425,000 in PILOTs. Next to Pinnacle, PHEAA, the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency, is the second biggest PILOT contributor, sending in \$107,444.79 each year for properties in the city.

"Under the Purely Public Charities Act, (Act 55), any PILOT payments are totally voluntary on the part of the non-profit," said Cory Angell, a spokesperson for city receiver Lynch.

While a noteworthy addition to any municipal budget, PILOTs rarely constitute more than 1 percent of any total budget, according to an exhaustive 2010 nationwide study of the issue conducted by the Lincoln Institute for Land Policy. In Harrisburg, PILOTs account for about three-quarters of 1 percent of the budget, a figure largely unchanged for the past decade.

Tony Ross, president of the United Way of Pennsylvania, which has members who partner

with more than 5,000 not-for-profit social service agencies statewide, said that standardizing a definition of what is and what is not a non-profit in Pennsylvania would help eliminate the fear that smaller non-profits—which have fewer assets and resources than the healthcare behemoths—end up bearing an undue share of the tax burden if stripped of their tax-exempt statuses. It would also help clear up the issue of just what qualifies as a non-profit from county to county.

"We're concerned that non-profits are getting lumped into one group," Ross said.

Ross explained that many of his affiliates, which tend to be smaller, community-based organizations, lack the assets and resources of the healthcare giants. What is a PILOT to PinnacleHealth could be a life or death situation to a smaller organization, he said.

"From what I can tell, those sorts of distinctions aren't being made," Ross said. "Whatever is done, it needs to be uniform across the state."

"This tension has been going on for a long time," said Joe Geiger, who until recently was the long-time director of the Pennsylvania Association of Non-Profit Organizations. "It wouldn't even be close to enough money to offset the deficit. And there are some unintended consequences that could occur where some non-profits who are currently operating in Harrisburg may decide they need to find a more favorable environment in which to operate."

"Poor decisions like that are what happened with the incinerator. That's where the problem is. It's not the fact that non-profits aren't paying taxes," Geiger said.

"Very few non-profits are property tax-exempt," Geiger explained. "Most of them rent their properties and pay their taxes through the rent that they pay. So, when you look at the amount of debt that Harrisburg is in and you look at the amount of money that they could leverage out of charities, it's not going to come anywhere close to the solution."

"Non-profits and the local government ought to be working together to look at solutions, not taking each other to court," he said.

## BASEBALL & BATHROOMS

After the state and PinnacleHealth, a host of smaller nonprofits dot the Harrisburg landscape (see map). In fact, you can walk through much of downtown and Midtown and hit one after another.

Did you know that Metro Bank Park is still owned by the city, so is tax-exempt even though Harrisburg sold the Senators baseball team in 2007? The team now leases the ballpark from the city.

The restrooms at Sunshine Park on Herr Street are also tax exempt, as is the controversial Forum Place

building on Walnut Street, even though it's valued at more than \$63 million.

Rep. Patty Kim, a first-year Democrat representing Harrisburg's 103rd district, said she thinks it's time for a public hearing as legislators have been getting lots of mail from the public. She also said she thinks that the non-profit designation should be made closer to home.

"I think it should be a municipal decision if it comes to that because, if the state does it, it's going to be like a cookie-cutter formula that doesn't fit with everybody's unique situations in the city," she said.

Kim said she was working with Rep. Robert L. Freeman, a Democrat from the 136th district representing Easton and Northampton County, as a future co-sponsor of a proposed bill that would ensure additional resources to cities like Harrisburg that have a disproportionate number of tax-exempt properties.

Speaking of legislation, a legislative solution is brewing that could expand the definition of a non-profit in Pennsylvania, which might further impact Harrisburg.

In June, the House Finance Committee stopped short of a vote on a proposed law that would amend the state constitution to give the General Assembly the power to define a tax-exempt non-profit statewide. The House was taking its look at the proposed new standards, known as Senate Bill No. 4, after the Senate approved it in March.

Pinnacle's McCall said that Pinnacle is also closely watching the progress of the proposed constitutional amendment, which likely would lead to a more liberal definition of what qualifies to be a non-profit.

"PinnacleHealth supports the legislation, as it will provide clarity and uniform treatment of charities throughout Pennsylvania," she said.

In Pinnacle's case, its payments are made as a result of a 1998 settlement reached with the Dauphin County Board of Assessment Appeals after the hospital appealed the county's decision stripping the hospital's tax exempt status in 1993. The reason the tax board took the hospital off the tax-exempt rolls? The county was not satisfied that the hospital had continued to meet the five-prong "HUP test"—established by a 1985 court decision to help determine what is a non-profit—because it engaged in competitive practices with other local healthcare providers.

Dauphin County Judge Richard A. Lewis later agreed, ruling that Pinnacle's acquisition of local private physician practices as part of its expansion of an integrated healthcare system evidenced a private profit motive on the part of the hospital.

"The taxing authorities argue that the physician practices compete with private physicians and that such competition is evidence of a private profit motive. This court finds that [Pinnacle] cannot compete while still maintaining its charitable mission and charitable nature," Lewis wrote.

Eric Montarti, senior policy analyst with the Allegheny Institute for Public Policy, a Pittsburgh-based non-profit taxpayer interest research group, said that hospitals, in a sense, are placed in a vulnerable position since no one wants to be seen as wishing to start taxing churches and schools.



"Take away these things that you're never going to tax. Take away these things that the politicians are never going to go after, and what are you left with?"

Pittsburgh, like Harrisburg, has an Act 47 problem, the legislative term used to describe when the state appoints an outsider to oversee a city's finances because the municipality is so far in debt that it has been declared a financially "distressed" city. In 2004, Pittsburgh began grappling with a \$34.3 million deficit.

"It obviously didn't solve the city of Pittsburgh's issue," he said.

Harrisburg, a city with a \$56.3 million budget, currently faces an operating deficit of about \$12 million and a \$350 million debt tied to its botched incinerator retrofit, which has pushed the city to the brink of bankruptcy.

Montarti said that trying to, in effect, indirectly tax tax-exempts is the wrong direction to take as nonprofits attract people who, for example, buy properties in the municipalities and therefore later end up paying property taxes. Montarti said that those same people also end up paying taxes on local services while otherwise helping to support the local economy. The city, instead of trying to tax non-profits, should first get its own fiscal house in order, he said.

"Our argument would have been, 'Well, okay, the city of Pittsburgh really needs to look at what it's spending and what it's doing in terms of how many services it provides, how many people it employs, how much cooperation there is between it and the county on similar services,'" he said.

People have made the same point about Harrisburg. Over the past few years, however, Harrisburg has slashed and slashed and slashed. The once-bloated city government now is down to its bare bones, challenged to deliver even basic services.

After years of underfunding its obligations, the state government has finally stepped up—at least for one year. PinnacleHealth also has shown that it's willing to be civic-minded. Will other nonprofits follow suit? Given the city's vast financial needs, PILOT payments may never amount to too much. However, Harrisburg does provide these nonprofit organizations with vital services. Given its desperate shape, the city is searching for every penny it can find. **B**

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*Reggie Sheffield is a freelance reporter in Harrisburg. He may be reached at troylus@comcast.net.*

*Map images created by Steve Cline.  
urban3dmodeling.com*

## PA FIRE PROTECTION FUNDS TO HARRISBURG:

2003: \$1.02 million  
2004: \$1.02 million  
2005: \$1.02 million  
2006: \$1.02 million  
2007: \$1.27 million  
2008: \$1.25 million  
2009: \$1.25 million  
2010: \$987,000  
2011: \$496,000  
2012: \$2.5 million  
2013: \$5 million

## PILOT PAYMENTS TO HARRISBURG:

2003: \$99,442  
2004: \$353,793  
2005: \$403,920  
2006: \$422,799  
2007: \$484,975  
2008: \$429,150  
2009: \$420,000  
2010: \$410,244  
2011: \$420,286  
2012: \$425,415 (midyear projection)  
2013: \$425,415 (approved budget)

*Source: City of Harrisburg*

# MY DAY AT THE HARRISBURG AUCTION

*Millions of public dollars were squandered buying Wild West artifacts. I wanted one small memento.*

BY LAWRENCE BINDA

I had my heart set on the spittoon. I had no practical use for it, being neither a chewer nor a spitter. But it was the one item at last month's artifact auction that actually pertained to Harrisburg, manufactured by the city's own F.H. Cowden Co. sometime in the late 19th century. That was why I wanted it.

Estimated sales price: \$40 to \$50.

I hoped the small stoneware vessel would get lost amongst the 5,500 or so other lots up for grabs at the (mostly) Wild West auction held on City Island. Apothecary bottles, Indian-style rugs, butter churns, sheriff's medals of dubious provenance, creepy religious statues.

A spittoon manufactured in Harrisburg, Pa.? Who'd want that?

To me, it was the perfect symbol of this singularly bizarre episode in Harrisburg history. Over a dozen or so years, former Mayor Steve Reed and his minions crisscrossed the country, quietly spending some \$8.3 million in public money to buy tons of stuff for a "National Museum of the American West" he hoped to build.

In central Pennsylvania.

There was never any solid path or plan to getting this thing built, little more than the surreal notion in Reed's head that what was needed was a Wild West Museum.

In central Pennsylvania.

For years, Reed used his appointed board at the



Harrisburg Authority to OK his debt-fueled buying sprees, stuffing his treasures floor-to-ceiling into a warehouse like some publicly elected version of Citizen Kane. And, on this day, the results of that failed project were listed in a 23-page brochure as the action commenced on a steamy morning inside the Carousal Pavilion next to Metro Bank Park.

And amidst the old-timey bathtubs and old-timey oil lamps and old-timey chamber pots, there was but a single item that I saw with some connection to this city where I lived—the stoneware spittoon—and I wanted it.

## FAIR WARNING

About a half-hour before the 10 a.m. start time, I had set off on foot from my Front Street house.

I took the river route to City Island, walking across Riverfront Park (overgrown grass, rotting tree limbs), down the ramp (missing railings, groundhog infestation), onto the river walk (cracked pavement, washed-out stairs), past the river steps (weed-choked, disintegrating) and over the Walnut Street Bridge (lights out again).

I arrived just as a guy with Guernsey's auction house was laying down the ground rules for in-person bidding. Speaking above the roar of several industrial-strength fans, he explained that there were no reserve prices, so the highest bid would win the item, regardless of its perceived value.

I was in.

I took some pictures, said "hi" to city COO Bob

Philbin, chatted with TV news guy Dave Marcheskie, claimed bidder ticket #112 and had a seat.

The crowd was sparse, maybe 50 or 60, but I wasn't certain what to make of that. Guernsey's said that more than 7,000 people had registered for the auction, so most of the action was going to come from Internet bidders. And, in fact, a long table occupied the entire right side of the pavilion, where Guernsey's staff hovered over a line of computers to track and call out Internet bids.

A bit after 10 o'clock, the auctioneer took her position behind the microphone and announced the first item: an antique wooden yarn winder. Estimated pre-auction value: \$60 to \$100.

A picture of the item flashed on a screen beside her, at the front of the auction area. It looked like a long wooden stick with handles on either end, but the projected image was vague in the daylight and difficult to see clearly.

"\$100," the hopeful auctioneer called out.

Nothing.

"\$75," she said and paused briefly.

"\$50," she barked out.

Still nothing. She took a breath. The bidding was going the wrong way.

Then some hope. A staff member manning one of the laptop computers had an interested bidder.

"\$25!" he yelled out.

"\$25," repeated the auctioneer.

"Thirty, thirty," she said, trying to juice the crowd into bidding more. "Thirty. Do I have thirty anywhere?" Faces looked up blankly, and no auction numbers were raised.

"I have \$25," she said, drawing out the number. "Fair warning . . ."

"Sold! To the Internet bidder! \$25!"

And so started the long-awaited Harrisburg artifact auction, with a sale of an item at less than half the estimated sales price.

Much of the rest of the morning would proceed in a similar way. There were a few bright spots, such as the beautiful National brass cash register, which an Internet bidder paid \$600 for (estimate: \$300 to \$500).

But most of the items ended up more like the \$30 paid for "primitive farm implements" (estimate: \$40 to \$50); the \$80 paid for the "large wooden ox yoke" (estimate: \$100 to \$200); and the \$60 paid for the "Oliver Standard Visible (Type) Writer No. 9" (estimate: \$300 to \$400).

Other items fetched more or less their pre-auction estimates, while a bunch received no bids at all and were passed over.

## AND SOLD!

As I waited for my spittoon to come up, I struck up a conversation with a guy sitting next to me, who, as it turned out, grew up on Allison Hill, but now lived with his family outside Mount Gretna.

His name was Darnell Pemberton, and he had come to bid on several African-style masks, meaning he had a long wait ahead of him, hours still, in the steam bath posing as an auction house. He also was interested in one of several western wagons that wouldn't be up until the auction's next-to-last day, Saturday.

"I've always wanted to own an old wagon," he said matter-of-factly, as if this were a common hope.

He asked me why there were African items at an Old West auction, and I told him that Reed dreamed of building other museums in Harrisburg, including a world-class museum of African-American history.

He looked at me and chuckled, as if I had just said the most ridiculous thing.

"Who would come to Harrisburg for a museum when they can just go to Washington?" he asked.

I then explained how we all had come to be there that day, that Reed had spent years and millions of dollars in

public money accumulating this stuff, which was now getting sold off at a rate of an item every three-or-so minutes, most below estimated value.

"Weird," he said, and I nodded.

But that wasn't going to stop me from making a bid, and my spittoon was due up next. I grabbed the cardboard number from my bag and nervously got ready to shout out my bid.

"Number 1086: F.H. Cowden Harrisburg Spittoon," said the auctioneer, and the vague image of the stoneware vessel appeared on the screen. I leaned forward to try to see it more clearly.

"\$50," called out one of the guys following the Internet bidding, before I could say a word.

\$50? The spittoon already was selling for the top of the estimated range. Oh no.

"\$75. \$100. \$125," cried the auctioneer, happy she finally had an item selling over predicted value.

Clearly, a few other locals were jumping on the only Harrisburg-related item in the auction, and I was being outbid into stunned silence.

"\$150? Do I hear \$150?" said the suddenly hopeful auctioneer.

"I have \$125," she said. "Fair warning . . ."

"And sold! To the Internet bidder! \$125."

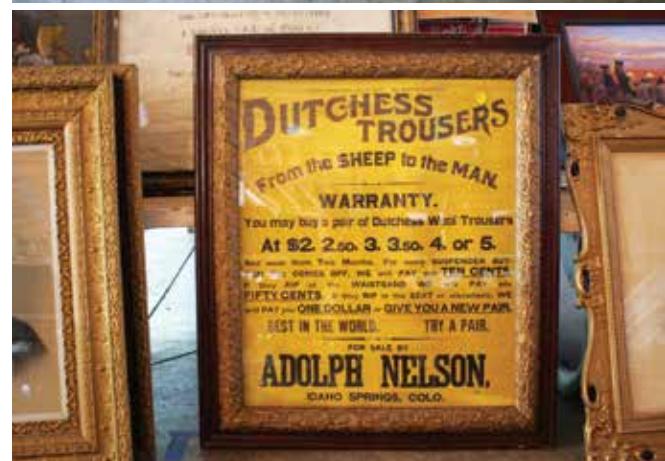
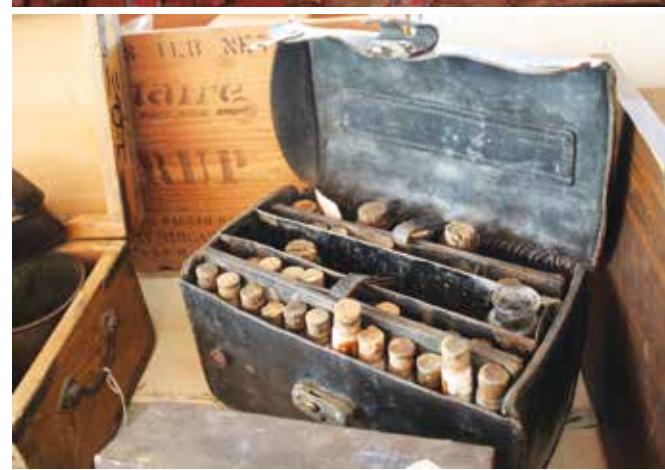
Rats!

Sure, I had lost out, but at least hadn't gotten suckered into paying too much for it. Researching Cowden pottery before the auction, I learned there's a ton for sale on eBay for less than \$100, which was my upper limit for the piece.

I stuck around long enough to bid on another lot I had spied at the auction preview the day before in a warehouse at the incinerator complex. My girlfriend liked a set of 10 old-timey glass lamp shades, said they'd look nice in a house we're having renovated in Olde Uptown.

Estimated value: \$100 to \$150. I paid \$40.

As I made my way back across the Walnut Street Bridge (lights still out) and over to the adjoining plaza (badly damaged planter) and back to the office through the streets of Harrisburg (potholes, cracks, no striping), I wished that my money would be spent well, but knew it would go only to covering a fraction of the massive debt Reed had amassed. Money that, years ago, should have gone to fixing Harrisburg. **B**



# DROPOUT WARRIORS

*At CISPA, the offices may be new, but the mission remains unchanged.*

BY ANDREW DYRLI HERMELING



Jane Hess and Nathan Mains

**G**ood space can bring energy to people,” says Nathan Mains. “It is certainly an improvement,” adds Jane Hess, indicating her understatement with a smile.

They’re talking about the brand new office space for Community in Schools Pennsylvania (CISPA), where Mains serves as president and director and Hess as executive director, Capital Region.

Incorporating repurposed wood, chic urban concrete architectural elements and strategic lighting, the office is a far cry from the cubicles and florescent ceiling lights of the organization’s former downtown home.

We’re in the meeting room of the Front Street building, which has a gorgeous view of the Susquehanna River. Mains and Hess believe the new office, which opened April 29, will help the organization in its mission—reducing the too-high dropout rate of the state’s schoolchildren.

“We want our employees to want to come to work in the morning,” says Mains. “The folks who work here could go anywhere, they are all talented. So, if we are going to retain our quality people, we have to consider the work environment.”

Beyond providing comfortable workspace for the organization, the new office enfolds powerful networking technology that lets Mains easily coordinate with the six service regions across Pennsylvania under his watch. And, as he points out, a working knowledge of network technology allowed him to lower the costs of installation and save money in the long run by limiting the expense of transportation and printing.

## EDUCATION IS THE KEY

Mains has spent more than 20 years working in the non-profit sector. The majority of his experience comes from work within the health industry. In his previous positions, Mains worked to fundraise for worthy causes, such as the March of Dimes and the American Lung Association, and increase awareness concerning the importance of such work.

Mains also is committed to Harrisburg. He has called the city home since graduating from Lebanon Valley College. Upon seeing an exciting new opportunity to do important work in his adoptive home, Mains made the natural transition from health to education.

As we talk, I am struck by Mains’ ability to represent the importance of CISPA’s mission while simultaneously being affable. On a number of occasions, our conversation was sidetracked as he asked me about my own experiences within education.

“Education is the key to everything,” says Mains. “We want to bring about change for the kids that we serve. It’s not just the important work that we do in the schools, but we also have to look at policy changes that need to occur, and we have to expand awareness about the importance of keeping kids in school.”

CISPA is part of the larger Community in Schools network, which is the nation’s largest dropout prevention organization. When schools (such as John Harris High School) request assistance from CISPA, a site coordinator is assigned to the school. Tasked with evaluating the diverse needs of at-risk students, coordinators develop an

action plan, put together a team and then leverage funds and material support from various sources to provide students with the attention that they need to stay in school.

As Hess states, “it is important to find the gaps, to see how student needs are not being met. For each individual student, these gaps can be different. Some need to be connected with food banks, others English language tutors. Sometimes, we coordinate services for the student’s entire family by setting up parenting classes or organizing transportation. Other times, helping a student is as easy as providing him or her with an alarm clock.”

I met separately with Caryn Watson, state Rep. Patty Kim’s legislative assistant, who formerly served as the site coordinator for John Harris High School.

“Our job was to come up with plans for individuals and for the community,” says Watson.

Watson maintained a caseload of students with whom she worked regularly. This involved developing an “Individualized Service Plan,” which addressed the specific problems that certain students faced. She also coordinated with the school’s faculty and counseling staff to make sure CISPA programming was as effective as possible. Additionally, she helped to develop school-wide programs. Her team offered FAFSA and college application workshops, along with SAT test preparation. Furthermore, Watson oversaw service learning projects.

“We wanted to produce a ‘Survival Guide’ for incoming ninth-graders. We were able to create a pamphlet and a video that focus on what it takes to graduate. Both are still being used by the high school when new students arrive in the fall.”

## LOVE FOR THEIR WORK

“Every day is different, and I think that’s the appeal,” says Mains. “You can find yourself one day in a school, chatting with some of the kids. The next day, you find yourself in a meeting with high-level donors, business people and government officials, talking about the importance of the issue. Then, the next day, I get the opportunity to talk to a reporter.”

A passion for education is certainly a job requirement for Mains and Hess. Funding is always tight, and the availability of a single grant can determine if CISPA can maintain a presence in a school or not. Such is the case here in Harrisburg. A last-minute funding cut meant that a CISPA program had to be shut down at John Harris. Discouraged but not defeated, Hess is determined to return there.

“We are currently waiting to hear about our most recent grant application,” says Hess. “Hopefully, we can use that funding to re-enter Harrisburg schools.”

Despite the excitement she feels about the opening of the new office, Hess realizes what CISPA’s real purpose is. Without the funding necessary for the implementation of CISPA’s programs, the work that began in the Harrisburg’s schools cannot be resumed. She knows that attractive meeting rooms and networking technology mean little while students in the city continue to drop out.

For Mains, Hess and everyone else at CISPA, getting students to don a cap and gown at graduation is the ultimate prize. **B**



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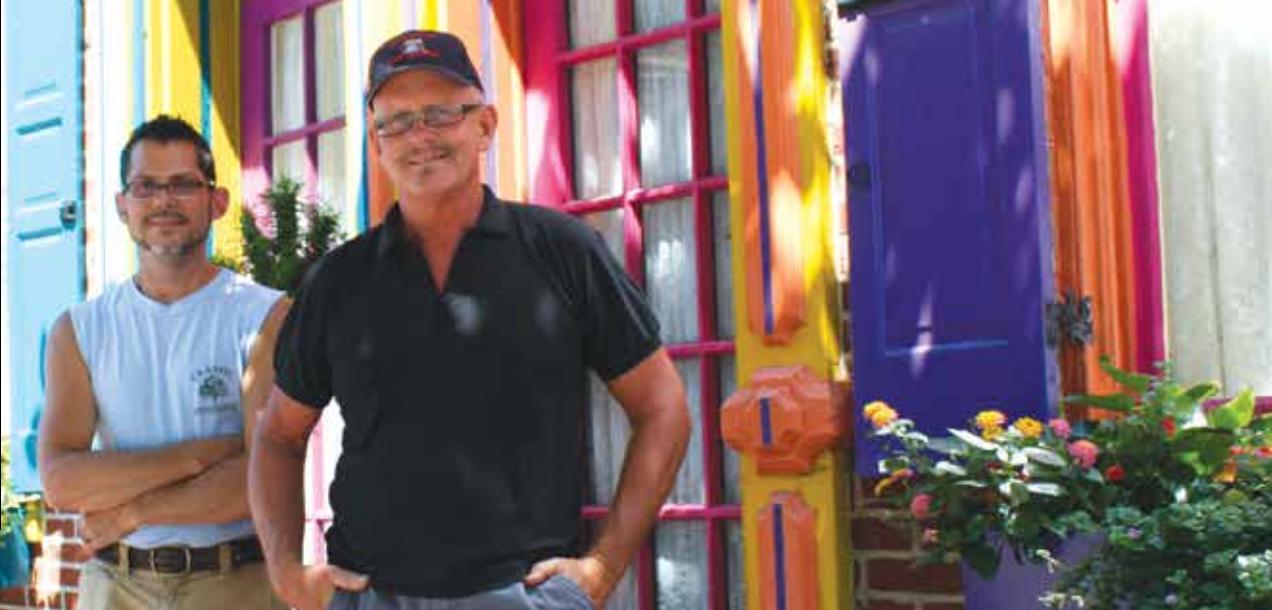
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## CITIZEN BILL

*Midtown man makes his piece of the planet a little more colorful.*

BY DAN WEBSTER



**F**ormer Mayor Reed calls this man "The Mayor of Cumberland Street," an earned and well-deserved nickname.

He takes care of the whole block, spraying down weeds, doing leaf cleanups and planting and tending to the trees he's installed for himself and neighbors alike. He's personally taken on the role of chief steward and designer of the memorial garden in Riverfront Park at the foot of the Taylor Bridge.

You may not know him personally if you aren't a resident of his curated block in Midtown Harrisburg. But you may have looked up and recognized his colorful pinwheels spinning in the wind, a feature that brings both wonderment and some joy for the passerby.

Bill Fritz is an energetic and important citizen of this neighborhood, a mainstay of Harrisburg and an import from nearby Lebanon, Pa. He and his business partner Patrick Brady migrated from Philadelphia, citing this city as a "nice blend between Philly and his hometown."

Upon arrival, Fritz and Brady got to work, founding Classic Groundskeeping, now a 26-year-old business providing facelifts and sweeping changes to home and commercial environments around central Pennsylvania and even to places as far away as Florida.

Fritz said his obsession for both the built and natural environment stems from his Boy Scout days. He also started cutting grass at the age of 11, which provided supplementary family income for his father, who worked as a concreter in the Cornwall Iron Ore Mines in northeastern Pennsylvania. After studying ornamental horticulture at Delaware Valley College, he transferred to Lebanon Valley and received his bachelor's degree in business administration.

This marriage of business and know-how is Fritz's jam along with a tireless work ethic. He meets for the interview in his work boots, tank top, jean shorts and an NRA cap; his mustache, crew cut and landscaping tan, along with his hurried movements and chatter, is a clear indication of the hard-nosed handyman he is.

I ask how many clients he has, and he looks at Brady, who has assumed the office work as of late.

"Too many" seems to be the nonverbal, but that hasn't stopped them from starting a pest control business this year.

"We wanted to get into something that was year-round, and it seemed like a natural transition," Fritz says.

Comprehensive Pest Control uses safe methods like integrated pest management and organic applications, because, he says, "you're dealing with family and children," a pragmatic and progressive alignment.

On a more informal note, Fritz really likes his logo. "It's a rat that's cross-eyed in the crosshairs, and lots of people get a big kick out of it."

He immediately gets back to business and chalks up their workmanship and success to their motto, a quote from one of our founding fathers, Benjamin Franklin: "The

bitterness of poor quality remains long after the sweetness of low price is forgotten." This paradoxical aphorism is the motivating force behind all their landscaping and pest control initiatives.

Beyond his business acumen, he clues me in on another one of his athletic undertakings. "I didn't get into any sports [growing up], so when I'm not working, I'm working on a house," an irony that is not lost on me.

His true architectural passion is of the Victorian type, calling it the "epitome of society."

The family room I sit in and the dining room adjoined showcase his carpentry and interior design artistry. He started from scratch in many of the rooms, installing the

wainscoting, finding and hanging the chandelier in the dining room—a purchase from one of the Wannamaker mansions in Philadelphia—while the one in the family room is from the former Ephrata Mountain Springs Hotel's receiving room, a place where Lincoln and Grant once stayed.

Portraits from bygone eras encircle the furniture. They aren't just mere vintage, but photographs of their respective family members; a remarkable one of his grandmother in flapper garb catches the eye. Fritz is a maximalist, so it's hard to keep your eye on any one thing in this house, especially when his beautiful gray cat, Sequel, vies for your attention.

After showing me his Caribbean themed patio—complete with palm trees, purple railings and yellow fencing—a shocking transition from the under-lit but gracefully adorned first floor, Fritz decides to reminisce, retelling, albeit quickly, a powerful narrative about his father (an MP during the American occupation of Germany) and his mother being wed overseas, a military ceremony that was purchased through soap, cigarettes and linens. He shows me the picture, and, sure enough, MPs line the aisle, his mother and father completing one of the first post-war nuptials between an American and German.

As if an aside, he called to mind his days owning Sweet Passions with Brady, a coffee shop that was located at 1006 N. 3rd St.

"It was ahead of its time. We had Tarot Card readings on Monday. Poetry night on Tuesday. On Sunday, we served Belgian waffles with fruit compote and had chair massages out back. We also sold exotic flowers out of it."

A man of many passions and skills, he doesn't give me an indication of what's next on the plate for his frenetic life, but he does strongly suggest that I mention his 2013 Reader's Choice award for landscaping and lawn care that Harrisburg Magazine is bestowing upon him.

I make a mental note of the irony of mentioning another Harrisburg publication, but the Mayor of Cumberland Street certainly deserves his title and his choice standing in the community. **B**



*You can reach Bill Fritz at Classic Groundskeeping at 717-234-2415 and at Comprehensive Pest Control at 717-712-2520. Learn more about his businesses at [www.classicgroundskeeping.com](http://www.classicgroundskeeping.com) and [www.comprehensivepestcontrol.com](http://www.comprehensivepestcontrol.com).*

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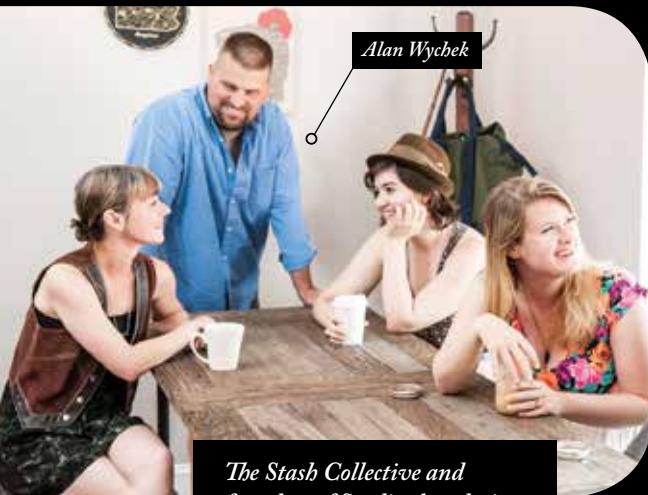
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*The Stash Collective and founders of Studio A make it to the starting blocks at Little Amps first.*

# ART + ENTERPRISE

*Creative biz kids build a network.*

BY DAN WEBSTER

An ecosystem of entrepreneurs and professionals is typical for cities. Conversations happen, friendships form and a network evolves of young professionals who all enjoin themselves under some umbrella of vocational work (see Harrisburg Young Professionals). That's one version. But more recently, Harrisburg is getting an injection of entrepreneurs—under the geezer age of 40—who are able to employ both their artisan sensibilities and economic know-how to produce and peddle some wonderful services in the city. In this photo-feature, you'll meet these go-getters:

Liz Laribee, the Midtown arts mogul, and creator of the Homegrown Market; Mike Lawler, the hair stylist who takes the craft of cutting hair seriously for both the Lords & Ladies at his salon on 2nd St.; Aaron Carlson, the coffee bean connoisseur who now has two locations (Downtown and old Uptown) for his electric java at Little Amps, accompanied by his tireless advocate and manager, Peter Allan; Anela Bence-Selkowitz and Alan Wycheck, the commercial and artistic photographers of Studio A on State Street. Bence-Selkowitz also joins her Stash Collective members, Haley Harned, Jen Merrill, and Jessica Flynn, who own an upstart clothing store on North Street; Stephanie and Ammon Perry, owners of the newly minted Yellowbird Café; and Adam Brackbill, co-founder of the co-working space, St@rtup.

If you have your ear to the ground or have past issues of TheBurg, you will hear of their business stories; their flair and whimsy, however, seem better suited for the camera lens. Note, the artist in each of them should not belie the strong acumen they have for business here in Harrisburg, and as a community, we would do well to keep these folks here for a long time, so we can continue to catalyze and empower this growing paradigm of enterprisers. **B**

Photos by Dani Fresh



*The meeting of the minds convenes, but who is behind that camera?*



*None other than the multi-talented Anela Bence-Selkowitz, photographer, co-owner of the Stash Collective and arts and events promoters. So many hats and one great noggin.'*



*Speaking of domes, the men strolled down for a fresh cut at Mike Lawler's Lords & Ladies.*





## LOST IN THE FLOOD?

*Not the Union Canal House, which has re-surfaced stronger than ever.*

BY STEPHANIE KALINA-METZGER

*Photo: paulvphotography.com*

Sterl Simmons, owner of the Union Canal House, has seen his share of adversity, having suffered the loss of a wife two decades ago, followed by a loss of a son, then his daughter, right before Tropical Storm Lee roared in and wiped out practically everything in the area.

That could have been the final straw for a man with a weaker constitution, but Simmons doesn't suffer defeat easily and, evidently, neither does the historic structure, which dates back to 1751.

"I know of at least three really large floods. Back in the 17 - 1800s, there may have been a flood here bigger than Lee. They didn't record things well back then. In '72, Hurricane Agnes brought water that came within an inch of the ceiling of the first floor; Lee was worse than Agnes, by about three foot," said Simmons.

The task to restore the South Hanover Township restaurant was daunting, but Simmons knew, by doing so, that he wasn't just paying homage to his father "Babe," who bought the business back in 1971 (and whose picture watches over the establishment from the dining room), but also preserving history.

"It served the soldiers fighting the French and Indian War when there was nothing but wilderness surrounding the area," he said. "They used the tunnel beneath our building to avoid being attacked by Indians and later used it to hide slaves."

Although some items like the bar, beams, tables and chairs were salvageable, others were a total loss and, oftentimes, the rebuilding process was emotional for Simmons. "In the beginning, I had a few setbacks, including a bad contractor, which is why it took me a year-and-a-half to reopen," he said.

Simmons also hired a new chef as part of the

restaurant's rebirth. "His name is Ed Monuteaux, and he comes from Massachusetts, but has worked at a lot of establishments, from the Florida Keys to Atlanta. He worked at Char's Bella Mundo for years," said Simmons.

Monuteaux said he collaborated with Simmons to update the menu. "It's a combination of the old classics and some new dishes, but I'd say our steaks are the most popular. I've never sold so much meat in my life, even though we're not classified as a steakhouse," he said. Simmons agreed, adding that the blackened Delmonico is a big fan favorite at the moment and nearly everything is made from scratch.

Customers like Ken Wolfe and his wife Gloria are thrilled to see the restaurant up and running again.

"We think it's a great dining experience," said Ken. "The menu offers a wide variety of items from meat to fish. My friends and I have tried a lot of different things and nothing disappoints."

Harrisburg-area residents Bob Scomak and his wife Cindy, who had been patronizing the restaurant for about four years before it flooded, said they are glad it's back. "My favorite is the duck and my wife enjoys the crab cakes," said Bob, adding that his friends just tried the osso buco, and they loved it.

Sally Springer from Hummelstown said she's very happy for owner Sterl now that things are up and running again. "He works very hard, and we were sad because, at one point, we weren't sure it was going to make a comeback," she said.

As for Simmons, he admits it's been a lot of work and, at times, was frustrating, but today he's happy with the end result. "I love the changes. It's better than it was before. The flood forced me to update some things; the kitchen is set up a lot nicer now, and the entire place is brighter," he said, smiling. **B**



*Photo: paulvphotography.com*



*Photo: paulvphotography.com*



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# BEER AMBITION

*The Armstrongs have a dream of building a small brewery in Harrisburg. Can they make it come true?*

BY ANDREW DYRLI HERMELING

Theo and Brandalynn Armstrong love beer. I don't mean this in the way college fraternities love the cheap stuff in large quantities. I mean this in the way a literature professor loves leather-bound first editions or a cinefile loves Kurosawa. Their love for beer is deep, their knowledge seemingly endless. It is this love that has pushed them to want to open a tasting room, bringing their home-brewed talent to the city of Harrisburg. I don't want to misrepresent the married couple, who together own the Alter Ego Brewing Co. It is not as if they are lofty, academic zymologists (those who study the science of fermentation) who cannot understand the simple joy of a cold beer on a summer evening. Theo and Brandalynn may be beer geeks, but there is no prerequisite for cracking open a bottle with them.

I arrived at their Harrisburg home in the evening. After meeting their dog Olive, I followed them into their basement. The furnished portion features a comfortable bar while the unfurnished portion houses Theo's brew-works. Before we could start talking, Brandalynn poured me the first of what would be a flight through their flagship brews. After a few sips, we were ready to dive into the evening's official business.

## WHY NOT?

Theo's home-brewing began alongside a new job.

"I used to work retail hours. I used to work all the time," says Theo. "Suddenly I was working a 40-hour week. I had weekends off. I had nothing to do with my free time. I decided I needed a hobby."

Theo had already developed a taste for craft beer and had been interested in venturing into home-brewing for a long time.

It was then that Theo met Brad Moyer, the store manager at Scotzin Brothers, the home-brew supply store in Lemoyne. Brad, with whom I met separately, wears his resume as a beer connoisseur on his sleeve quite literally—tattooed hops and grains adorn his arm.

"He was always coming in and asking tough questions," says Brad.

Theo had a couple of false starts, but, before long, he realized he had a knack for brewing.

"People started asking me why I wasn't selling my beer," says Theo. "We looked at each other and asked, 'Why not?'"

However, taking the real step towards turning hobby into business took some convincing. That's when Brandalynn stepped in to encourage Theo, though still apprehensive herself.

"I was concerned that, if we start doing this professionally, Theo would lose his love for the hobby," says Brandalynn. "But so far so good!"



**"PEOPLE STARTED ASKING ME WHY I WASN'T SELLING MY BEER. WE LOOKED AT EACH OTHER AND ASKED, 'WHY NOT?'"**

## HOME-BREW TO BUSINESS

Theo wants to steer away from the term "microbrewery." Instead, he and Brandalynn like to think of Alter Ego as "artisanal."

"We want our brewery to be a place where you can come in, talk to the owners and feel like you are sitting in a living room at a friend's house," says Theo.

"Just good beer and good people," adds Brandalynn.

Specifically, the couple wants to open a small tasting room with seating for 30 people or so, featuring their beers and a selective menu of locally sourced food. They plan on offering growler fills, but, at this point, they don't envision any bottling. They simply want to combine their love of beer with their passion for hospitality. They want to be an unpretentious, neighborhood brewery.

To convert vision into reality, Theo and Brandalynn turned to crowd-sourcing to raise the necessary capital to open up shop.

"I've always enjoyed watching people's projects," says Theo. "You get a sense of involvement. So for us, it wasn't just about raising money, it raised community awareness."

This is where Brandalynn's expertise becomes invaluable. While Theo brews, Brandalynn manages the social media.

"It was a lot of work," says Brandalynn, "Nobody wants to get spammed, nobody wants to see 'give me money, give me money.' We wanted to get our name out, but nobody wants to see the same Facebook post over and over. We wanted to sound authentic. Despite the work, I think it paid off."

To build hype for their brand, Theo and Brandalynn set up several tastings. Scotzin Brothers hosted one such tasting back in April. They set up some barbecues and brought some kegs for sampling. Even on short notice, the crowds came.

"I know Theo went through a lot of beer that day," says Brad, chuckling.

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## "AND AT ITS HEART, THIS IS THE ALTER EGO BREWING CO.: A COUPLE OF BEER PEOPLE DOING WHAT THEY LOVE."

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### GRASSROOTS APPROACH

Theo and Brandalynn still have a lot of work ahead of them to meet their goal of opening in the city in 2014. But licensing and space requirements have made finding a suitable location difficult.

Pennsylvania is a tough state for upstart brewers. A restaurant can't even start

serving liquor until it has occupied a property for six months. Theo and Brandalynn saw crowd-sourcing as an opportunity to defray the cost of six months' rent without being able to open for business.

Even more challenging, the amount of industrial brewing equipment needed has eliminated a number of potential locations.

"In the city of Harrisburg, there are not many locations with docks or garage doors, or the space to grow," says Theo.

"For our licensing, the physical brewery, kitchen, tasting room and seating for 30 have to be on site," adds Brandalynn.

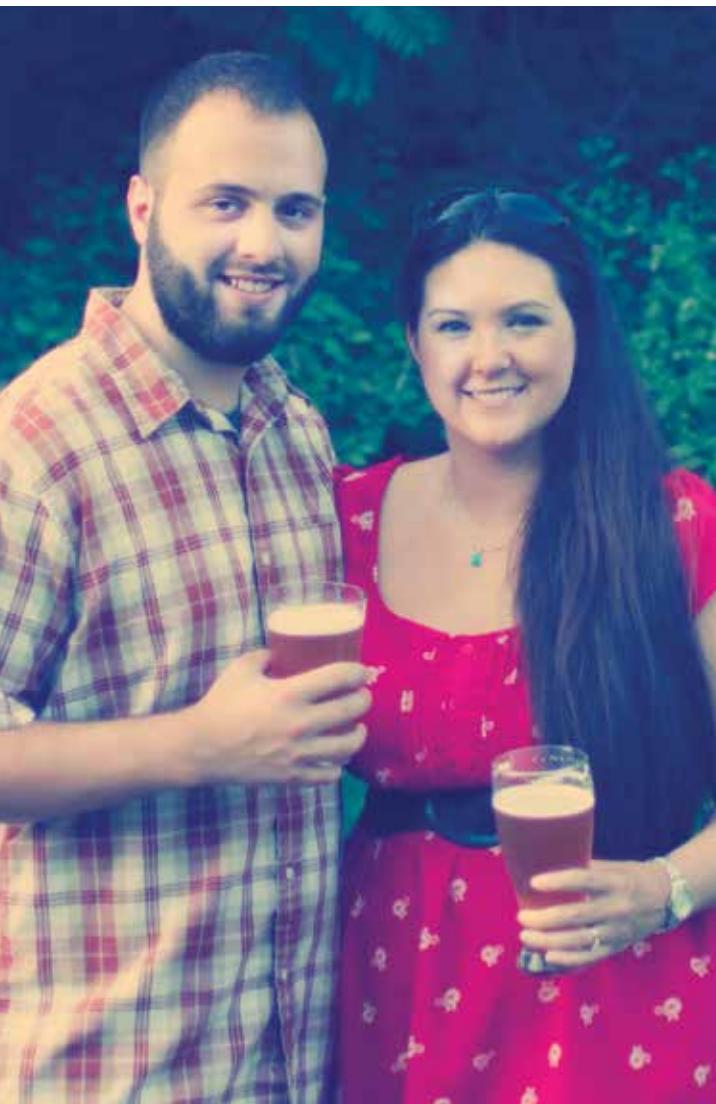
I asked Brad Moyer to rate Alter Ego's chances.

"I think they are doing a lot of things different in the right way," responds Brad. "I like that they're really taking a grassroots approach. Other breweries make their beers for the beer nerds. I think Theo and Brandalynn are really marketing for the everyday craft drinker. And that's important."

In the meantime, they continue to search for a place to call home. Brandalynn stays on top of promotion through social media and Theo continues to brew. And at its heart, this is the Alter Ego Brewing Co.: a couple of beer people doing what they love. **B**

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*For more information and to follow the progress of Alter Ego Brewing Co., visit [www.alteregeobrewing.com](http://www.alteregeobrewing.com), or Facebook: Alter Ego Brewing.*



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### "WE WANT OUR BREWERY TO BE PLACE WHERE YOU CAN COME IN, TALK TO THE OWNERS AND FEEL LIKE YOU ARE SITTING IN A LIVING ROOM AT A FRIEND'S HOUSE. JUST GOOD BEER AND GOOD PEOPLE."

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## AN AL FRESCO FAVORITE

*Steak Florentine & Panzanella Salad: The perfect dish for the perfect summer day.*

BY ROSEMARY RUGGIERI BAER

I know Harrisburg isn't Italy.

But every time we drive down and around city streets on summer evenings, I see scores of people dining outside at our many pubs and bistros. Everywhere you look, large and small tables line sidewalks, often in tight spaces or corralled behind fencing and barricades to allow walkers to pass by. And I am always reminded of the small towns of Umbria and Sicily where almost all the trattorias offer al fresco dining.

Harrisburg's outdoor dining scene seems to lend a sense of vitality and fun to our little city, especially on a beautiful day. From busy 2nd Street with old favorites like Stocks, The Red Door, Café Fresco and the Hilton Courtyard to Bricco's cozy spot at 3rd and Chestnut, diners enjoy happy hour cocktails, appetizers and dinner. Newcomer, Federal Taphouse, has gotten into the act and added outside tables to its bustling venue. And even tiny Alvaro's, quietly serving wonderful pasta on Friday and Saturday nights, has placed a few wrought iron tables on their Green Street corner. At Carley's on Locust Street, the entire front wall opens to the sidewalk, and a piano player croons to evening patrons. Home 231 boasts a backyard dining space canopied with lights where a strawberry Prosecco cocktail tastes sublime.

Al fresco dining is great at home, too. I have a tiny, screened porch at the back of my house, and, this year, I splurged on a table that actually seats more than two people comfortably. There is no wood oven scenting the night air, no jasmine covered arbor and no silvery olive trees in the backyard. Our wine comes from the state store and not from the vineyard over the next rolling hill. But it is a place where I start the day with coffee, end it with a glass of wine and eat meals whenever I can.

The recipes that follow make for wonderful end-of-summer al fresco dinners. Both dishes originate from Florence, or Firenze, the golden jewel of Tuscany. Both epitomize the best of summer foods: simply grilled beef and sun-ripened vegetables in a unique salad. Bistecca Fiorentina (or steak Florentine) is special to Tuscans, who eat beef often. The steak, enough to serve two, must be a large T-bone cut at least an inch or inch-and-a-half thick with a large tenderloin. The salad, called Panzanella, makes perfect use of leftover Italian bread. With a glass of chilled white wine and maybe some sliced sweet peaches, it's all you need for a perfect dinner.

### STEAK FLORENTINE AND PANZANELLA SALAD

#### *For the steak:*

- In a small bowl, mix a few tablespoons of olive oil, a handful of chopped fresh herbs (use whatever you like such as rosemary, chives, oregano or parsley) and a tablespoon or two of minced garlic. Set aside.
- With the grill on high heat, sear a large T-bone or Porterhouse steak, cut about 1½-inches thick and weighing about 1¾ pounds. (Order ahead from your favorite butcher.) Cook to desired doneness but know that, in Florence, the steak is served darkly seared on the outside and rare inside. Place the steak on a platter to rest for a few minutes and then top with the garlic and herb mixture.
- Place the steak on a cutting board, garnish with Rosemary sprigs and serve.

#### *For the panzanella (tomato bread salad):*

- Take a several-day-old Italian baguette and cut it into large cubes. Sprinkle the bread with water until it is thoroughly moistened and let sit 15 minutes.
- Drain the bread and squeeze out as much water as possible.
- Cut 3 ripe, red tomatoes into chunks and place in a second bowl along with a cubed and peeled cucumber and a diced medium red onion.
- Add the drained bread and a handful of torn fresh basil leaves.
- Drizzle good virgin olive oil over the mixture to moisten it, add salt and pepper to taste and a little minced garlic if you like.
- Add several tablespoons of red wine vinegar and toss the salad again.
- Serve at room temperature along with the steak.

This recipe is best made with the freshest and ripest tomatoes you can find, as well as homegrown, summer cucumbers. It's also very flexible. You can add chopped celery or black olives or even anchovies. And, if you add some chopped tuna, it can be a summer lunch.

So head out to your porch or patio with your steak and salad, place a vase of sunflowers on the table and pour a cold white wine. Enjoy the sights and sounds of August and your own Tuscan dinner.

And don't forget to try Harrisburg's outdoor eating venues too. The time for al fresco dining will be over far too soon. **B**

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*Rosemary's recipe, prepared by Qui Qui Mussara of Mangia Qui.  
272 North Street, Harrisburg. [www.mangiaqui.com](http://www.mangiaqui.com)*



*Rosemary Ruggieri Baer, a first generation Italian-American, grew up in Harrisburg and has spent her life perfecting her mother's country cooking.*

# WARM BREEZES, A COOL ROSÉ

*This refreshing wine helps beat the heat.*

BY STEVE JULIANA



**S**ummertime—and the dining is easy. With long hours of daylight, this is the time of the year to enjoy outdoor meals that fade into the starry twilights. The downside is that the temperatures can climb to most uncomfortable heights, which makes matching wine and food a challenge. Fear not. The universal quaff for these months is the delicious and versatile rosé.

Not just any pink wine qualifies as a good rosé. White Zinfandel is technically a rosé wine, but its inability to match food makes it a poor candidate at a nice grill-side meal.

There are two major ways to make rosé. One is to blend red and white wines together. Hopefully, the best features of the two will shine, while any shortcomings will fade into the background. The other method is to take red grapes and drain the juice from the crush before too much of the skin color is absorbed into the wine. The result is a drink that is light enough to be refreshing while still able to match food. Most rosés have good acidity, which helps to cut through the many flavors at your picnic. Moderate alcohol levels are another plus.

The history of rosés in America is inauspicious at best. Take away the popularity of white Zin, and you have to go back to a time when the biggest selling pink wines came from Portugal in odd-shaped bottles that seemed to sprout candles when they were empty. Nowadays, these same types of beverages are available from all over the globe.

According to Wine Enthusiast magazine, from 2011 to 2012, imported rosé increased 28 percent in the United States. As a trend, this is huge. Rosé is available from Germany, which has always been a bastion of white wine-making.

The ones that I like the best come from southern France. The wines are made by running the free juice from the grapes before it is too dark. The grapes themselves are the same ones that are grown in the Rhône valley. Syrah and Grenache dominate, while lesser varietals are used in blending. Personally, I have not found wines made with Bordeaux grapes or even Pinot Noir from Burgundy to my liking. However, the jury is still out, and I may come across one that has what I like.

The Rhône rosés seem to me to be the best of the lot. Chill them down nicely, and they can be drunk for pure refreshing pleasure. These quaffs can match grilled foods, be they fish, barbecue or even grilled vegetables. Their brisk acidity, combined with fruit flavors that range from strawberry to peach with an inherent ability to stand up to baked beans, make these standouts at any outdoor affair. Check the labels, as most pink wines have a list of grape varieties that are in the bottle. Chill well and notice how the flavors expand as the wine slowly warms. It doesn't get much better.

Keep sipping, Steve.



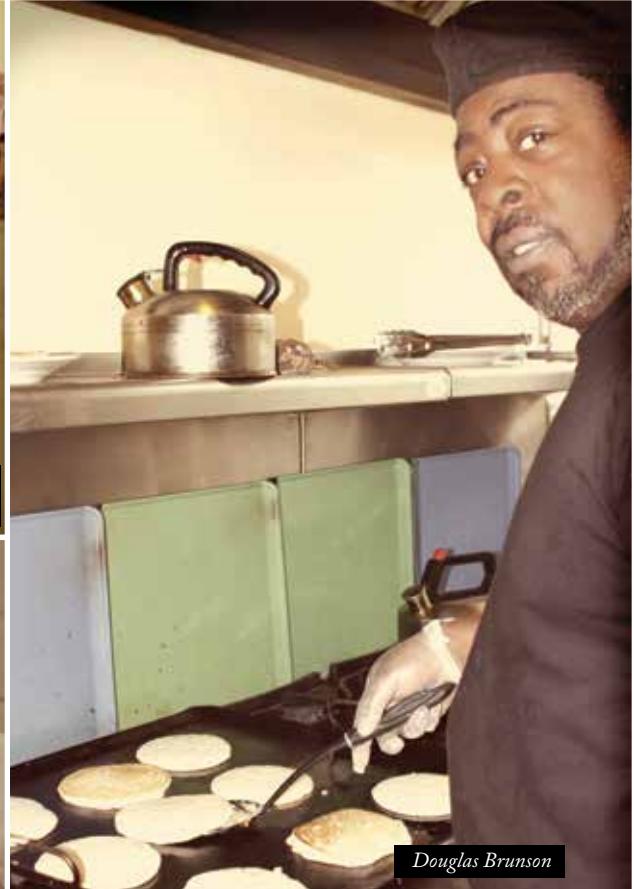
Mark Perrin, Peter Holtz



Noah Sigel, holding a chain of things to be thankful for



Dawson Family and Tom Conners (far right)



Douglas Brunson

## PANCAKES TOPPED WITH THE GOLDEN RULE

*Breakfast, friendship dished up at Common Ground Café.*

BY DANIELLE ROTH

**M**ost free meals come with just that—a meal. The Unitarian Church of Harrisburg is dispensing more than just chow these days. At their Common Ground Café at 1508 Market St., members of the Allison Hill community are treated to a restaurant-style breakfast with a side of conversation.

The Unitarian Church bought its Allison Hill church in 2010 from the Shared Ministries Church, which had started the breakfasts in a buffet style. With a larger community and more money, the church transformed the bi-weekly Saturday morning breakfasts into the Common Ground Café.

Wishing to create a respectful community focused on social action, not charity, the Café serves residents in a traditional and respectful way.

"They get a server just like everyone else would if they were going to Cracker Barrel," said Clay Lambert, director of the Café since its inception three years ago. "With an affluent church community like ours in such close proximity to such a poor area, it makes no sense for us not to be as involved as possible."

"In the buffet line, people [used to] just shuffle in line. They didn't talk to each other. They ate and they left," said Brian Kahler, a volunteer for four years and church-goer for 23 years. "We tried to apply the Golden Rule: How would you like to be treated if you came to a place like this for breakfast?"

Now, the vibrant community entertains about 350 attendees per breakfast with 20 to 25 volunteers from the Unitarian Church and elsewhere. The church provides funding for the majority of the operational costs and accepts donations of goods (recently, a new stove, toaster and microwave) and services. The Common Ground Café partners with other organizations to provide services to its community, such as a free eye care clinic, STD and diabetes testing, heart screening, blood pressure monitoring and children/adult reading programs.

Nina, an attendee for three years, describes the community as "a multicultural family." She got her current job because the Common Ground Café gave her a bus voucher to help her get to her interview. Her glasses were from a free eye care clinic at the church. "They do more for the community than anybody," she said. "Even though you're in

need, they make you feel like you're somebody. They uplift you. If you're missing, they wonder. If you're in the hospital, they visit. They marry people and have funerals. They open their doors."

Added Lambert: "I don't think people are necessarily coming for the food. They come to talk to one another, enjoy each other. Almost all of [the attendees] live in a home of one form or another. They could find another breakfast. It's more about trying to build a sense of community around the church and trying to bring the members of the church into the [Allison Hill] community as well."

A woman who chose to go by Queen for this article has been coming to the Saturday morning breakfasts for about three years—never missing a day.

"It's like family here," she said. "They take good care of me, and I take good care of them, too."

A volunteer interrupted our conversation to give Queen pictures she had gotten developed. Queen started a bulletin board of pictures last year. It's now grown to three boards of the "family" photos.

Katie, Queen's friend eating breakfast next to her, has been coming to the breakfasts for about three years.

"When I first came, I didn't know nobody. The second time, it's like I knew people forever," she said.

Then she continued, "I'm shy. When I first meet someone, I'm shy." The table came alive with shouts of "liar!" led by Queen.

"That ain't quiet! I'm scared of her quiet voice," said a gentleman at the table. Queen taps me on the shoulder and says with a laugh, "Now you see why we come." **B**

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*The Common Ground Café is located at 1508 Market St., Harrisburg, and is open 9 to 11 a.m. every second and last Saturday of the month. Those interested in volunteering or donating services and goods should contact Clay Lambert at [commongroundbreakfast@gmail.com](mailto:commongroundbreakfast@gmail.com). More information can be found on their Facebook page or at [www.harrisburguu.org](http://www.harrisburguu.org).*

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Photos at St. Stephen's Episcopal School, by Wendy Adams

# GOING PRIVATE

FOR HARRISBURG-AREA PARENTS SEEKING OUT SCHOOL OPTIONS, THE CHOICES ARE MANY.

BY KERRY ROYER

**A**s the new school year approaches, parents must make many decisions over how they want their children to be educated. For some, private schools factor into this decision-making process.

Perhaps they're not happy with the local public school system or maybe they want their kids' education to include a religious element. Sometimes, they themselves attended private schools, so want their children to follow suit.

Whatever the reason, Harrisburg-area parents are fortunate to have a wealth of options within easy reach. Below, we provide an overview of some of the more popular choices for private school education in the region.

## CENTURIES OF TRADITION

Local private school offerings are varied and often steeped in tradition. In this area, it gets no more traditional

than the Harrisburg Academy, the 17th oldest non-public school in the country. The school was founded in 1784 by John Harris, Jr., in a room of the Harris-Cameron Mansion, which now houses the Dauphin County Historical Society in Harrisburg.

According to the school's website, Harris brought in a schoolmaster from Lancaster to teach his and his neighbor's children. Soon after, he granted "the rent, issues and profits of his ferry for the endowment of an Academy where German and English should be taught." Two years later, with donations and materials from Harris and more than 80 of his neighbors, "a log cabin school was built on a knoll 300 yards east of the Susquehanna River," probably behind the Harris mansion near Walnut and N. 3rd streets.

The fast-growing Academy eventually moved Uptown, constructing five

large buildings in what is now Dixon University Center and educating generations of Harrisburg's most prominent citizens. It opened for classes at its current location, a 24-acre campus in Wormleysburg, in 1959. The school enrolls about 400 students annually ranging from preschool through high school, and 34 percent of students represent ethnic or international diversity.

Although not religiously affiliated, Harrisburg Academy holds events with an eye toward a global view of the world. One tradition is the annual holiday concert at the Forum, where students perform what they learn and celebrate about world religion and culture.

"We bring together a global representation of Christian, Jewish, Hindu, African and several other cultures to a family-based celebration

highlighting a theme of light," said Kristina Pae, director of communications for the school. "Light is a common theme of religious and ethnic holidays celebrated during the winter season, which is why it is a focal point of our all-school holiday concert."

Another tradition, closer to home, is the school's Fourth Grade State Fair. Ask students what they remember most about that grade, and they will mention the state they represented.

"I was Wisconsin," said Carter Taliaferro from Harrisburg, who is entering his junior year of high school at the Academy. "That is always a fun time. We research the state and showcase what we learn at the fair. I brought in a variety of cheese from the state. All of the other grades get to come to our fair. It's great to see what the younger students do year after year."

## CREATING CITIZENS

The American democratic process is in full bloom at The Circle School in Swatara Township, a private school for preschool through high school.

Jim Rietmulder co-founded the school in 1984 when seeking alternative education for his family. He wanted an atmosphere that echoed the larger society rather than the standard rules that govern most classrooms.

"We focus on democracy and community," he said. "Students here are essentially citizens in a scaled-down version of the larger world. The school is run democratically, with each student and each staff member having equal rights of voice and vote. Most things are decided by majority vote, including staff hiring and management, budgetary decisions and all school rules. Decisions of our School Meeting—students and staff—are not subject to approval, review or veto by staff or administration."

A typical day is where students freely associate, often huddling into small groups to share interests, books, knowledge. The curriculum rarely segregates subjects, so that math, reading and other concepts are all learned as an integrated whole.

That is what most interested Laura Owens of Harrisburg, who recently graduated from The Circle School. "I had the freedom to learn with other age groups," she said. "When I was younger, I looked up to a lot of role models, and then, when I was in the older classes, I gained valuable leadership experience. I enjoyed finding people of all ages who shared my interests."

The school established a judicial system that closely follows cherished American traditions of due process, civil liberties—yes, for children, too—and rule of school law. A person charged with violating a school law can plead not guilty and is then entitled to a trial by jury of four students and one staff member,

again with no review or veto by staff or administration, according to Rietmulder.

Owens, who was a member of the judicial committee and paid close attention to the prosecution and defense processes, said that this experience taught her that it truly is possible to be heard and to prove a point in a fair and democratic atmosphere.

The Circle School enrolls about 75 students at all grade levels. "Enrollment was in the mid-20s until around 2003, when we decided we needed to double in size to at least 50. Over the subsequent five years, we tripled to our current size, which is approximately what we want in our current campus. This year, we began an initiative to relocate to a larger campus with increased capacity," said Rietmulder.

## SENSE OF COMMUNITY

Head of School Ruth Graffius at St. Stephen's Episcopal School, located in downtown Harrisburg, touts the school's strong tradition and its picturesque setting along the Susquehanna River. It makes the most of the location with regular trips to a wide range of community resources.

"Because it has been a part of the city for 35 years, St. Stephen's instills a love of the urban environment, a sense of community and an understanding of being part of something bigger than oneself," she said.

Parents working in Harrisburg, many of them in government, send their children to the school so that they are nearby. Graffius said parents are welcome to join their children at lunchtime for a special break in the day. "We are a close-knit, child-centered community," she said. Students come from a four-county region and can also participate in a before- and after-school program.

"It's a wonderful place to be," said Davin Anderson of Linglestown,

who will be entering eighth grade, his final year at St. Stephen's before high school. Anderson said he loves the small classes and the one-on-one time he gets with his teachers. He enjoys the familiarity of the people, and his kindergarten teacher is now the principal of the school. There are about 135 students. "Outside of school, I recognize 90 percent of the other kids by name," he said.

Anderson has attended St. Stephen's since preschool and said some of his best memories are of the school's fundraising events, where students are matched with kids in younger grades to create posters for a "Race for Education." He said the younger kids become their "little buddies."

Graffius said, "Our downtown Harrisburg school provides a superior, affordable education for children in preschool through eighth grade. The diversity of the students reflects the mission to welcome children of all ethnic and religious heritages."

## UNIQUE PARTNERSHIP

The Londonderry School, at 1800 Bamberger Rd., deems itself a "wonderful alternative educational opportunity for more than 200 preschool through eighth-grade students from the greater Harrisburg area," according to its website.

"We've been an innovator in education since 1971, when a group of parents initiated the school as an alternative to traditional education. For more than 40 years, the school has thrived as the result of the unique partnership among faculty and parents that has created a learning environment to encourage students to follow their curiosity, creating a pathway for lifelong achievement."

## WHAT IS WISE

Parents desiring another option for their children also led to the founding of Covenant Christian Academy, a pre-kindergarten through 12th grade school founded in 1997. Today, about 245 students from Harrisburg and the surrounding suburban and rural areas attend. In 2009, the school moved to its first campus located on Locust Lane just outside of Harrisburg.

"As a school, we are interested in teaching our students information in a variety of subjects," said Joseph E. Sanelli, headmaster. "Equally important to us at CCA is our tradition of teaching students how to learn. We do not expect them to learn everything important by the end of twelfth grade; we do expect them to leave CCA prepared to be lifelong learners."

The school, said Sanelli, employs a "classical" model in both curriculum and teaching.

"Our course of study is challenging and thought-provoking and will teach your child to think and prepare them for a life of learning," he said. "Furthermore, each student is engaged spiritually as well as intellectually, learning what is wise—not merely smart—and the difference between integrity and expediency."

## THE WHOLE PERSON

Big news came in January for a local private high school.

Bishop McDevitt High School moved from its landmark building at 2200 Market St. in Harrisburg to 1 Crusader Way in Lower Paxton Township. According to the Harrisburg Diocese, the new school, built on an 87-acre campus, is replete with 45 classrooms, a 1,200-seat auditorium, a fine arts center, a 1,000-seat gymnasium, a fully equipped library and a multi-purpose stadium with artificial turf and an eight-lane track.

Established in 1918, Bishop McDevitt was known as Harrisburg Catholic High School until it was renamed in 1957 to honor the founder of the school, the Rev. Philip R. McDevitt. It is a Catholic, college-preparatory, coeducational school within the Diocese of Harrisburg.

"It encompasses students of diverse intellectual, socio-economic and religious backgrounds. Bishop McDevitt strives to nurture the whole person by promoting a quality education rooted in Gospel values and creating a challenging academic environment. The school community aspires to graduate well-rounded Christian men and women committed to living moral lives of holiness, integrity, justice and responsible citizenship," reads the school's homepage.

From traditional to Christian to alternative schools, Harrisburg-area parents have a wealth of options for their children. These private schools, although varied in offerings, help to make up the diverse framework of Harrisburg education. **B**

**Bishop McDevitt High School**  
1 Crusader Way, Harrisburg  
[bishopmcdevitt.org](http://bishopmcdevitt.org)

**The Circle School of Harrisburg**  
210 Oakleigh Ave., Harrisburg  
[circleschool.org](http://circleschool.org)

**Covenant Christian Academy**  
1982 Locust Lane, Harrisburg  
[covenantchristianacademy.us](http://covenantchristianacademy.us)

**Harrisburg Academy**  
10 Erford Rd., Wormleysburg  
[harrisburgacademy.org](http://harrisburgacademy.org)

**Londonderry School**  
1800 Bamberger Rd., Harrisburg  
[thelondonderryschool.org](http://thelondonderryschool.org)

**St. Stephen's Episcopal School**  
215 N. Front St., Harrisburg  
[sseschool.org](http://sseschool.org)



*Photo at The Circle School of Harrisburg*



## TAKE TWO

*Duos rush in for August.*

BY DAN WEBSTER

**B**en and Jerry, Michael and Scottie and Simon and Garfunkel all define the “duo” in the traditional sense. They play off one another, they’re successful and, if we’re lucky, they stick it out for more than five years (I’m looking at you Ren and Stimpy).

The following pairs coming to central PA harmonize more in the collaborative sense, bound by an appreciation for their respective crafts (sometimes overlapping) rather than the “with our without you” sense. These artists crisscross genres, some awaken spirits from the old-time twangs or Motown melodies. Other times, these pairings give us timeless and unique music from the here and now and of yore.

**PRAIRIE EMPIRE/SPIRIT FAMILY REUNION, APPALACHIAN BREWING CO., AUG. 18, DOORS AT 8 P.M.:** Spirit Family Reunion embodies the revived tradition of old-timey twang with a fleet of foot-stomping numbers off their debut album, “No Separation.” As Paste Magazine puts it, “It’s the type of music that blurs the line between past and present so thoroughly, and so deftly, that it makes irrelevant.” Amen.

Prairie Empire will be joining them. The group is comprised of three-fifths of the Decembrists clan and features a string band that includes an accordion, a dobro, an upright bass, a fiddle and that good ole six-string. They combine a keen understanding of instrumentation with clear vocals, and their musical clout and sensibilities allow them to break the traditional rules of Americana music. Listen to the folk/klezmer string hybrid in the song, “How Do You Ruin Me?”

Both will have played the internationally acclaimed Newport Folk Festival by the time they touch down at the Abbey Bar. They’re the real deal, and we should “pay” and “heed” their art.

**JAY-Z AND JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE, HERSHEY PARK STADIUM, AUG. 4, DOORS AT 8 P.M.:** Hova and J.T. will put on their suits and ties for their “Legends of the Summer” tour. Both are riding legacy-cementing albums into the fall (Jay-Z’s “Magna Carta Holy Grail” and Timberlake’s “20/20 Experience”). Timberlake’s album is seen as status quo lyrically relative to his other albums, if not a bit more cheery (Remember, “Cry Me a River,” circa 2002?). However, he stretches his song structures and genres due to the genius pop production of Timbaland. Jay-Z’s twelfth studio album had a robust and enigmatic ad campaign, his three-minute mini-doc premiering during the NBA Finals in June. Most of it featured spliced interactions of Jay spitting axiomatic phrases at Pharrell and team, and Rick Rubin playing the eccentric hobo on the couch. Odd. The album is again a production masterpiece because of Timbaland, but he’s getting the universal thumbs down on this one. Regardless, if you can fork over the dough for this one, you know they won’t disappoint on the main stage. **B**

*Mentionables: Aug. 1, Beach Arabs, Baby Brains, DJ Garret Price, Gingerbread Man-Harrisburg, 9 p.m. | Aug. 7, CC3-Chris Cawthay Trio, MakeSpace, 8 p.m. | Aug. 9, Timurid, Warrior Rabbit and Good Graeff, Little Amps, 6 p.m.*

8 | 1

BEACH ARABS, BABY BRAINS,  
DJ GARRET PRICE, AUGUST 1

GINGERBREAD MAN, HARRISBURG  
312 MARKET ST, HARRISBURG  
STARTS AT 9 P.M.

8 | 4

JAY-Z AND JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE, AUGUST 4  
HERSHEYPARK STADIUM  
100 W HERSHEY PARK DR., HERSHEY  
STARTS AT 8 P.M.

8 | 7

CC3-CHRIS CAWTHAY, AUGUST 7  
THE MAKESPACE  
1916 N. 3RD ST., HARRISBURG  
STARTS AT 8 P.M.

8 | 9

TIMURID, WARRIOR RABBIT AND  
GOOD GRAEFF, AUGUST 9

LITTLE AMPS  
1836 GREEN ST., HARRISBURG  
STARTS AT 6 P.M.

8 | 18

PRAIRIE EMPIRE/SPIRIT FAMILY REUNION,  
AUGUST 18

APPALACHIAN BREWING CO.  
50 N CAMERON ST., HARRISBURG  
STARTS AT 8 P.M.



*Spirit Family Reunion*

# SHOW TUNE SHOWCASE

*Casts Combine Talents for “Summer Salute.”*

BY LORI M. MYERS



The country charm of Lebanon, Pa., may have little in common with the hustle and bustle of Harrisburg. But this month at Whitaker Center, Theatre Harrisburg and The Alumni Chorale of Lebanon Valley College will join forces to present “A Summer Salute to the Best of Broadway Musicals III.”

Along with hits from “My Fair Lady,” “Oliver” and a host of other toe-tapping tunes, the performances will feature small group and small ensemble numbers from musicals such as “Avenue Q,” “Smokey Joe’s Cafe,” “Chicago” and “The Secret Garden.”

Steven L. Flom, president of the Chorale, admits that it was tough to choose from the vast Broadway songbook.

“The first problem is that we have an embarrassment of riches when it comes to talent for the ‘Summer Salute,’ ” he says. “This is not an auditioned concert; these musicians are hand-chosen because of their vocal and performance prowess. It is our task to showcase them as best we can to bring some of the greatest Broadway songs to life on our stage.”

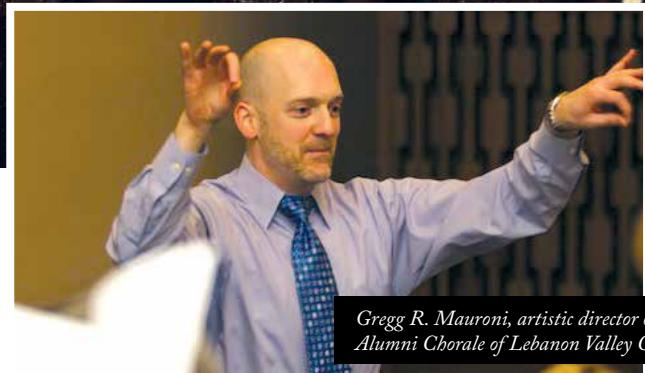
The “Summer Salute” was the brainchild of Flom and the Chorale’s artistic director, Gregg R. Mauroni. Because arts organizations always have financial challenges, the two had decided to do a fundraiser similar to the one they had been doing for Central Dauphin East High School, where Mauroni is choral director. They approached Sam Kuba, Theatre Harrisburg’s executive director, with the “Summer Salute” idea, and it was full steam ahead.

This year marks the third installment of the “Summer Salute” and the performance partnership of the Theatre and the Chorale, known for its tight harmonies. The first year attracted a modest but enthusiastic crowd, Flom says, and, by year two, audiences were begging for more.

“When we program the show, our goals are to wow the crowd and challenge the performers to create a great evening of music,” Flom adds. “We were thrilled to hear that the audience wanted more. Spoiler—they will get it this year.”

Twenty Broadway shows are represented in this year’s program, and there are no solo performances. Flom predicts that “Titanic” will be a showstopper. “It is vocally stunning and, when attacked by our 70-plus cast, the result is spectacular.”

While the drive between Lebanon and Harrisburg approximates 45 minutes or more depending on the time of day and motorists’ attitudes, these two arts



Gregg R. Mauroni, artistic director of the Alumni Chorale of Lebanon Valley College

organizations have closely shared talent for many years. Both Flom and Mauroni have worked behind the scenes and on stage for Theatre Harrisburg; one noted founding member of the Chorale, Thomas Hostetter, was Theatre Harrisburg’s artistic director for 28 years.

“He has been part of the backbones of each organization,” Flom says. “Other examples include Joe Gargiulo, who is a long-time member and business manager for the Chorale and who recently performed with Theatre Harrisburg in “Music Man” and “Urinetown.” And the Chorale is enjoying new members like Mandi Krepps, Rick Graybill, Kate Roksandic and Marisa Keener, who were introduced to us through Theatre Harrisburg.”

Flom has a special place in his heart for Broadway and recalls that the first show he ever saw in the Big Apple was “Cats.” Being very young, he didn’t have a clue as to the meaning of it all, but he was enthralled with what he had witnessed and was sure he wanted to be a part of it. He’s made that dream come true. His work as a director and/or choreographer has been featured on Theatre Harrisburg’s main stage every season since 1999. He also serves as resident director/choreographer for Cumberland Valley High School.

So what can audiences expect from “Summer Salute,” a Lebanon/Harrisburg collaboration? Flom says they will be entertained by one of the greatest gatherings of vocalists in song and dance performing both familiar and unexpected Broadway repertoire.

“Be on the lookout for murderers, puppets and even a fiddler on the roof, all rolled together to delight our audience,” Flom promises. **B**

*“A Summer Salute to the Best of Broadway Musical III” will be performed on Aug. 10 at 7:30 p.m., and Aug. 11 at 2 p.m. at Whitaker Center for Science and the Arts, Harrisburg. For tickets, phone 717-214-ARTS or visit [www.whitakercenter.org](http://www.whitakercenter.org).*

## ART OF THE STATE

There are certain perks to living in a capital city. In Harrisburg, a definite advantage is easy access to the State Museum and, of all the events held there, the annual "Art of the State" exhibit is certainly a highlight. Each year, the museum displays some of the best work of Pennsylvania artists. This year is no exception. The 46th annual exhibit includes 137 works by 131 artists from 31 counties. The museum culled through 1,933 entries overall to select the finalists. So, this month, drop in and see the best of the best. Co-sponsored by the State Museum and Jump Street, "Art of the State" runs through Sept. 8.



Daniel Kalbach, *Lucky Strikes*



Wayne Hirschman, *Candice as Joan of Arc*



Janette Toth, *Resting*



Marion Stephenson, *North Lake*



Sharon Merkel, *Primary Colors*



Ted Walsh, *Danger Weather*

Join the State Museum during Gallery Walk on Sunday, Sept. 8 at 1 pm. First prize in painting winner, Ted Walsh, will be co-leading an "Artists Conversations" tour with awards juror, Lucy Gans.



## COMMUNITY CORNER

### **Mark Brezler Memorial Auction and Reception**

Aug. 1: This charity auction will raise money for scholarships at Harrisburg University. Signed sports memorabilia, professional sporting event tickets and gift certificates from businesses and restaurants will be auctioned 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at Harrisburg University. More information is at [harrisburgu.com](http://harrisburgu.com).

### **Ned Smith Center Golf Classic Fundraiser**

Aug. 1: Support the Ned Smith Center for Nature and Art while playing golf at the Country Club of Harrisburg. Registration is \$125 per golfer and \$500 per foursome. Lunch and registration is at 11:30 a.m., the shotgun start is at 1 p.m. and the dinner reception and awards presentation is at 6 p.m. More information is at [nedsmithcenter.org](http://nedsmithcenter.org).

### **Cultural Fest**

Aug. 2: The 6th Annual Cultural Fest, a free street festival on 2nd and Market streets, runs from 4:30 to 10 p.m. This festival celebrates the city's diversity with food, crafts and music, including Central Pennsylvania Friends of Jazz, Rumba Con Son, Be'lA Dona Band and Doug E. Fresh. More information is at Dauphin County's website, [dauphincounty.org](http://dauphincounty.org), under the events tab.

### **King Center's Health Fair and Community Day**

Aug. 3: From 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., this fair will provide free health care information, education, testing and counseling. Also featured will be free music, food and refreshments. The fair is located at the King Center's campus on S. 18th and Hanover streets.

### **AFRAM Celebration**

Aug. 3: This fifth annual celebration will showcase African American businesses, entertainers and supporters. This event will be at the Pennsylvania Armory, 1400 Calder St., from noon to 4 p.m. More information at [aframcelebration.com](http://aframcelebration.com).

### **Central Dauphin Classic Car Show**

Aug. 3: Enjoy classic cars, trucks and motorcycles at Central Dauphin High School from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. At 1 p.m., vehicles will be awarded for best paint, best of show car, best of show truck, best of show motorcycle and a people's choice award. More information, including car registration information, at [carshowlink.com/August.html](http://carshowlink.com/August.html).

### **National Night Out**

Aug. 6: Join your neighbors for National Night Out, which will be celebrated throughout Harrisburg beginning in the early evening. For details on your community's events, check with your local citizens and neighborhood groups.

### **Fair Entry Fun Day**

Aug. 7: Winters Heritage House Museum in Elizabethtown will hold its second annual Fair Entry Fun Day. Participating children, ages 10 through teens, can choose from several different historic crafts to create an item suitable for entry in the Elizabethtown Fair domestic exhibits competition. Winters Heritage House Museum is located at 47 E. High St. in Elizabethtown. More information is at 717-367-4672.

### **33rd Annual Central PA Jazz Festival**

Aug. 8-11: Support local music and the Central PA friends of Jazz by attending one or all four of the events of the JazzFest. On Aug. 8, listen to the Dave Stahl Quintet from 5:30 to 9 p.m. on the Pride of the Susquehanna. Enjoy live music in downtown Harrisburg with Jazzwalk on Aug. 9. The Central PA Friends of Jazz Youth Band and the Dave Stahl Big Band will perform on Aug. 10 at a picnic at City Island from 2 to 7 p.m. On Aug. 11, enjoy the final event of the festival. More information can be found at [friendsofjazz.org](http://friendsofjazz.org).

### **Keystone Cluster Dog Show**

Aug. 9-11: See about 17,000 dogs compete in three events, Conformation, Obedience and Rally Obedience, in the PA Farm Show Complex. There will also be vendors selling specialty dog products. For more information, go to [hkc.org](http://hkc.org).

### **Volunteer Work Day**

Aug. 10: From 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., volunteers will work outside and help Wildwood Park's continued park and habitat enhancement projects. The workday will be cancelled in case of rain. Pre-registration is required. More information is at [wildwoodlake.org](http://wildwoodlake.org).

### **Rose and Push 2nd Annual Music Festival**

Aug. 10: Enjoy this free festival's music, ranging from rock to hip hop, in Reservoir Park from 1 p.m. to 8 p.m. There will also be a school supply give away. For more information, visit [wegrowroses.org](http://wegrowroses.org).

### **"Ugh! It's Bugs"**

Aug. 10: Explore the secret world of bugs as Hershey Gardens goes underground to reveal the creepy, crawly residents. Kids will participate in activities that include live bugs from 9:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. in the Hershey Gardens. Admission for the event and the Gardens is \$15. Registration is required. More information at [hersheygardens.org](http://hersheygardens.org).

### **Summer Discovery Camp: Blood, Boogers and Burps**

Aug. 14: Kids in 1st and 2nd grades will enjoy exploring the body's nauseating secrets: snot, blood, plaque and spit. Kids will have the opportunity to make their own fake blood and snot. More information is at [whitakercenter.org](http://whitakercenter.org).

### **Destination Midtown**

Aug. 15: Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Capital Region will host this food and beer pairing event on the rooftop of Midtown Harrisburg's 1500 Condominium. VIP ticket-holders (\$75) can attend the event from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. and general admission tickets-holders (\$50) can attend from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. More information is at [capbigs.org](http://capbigs.org).

### **After Dark 7K Race**

Aug. 16: The Harrisburg Area Road Runners Club (HARRC) will host its third annual evening race at 7 p.m. starting at Kunkel Plaza and ending north of the Harvey Taylor Bridge in Harrisburg. Registration is \$30 by Aug. 9 (\$35 after). Prizes will be awarded to the top three male and female winners per age group.

### **India Day Celebration**

Aug. 18: Enjoy the dance extravaganza hosted by the Asian Indian Americans of Central Pennsylvania at the Forum from 3 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. The event is a "tribute to the most special person we've ever known, mother." More information is at [aiacpa.org](http://aiacpa.org).

### **Ned Smith Center 20th Anniversary**

Aug. 20: The Ned Smith Center of Millersburg will have an open house to celebrate its 20th anniversary. Admission to the galleries will be free to the public and refreshments will be served. All visitors will receive a complementary copy of Ned Smith's "Wildlife Sketchbook." More at [nedsmithcenter.org/20thanniversary](http://nedsmithcenter.org/20thanniversary).

### **Symphony Stroll**

Aug. 24: Stroll through downtown Harrisburg in support of the Harrisburg Symphony's educational programs. The Symphony Stroll is a "progressive" music event that allows patrons to experience three different restaurant settings and three different ensembles comprised of HSO musicians. Tickets are \$45 and include appetizers and a drink at Stock's on Second, Home 231 and Federal Taphouse, 2 to 5 p.m. More information is at 717-545-5527 or visit [HarrisburgSymphony.org](http://HarrisburgSymphony.org).

### **3rd Annual Chocolate Tour**

Aug. 24: Support cancer research at Penn State by walking, running or cycling. Events range from an 8-, 35-, 65- and 100-mile bike ride, 6-mile run and walk and a half relay marathon. More information, including prices for registration, is at [pennstatehershey.org/web/melanoma/home/fundraising](http://pennstatehershey.org/web/melanoma/home/fundraising).

### **Keystone Capital Chorus Annual Dinner and Show**

Aug. 24: Enjoy home-baked lasagna followed by an hour-long show featuring the award-winning chorus and its member quartets. Tickets are \$25 for adults and \$15 for children 10 and younger. The event is at the Scottish Rite Ballroom 2701 N. 3rd St. in Harrisburg. More information is at [keystonecapitalchorus.org](http://keystonecapitalchorus.org).

### **Keystone State Triathlon**

Aug. 24-25: Challenge yourself with one of four different triathlon courses, including an Olympic course, at Gifford Pinchot State Park in Lewisberry. The top three male and female winners of each age group will win awards. More information, including registration fees, is available at [trimaxendurancesports.com/KeystoneState.html](http://trimaxendurancesports.com/KeystoneState.html).

### **Yorkfest**

Aug. 24-25: Celebrate our neighboring city at the Yorkfest Fine Arts Festival, a weekend of 100 fine artists from around the country, a juried exhibition at YorkArts, free family entertainment, hands-on arts activities, a free community jazz concert in the Capitol Theatre, Chalk Walk, youth art and literary awards, walking tours of the York Murals and more. All events are free and open to the public. More information at [yorkcity.org/yorkfest](http://yorkcity.org/yorkfest).

### **Kipona Wine, Art and Blues Festival**

Aug. 31-Sept. 2: Enjoy the Keystone Regional Chili Cook-off, Native American Pow-wow, "Breath of Nature" Karate Tournament, Wine Village and Bassmasters Fishing Tournament. There will also be food, music, rides and games. The festival will be at Riverfront Park from 12 p.m. to 9 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday and until 7 p.m. on Monday.

## MUSEUM & ART SPACES

### Antique Auto Museum at Hershey

161 Museum Dr., Hershey  
717-566-7100; [aacamuseum.org](http://aacamuseum.org)

“British Motorcycles in America,” a retrospective of classic British bikes, 1940s-1970s, through Oct. 17.

“Pop Culture & Popular Cars,” popular cars of the 1950s-1970s are recreated and celebrated alongside the popular culture of the time, through Oct. 13.

### Art Association of Harrisburg

21 N. Front St., Harrisburg  
717-236-1432; [artassocofhbg.com](http://artassocofhbg.com)

“Permanent Collection Exhibition,” through Aug. 29.

“New Cumberland Soirée I, New Cumberland Soirée II, and A Picnic in Tuscany Soirée,” are the final three installments of the six summer soirées supporting the Art Association of Harrisburg, featuring landscapes, abstracts and architectural images.

New Cumberland Soirée I:  
Aug. 3, 5-8 p.m.

New Cumberland Soirée II:  
Aug. 10, 5-8 p.m.

A Picnic in Tuscany Soirée III:  
Aug. 24: 5-8 p.m.

“Noted Author/Sculptor Gail Soliwoda Cassily to Speak at AAH,” The St. Louis sculptor will visit the Art Association of Harrisburg to give a lecture on her extraordinary life and work and her fascinating and compelling memoir entitled “Saltwater,” Aug. 18, 2-4 p.m.

### The Cornerstone Coffeehouse

2133 Market St., Camp Hill  
[thecornerstonecoffeehouse.com](http://thecornerstonecoffeehouse.com)

Watercolors and pastels by Claire Klaum, through Aug. 31.

### Fenêtre Gallery

HACC Midtown 2, 2nd Floor  
N. 3rd and Reilly Streets, Harrisburg

“The Great Indoors,” paintings by Erika Stearly, through Sept. 11; reception Aug. 16, 6-8 p.m.

### Gallery@Second

608 N. 2nd St., Harrisburg  
[galleryatsecond.com](http://galleryatsecond.com)

Works by Nancy Huerter and Craig Andrews, through Aug. 31.

### Historical Society of Dauphin County

219 South Front St., Harrisburg  
717-233-3462;  
[dauphincountyhistory.org](http://dauphincountyhistory.org)

“Women’s Fashion of the 1920s,” supplied through the Shippensburg University Fashion Archives Collection; flapper era fashions are on display, through Sept. 26.

### Metropolis Collective

17 W. Main St., Mechanicsburg  
717-458-8245  
[metropoliscollective.com](http://metropoliscollective.com)

“Field of Vision,” an exhibition of folk, outsider, visionary and self-taught art, through Aug. 31.

### National Civil War Museum

One Lincoln Circle at Reservoir, Harrisburg. 717-260-1861;  
[nationalcivilwarmuseum.org](http://nationalcivilwarmuseum.org)

“Living History.” Visit Civil War camps and ask historians questions, Aug. 3, 4; Musket and rifle loading and firing demonstrations Aug. 10 at 11 a.m., 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. and Aug. 11 at 1 p.m. and 3 p.m.

Murder Mystery Cruise: “Who is the Confederate Spy?” Cruise features a night of entertainment and complete sit down meal, Aug. 16, 7-9 p.m.

“Civil War Lecture Dinner Cruise,” enjoy dinner while learning about the Civil War, Aug. 24, 6-8 p.m.

“1863,” an exhibit highlighting the third year of the Civil War, through Dec. 31.

### Ned Smith Center for Nature & Art

176 Water Company Rd., Millersburg  
717-692-3699; [nedsmithcenter.org](http://nedsmithcenter.org)

“Bob Hines: National Wildlife Artist,” an exhibit displaying work of the only officially designated staff artist for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Illustrations include his work of birds, game mammals and sport fish, through Sept. 1.

### Rose Lehrman Arts Center

One HACC Drive, Harrisburg  
[hacc.edu/RoseLehrmanArtsCenter](http://hacc.edu/RoseLehrmanArtsCenter)

“Clouds, Smoke and Vapors,” pieces in several media by Ward Davenny, through Aug. 29; lecture and reception Aug. 29, 5:30-7 p.m.

### The State Museum of Pennsylvania

300 North St., Harrisburg  
717-787-4980; [statemuseumpa.org](http://statemuseumpa.org)

“46th Annual Art of the State: Pennsylvania 2013,” an exhibit showcasing the creativity and diversity of 131 artists from across the state and 137 works in various media, through Sept. 8.

“Objects of Valor,” an exhibit showcasing treasured State Museum artifacts that reflect a century and a half of collecting, preserving and interpreting the commonwealth’s Civil War experience.

### Susquehanna Art Museum

100 North St., Harrisburg  
[sqart.org](http://sqart.org) (*at the State Museum*)

“Construction/Destruction,” a display of artwork capturing the idea of the past constructing our present community, through Dec. 1.

### Whitaker Center/The Curved Wall

222 Market St., Harrisburg  
717-214-ARTS; [whitakercenter.org](http://whitakercenter.org)

“Warmth of Light, Chill of Night,” an exhibit of artwork emphasizing the season’s change, through Aug. 22.

### Yellow Wall Gallery/

#### Midtown Scholar

1302 N. 3rd St., Harrisburg  
717-236-1680; [midtownscholar.com](http://midtownscholar.com)

“Renderings” by Adrian Felton and Dave Ottey, Aug. 13-Sept. 15; opening and reception, Aug. 16, 6-10 p.m.

## READ, MAKE, LEARN

### The LGBT Center of Central PA

1306 N. 3rd St., Harrisburg  
717-920-9534; [centralpalgbtcenter.org](http://centralpalgbtcenter.org)

Aug. 1: Women’s Group, Title IX Then and Now, 7-9 p.m.

Aug. 9: Movies of Substance and Thought (MOST), 7 p.m.

Aug. 23: Open Mic Night, 7-9 p.m.

### The MakeSpace

1916 N. 3rd St., Harrisburg  
[hbgmakespace.com](http://hbgmakespace.com)

Aug. 3: Collagery, 1-2 p.m.

Aug. 7, 14, 21, 28: Yoga, 7:30-8:30 a.m.

Aug. 8: Untitled (Stories), 8-9 p.m.

### Midtown Scholar Bookstore-Café

1302 N. 3rd St., Harrisburg  
717-236-1680; [midtownscholar.com](http://midtownscholar.com)

Aug. 1: Almost Uptown Poetry Cartel, featuring Gary Miller w/ host Christain Thiede, 7 p.m.

Aug. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30: Nathaniel Gadsden’s Writers workshop and Jump Street, Inc. present Poetry Night, 7 p.m.

Aug. 3: Good News Café, 6 p.m.

Aug. 4, 11, 18, 25: TED Talks, 1 p.m.

Aug. 5: Swing Dance at the Scholar, 6:30 p.m., Midtown Writers Group, 7 p.m.

Aug. 6: Healthy Eating/Healthy Living “Healthy Outdoor Cooking,” presented by Ruth Seitz, 10 a.m., Sci Fi Writers Group, 7 p.m.

Aug. 7: Sydney’s Book Club – Preschool Event, 10 a.m., Healthy Eating/Healthy Living “Healthy Outdoor Cooking” presented by Ruth Seitz, 10 a.m.

Aug. 8: Capital Area Toastmasters Meeting, 6:30 p.m., Almost Uptown Poetry Cartel, featuring Kenneth Walker w/host Christian Thiede, 7 p.m.

Aug. 13: Young Dauphin County Democrats Meeting, 7 p.m.

Aug. 14: Friends of Midtown: Events Meeting, 6 p.m.

Aug. 15: Capital Area Toastmasters Meeting, 6:30 p.m., Almost Uptown Poetry Cartel: Open Reading w/host Christian Thiede, 7 p.m., Banned Books Book Club, 7 p.m.

Aug. 16: Coffee Education with Café Staff, 12 p.m., Tea Tasting with Café Staff, 2 p.m., TMI Improv, 6 p.m.

Aug. 17: Jonathan Bean Book Party, 11 a.m., Poison Pen Book Club, 5 p.m.

Aug. 18: Philosophy Salon: Open Discussion, 12:30 p.m., Midtown Writers Group, 2 p.m., LGBT Book Club, 5 p.m., Sum of One Board Meeting, 5 p.m.

Aug. 20: Capital Area Modern Quilters Guild Meeting, 7 p.m.

Aug. 21: Sydney’s Book Club – Preschool Event, 10 a.m., Sci-Fi/Fantasy Book Club, 7 p.m.

Aug. 22: Almost Uptown Poetry Cartel: Features Randy Gross and Lauren M. Gross w/host Christian Thiede, 7 p.m.

Aug. 24: Literary Celebration Series presents: August for Arthur Celebration for Arthur Miller, 10 a.m.

Aug. 25: Harrisburg Young Professionals Book Club, 2 p.m.

Aug. 26: Feminism Book Club, 7 p.m.

Aug. 27: Art Kaleidoscope, 7 p.m.

Aug. 28: Bike the Burg, 7 p.m.

Aug. 29: Almost Uptown Poetry Cartel: Open Reading with host Marty Esworthy, 7 p.m.

Aug. 30: Grant and Steve in Concert, 8 p.m.

Aug. 31: Children’s Book Blast – Skype, 11 a.m., Local Author Signings, 2 p.m.

### National Civil War Museum

One Lincoln Circle at Reservoir, Harrisburg  
717-260-1861;  
[nationalcivilwarmuseum.org](http://nationalcivilwarmuseum.org)

“Civil War Adventure Camp,” The Civil War comes to life as children between fourth and sixth grades are invited to experience educational activities, crafts and games focused on the Civil War. Aug. 5-7, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

## LIVE MUSIC AROUND HARRISBURG

### Appalachian Brewing Co./Abbey Bar

50 N. Cameron St., Harrisburg  
717-221-1083; [abcbrew.com](http://abcbrew.com)

Aug. 1: Jerry Joseph and the Jackmormons

Aug. 18: Black Prairie and Spirit Family Reunion

### Carley’s Ristorante and Piano Bar

204 Locust St., Harrisburg  
717-909-9191; [carleysristorante.com](http://carleysristorante.com)

Aug. 1, 30: Ten Ansel

Aug. 2, 6, 13, 20, 27, 31: Brandon Parsons

Aug. 5, 12, 19: Chris Gassaway

Aug. 7, 21: Chelsea Caroline

Aug. 8, 22: Giovanni Triano

Aug. 9, 16: Roy Lefever

## [ BURG BLOOPER ] CORRECTION 07.13

## DINNER & A DRINK

*In which we ask a chef and bartender to recommend an entrée and a drink.*

BY LAWRENCE BINDA



Aug. 10, 24: Jett Prescott  
Aug. 11, 15, 25, 29: Anthony Haubert (show tunes)  
Aug. 16: Roy Lefever  
Aug. 17, 23: Noel Gevers

### **Central PA Friends of Jazz**

717-540-1010; friendsofjazz.org

Aug. 8: 33rd Annual Central PA Jazz Festival: Riverboat Cruise  
Aug. 9: 33rd Annual Central PA Jazz Festival: JAZZWALK  
Aug. 10: 33rd Annual Central PA Jazz Festival: Picnic  
Aug. 11: 33rd Annual Central PA Jazz Festival: Lecture and Jam Session  
Aug. 28: Jam Session at Gullifty's

### **Char's at Tracy Mansion**

1829 N. Front St., Harrisburg  
717-213-4002; charsrestaurant.com

Aug. 2: Trixie Greiner Trio  
Aug. 3: Stevenson Twins Trio  
Aug. 9: Cruise Control Trio  
Aug. 10: Jeff Calvin Trio  
Aug. 16: The House Salad  
Aug. 17: Wave Trio  
Aug. 23: Forrest Brown Trio  
Aug. 24: Andy Alonzo Trio  
Aug. 30: X Factor Quartet  
Aug. 31: Danny Stuber Trio

### **The Cornerstone Coffeehouse**

2133 Market St., Camp Hill  
717-737-5026  
thecornerstonecoffeehouse.com

Aug. 2: Dominick Cicco  
Aug. 3: Rhythm on Main  
Aug. 4: David Carr  
Aug. 9: Kevin Kline  
Aug. 10: Bob Alonge  
Aug. 16: Antonio Andrade  
Aug. 17: Joe Cooney  
Aug. 18: Jeff Judy  
Aug. 23: Kristin Rebecca  
Aug. 24: Sinclair Soul  
Aug. 25: Shelbi Purtle  
Aug. 31: Tahir

### **Fed Live**

234 N 2nd St., Harrisburg  
717-525-8077; fedlive.net

Aug. 3: Mountain Road  
Aug. 17: Running From Dharma

### **Fraîche**

2138 Market St., Camp Hill  
717-737-4380; fraichetodef.com

Aug. 7: Josh Dominick  
Aug. 14: Kevin Kline  
Aug. 21: D'Angelo Trio  
Aug. 17: Misha Kashock

### **The Gingerbread Man Downtown**

312 Market Street, Harrisburg  
717-221-8400

Aug. 1: Beach Arabs, Baby Brains, DJ Garret Price

### **HMAC/Stage on Herr**

1110 N. 3rd St./268 Herr St., Harrisburg  
717-441-7506; harrisburgarts.com

Aug. 1: Night of Debauchery DJ Dance Party

Aug. 2: First w/Aortic Valve  
Aug. 3: Susan Giblin Foundation Tribute Show  
Aug. 5: Karaoke w/Giovanni  
Aug. 7: Open Mic w/Mike Banks  
Aug. 8: Strangest of Places  
Aug. 9: Waylon Speed  
Aug. 10: Dirty Sweet  
Aug. 11: Shivering Timbers w/Des Sera  
Aug. 12: Karaoke w/Giovanni  
Aug. 14: Open Mic w/Mike Banks  
Aug. 15: The Midtown Getdown w/Shrimpboat  
Aug. 16: The Haircut w/Aabaraki  
Aug. 17: Surfin for Supplies w/Buzzchopper  
Aug. 19: Karaoke w/Giovanni  
Aug. 21: Open Mic w/Mike Banks  
Aug. 22: The Great Socio  
Aug. 23: Hip Pocket Motown Project  
Aug. 24: The Passionettes  
Aug. 26: Karaoke w/Giovanni  
Aug. 28: Open mic w/Mike Banks  
Aug. 29: Grandfather w/the Saints of Sorrow and Jet City Vega  
Aug. 30: "Get on Board" w/The Trailer Park Cowboys and Tsunami Experiment  
Aug. 30: Last Friday Latin Night w/Los Monstros  
Aug. 31: Amy Lynn and the Gun Show

### **The MakeSpace**

1916 N. 3rd St., Harrisburg  
hbgmakespace.com

Aug. 3: You You Dark Forest, Spider Glass  
Aug. 24: Jake Lewis and the Clergy/Nathan Robinson

### **Midtown Scholar Bookstore-Café**

1302 N. 3rd St., Harrisburg  
717-236-1680; midtownscholar.com

Aug. 4: Jonathan Frazier  
Aug. 4: American Troubadour William Nicholson  
Aug. 10: Rupert Wates  
Aug. 16: Superstar Runner  
Aug. 17: The Sweet Sorrows  
Aug. 23: Annalise Emerick  
Aug. 30: Grant and Steve  
Aug. 31: The Pig Merchants, Kady Z.

### **MoMo's BBQ & Grille**

307 Market St., Harrisburg  
717-230-1030  
momosbbqandgrill.com

Aug. 1: Eric Bohn  
Aug. 2: Octavia Harp  
Aug. 8: The Robinsons  
Aug. 10: Nate Myers Band  
Aug. 16: Jeff Calvin  
Aug. 22: Gary Brown Acoustic  
Aug. 29: Gabe Traynor Acoustic  
Aug. 30: Sterling Koch Band

### **St. Thomas Roasters**

5951 Linglestown Rd., Linglestown  
717-526-4171; stthomasroasters.com

Aug. 1: Relics of Medievalism  
Aug. 2: Corianne Silvers  
Aug. 3: Bill Soles  
Aug. 8: Ducks Fly Together  
Aug. 9: Antonio Andrade and Ralf Dahle

Aug. 10: Roger Hammer  
Aug. 15: Mark Zagursky  
Aug. 16: Cotoolo  
Aug. 17: Paul Zavinsky  
Aug. 22: Jamie O'Brian  
Aug. 23: Diaspora  
Aug. 24: Rayzen Kane  
Aug. 30: Relics of Medievalism  
Aug. 31: Adam Forrey

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717-233-6699; stocksonsecond.com

Aug. 31: The Whitebread Band

### **Suba Tapas Bar**

272 North Street, Harrisburg  
717-233-7398; mangiaqui.com

Aug. 2: Nate Myers & The Aces  
Aug. 3: Jay Umble & String Theory  
Aug. 9: The River Brothers  
Aug. 10: Mycenea Worley  
Aug. 16: Andy Shaw Band  
Aug. 17: Jason Waters  
Aug. 23: Suzi Brown  
Aug. 24: The Wilhelm Brothers  
Aug. 30: Shine Delphi  
Aug. 31: Eric & Kate Avey

## THE STAGE DOOR

### **Harrisburg Shakespeare Company**

3rd Floor, Strawberry Square,  
Harrisburg  
717-238-4111; gamutplays.org

Aug. 10: T.M.I. Improv Group show at Gamut Classic Theater

### **Hershey Theatre**

15 E. Carcas Ave., Hershey  
717-534-3405; hersheytheatre.com

Aug. 18: The Wiggles

### **Oyster Mill Playhouse**

1001 Oyster Mill Road, Camp Hill  
717-737-6768; oytermill.com

Aug. 16-25: Almost, Maine

### **Popcorn Hat Players at the Gamut**

3rd Floor, Strawberry Square,  
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717-238-4111; gamutplays.org

Through Aug. 22: Snow White and the Two Dwarfs

### **Whitaker Center**

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Aug. 10, 11: Theatre Harrisburg presents: A Summer Salute to the Best of Broadway III

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## CODY WANNER

Cody Wanner is a freelance videographer based in Mechanicsburg. He enjoys riding bicycles, playing card games and drinking coffee with his lovely wife, Amber.  
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## 4TH OF JULY

The heat arrived right on schedule for this year's Independence Day celebration, which carried over for four steamy days on the Harrisburg riverfront. The focus was music, and bands played on three stages, surrounded by numerous food and drink vendors. Other highlights included The Festival of India, the "Harrisburg's Got Talent" competition and the first-ever wine tent, sponsored by Hershey-Harrisburg Wine Country. If you missed the wine area, don't fret, as it will be back for Kipona, which begins Aug. 31.

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## SPORTS & HEALTH



Misha Kaschock and Sara Rose Bryant separately point out that Yoga means "yoked" or "union," a well-suited mantra for the meditative practice they both teach. Yet, the union between the two was not a bond supernaturally formed, rather a joining many years in the making.

Misha is a Camp Hill native, graduating from East Pennsboro. He has long (almost-down-to-his-tush long) salt-and-peppered hair, wears almost a permanent smile and a 5 o'clock shadow and walks with a clear bounce in his step. Everything seems to flow with Misha. When you first look at him, he could be a yogi, an artist or a soccer player. And true to form, he is and was.

He doesn't come from a family of dancers, but his older sisters and older brother both fell into the performance art, as did he.

"I loved it as a kid, but, from the ages of 7 to 16, I wanted to quit every other day. I also played soccer."

He wasn't sure what he wanted to do after high school, so the natural inclination was to continue with his practiced artistry, enrolling at Ohio State University to study dance.

"The story of the youngest child, sometimes, is chasing everyone's coattails. But I started to become my own man, and in college, that's where I took my first yoga class. I started off with ashtanga, a specific form of yoga, that is more set, like dance."

After graduating from college, Misha moved deeper into the Midwest to Chicago, still dancing, but also picking up the time-honored carpentry trade, first working on sets then in woodshops, even securing a position with the Steppenwolf Theater Company. He got the moving itch again, and packed up his clothes and a bicycle—"all I had"—and flew to Seattle.

There, he continued his work as a professional dancer, working in the Scott/Powell Performance Company, and choreographed his own shows, while also finding work with "a ragtag group of guys" led by an eccentric general contractor who "taught me by not teaching me anything," said Misha. "He would just say, 'You've seen me do this, go for it.'"

During his stint in Seattle, he practiced at Samadhi Yoga, a place he identified as a second home, his teacher a former dancer, who truly understood how and why the yoga practice was attractive to the ever-externalizing dance professionals. She helped direct Misha to take a 200-hour certification class, so that he could teach, a badge that would become quite utilitarian.



Sara Rose Bryant is a Seattle native, her grandfather the founder and owner of the touristy and legendary Emmett Watson's Oyster Bar in Pike Place Market. Sara described her upbringing as "tumultuous," living with a set of alcoholic parents. It's also a true survivor story, her best friend, younger brother, mom and dad all passing away by the time she was 24.

Sara was considered a misfit in high school due to her absenteeism, a false designation caused by the troubled familial relationships. Leaving home and living with a friend's family during these years, she began supporting herself in high school, working at the Oyster Bar, but all along knew she had to finish her degree or would be stuck serving seafood for a long time.

She entered the Running Start program, a reciprocal agreement with the local community college and her high school, whereby college credits counted as two high

call to Om

*After much searching, a couple finds their purpose in Yoga Nature.*

BY DAN WEBSTER

school classes. She took yoga for her PE credit.

"I felt like it was the first time I breathed...and I could create some sort of toolbox for how to deal with the things that were going on with me," says Sara.

Like Misha, her yoga teacher influenced her future. For Sara, this yogi also was a massage therapist, a vocational pursuit she was taken by. It's also something that she had had experience with, on the receiving end.

"When I was 14 or 15, my boyfriend got me a massage for my birthday. Mike Nelson was a good one," she chuckled, referring to her adolescent sweetheart.

Ultimately, she graduated high school, but was left with a conundrum: finance herself through college or become a massage therapist.

Ever the pragmatist, she went on to study at the Brenneke School of Massage. There she found a lifelong passion of healing, yet massage therapy never truly became her only job. She bounced between jobs as a

medical receptionist and in the occupational therapy field, helped manage the wellness center at the well-regarded Washington Athletic Club, what she called, "a country club in the middle of Seattle," and even went on a European tour with the super-group, Audioslave, acting as their in-house massage therapist. All of these gigs, however, seemed like the perfect convergence of skills for what was to come.

Misha and Sara point to a meditative retreat in the San Juan Islands in Puget Sound as the mystical start to their relationship, but it was a bartering deal, a transaction, that solidified their bond.

"She needed a set of bars to do ashiatsu, which is a form of massage that she does with her feet, and I needed a massage, because I was a carpenter and dancer, so we traded," said Misha.

The rest was history, until, a few months into their relationship, Misha suffered a back injury during a



*Photo by Dani Fresh*



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construction job. Without work and unable to afford rent, he went on a sojourn for a few weeks, inching his way across America until settling into his parents home and finding odd jobs around Harrisburg.

Sara, meanwhile, was ready to make a significant move away from her hometown of Seattle.

"It was L.A., Portland or Hawaii, all considerably more sunny than Seattle," she says.

"Harrisburg is never a place I knew existed. My great-grandmother lived in St. Louis, but I had never been to Pennsylvania."

Harrisburg and Misha, however, won out on the location lottery. They both began teaching out of Keystone Yoga, the current location of their studio. At the time, it was owned by Joanne Gallagher. The day Joanne met Sara, she disclosed to both of them that her husband had been diagnosed with terminal cancer.

"For me, it was really hard and brought up my own fears about cancer. But also, I felt really equipped, and that there was a reason for this."

About five months after Sara's arrival on the "right coast" and the day after her birthday, Aug. 29, Joanne approached them. She was having difficulty taking care of her very ill husband and keeping her young business afloat.

"I could close the studio and sell it or give it to you two."

They took two weeks to decide, but, ultimately, this was a dream come true for both of them, even given the circumstances of being recently uprooted and the tragic reason for this conveyance.



Linglestown Road is the obvious suburban strip-mall commuter route, the typical specialty doctor's offices, the grocery stores, the unnamed warehouses. Three miles into the drive, you will come upon one of those nondescript buildings where Yoga Nature, formerly Keystone Yoga, is housed. Inside, however, is a different environment.

After the keys were handed to Sara and Misha, they went right to work, trying to use a family's micro-loan ever so carefully. A little over a year into the venture, a reception space was created, a wall put up between the studio and foyer, bamboo floors were installed, faux Japanese lanterns grace the rafters and two gorgeous

reclaimed wooden logs were stripped, washed and set, a hallmark of Misha's handiwork.

Yet, they were struggling, financially and also in their relationship.

"Joann always told us if the studio were to ever negatively affect our relationship, I don't want you to do it anymore," Misha said. "The most profound move we ever made as business owners was to ask for help."

It came in the form of a business consultant in Nicholas Banting, a yoga enthusiast and strategist for Freefall Creative, and a local media/account strategist from JPL, Lara Colestock. Misha and Sara all but called them "angels." They revamped their branding, moving their name from Keystone Yoga to Yoga Nature, helped them financially plan for the present and future and breathed life into their Web and social media presence. Their plea for assistance has paid off.

"Even with all these expenditures...we're still in the black," says Misha. "Yoga sells itself...basically, like 85 to 90 percent of referrals come from word of mouth."

This kind of steady growth is allowing them to expand classes and workshops methodically and truly grow into a more integrative wellness center.

Down the road, they hope to add on an additional studio to focus on kids, bringing in school and church groups, to effect change at the root buds, said Sara. "I think energetically we have more of a return now," providing us the enterprising spirit to do even more.

Their Yin and Yang skills are slowly breathing life not only into their students but the business and their relationship, truly living up to the Sanskrit definition of yoga, "union." **B**

# SENATORS



## WAITING ON *The Show*

LIKE MOST DOUBLE-A PLAYERS, JIMMY VAN OSTRAND MAY NEVER MAKE IT TO THE MAJORS, A FATE HE'S COME TO TERMS WITH.

BY ANDREW BARGH

**W**hy do you want to make it, Jimmy? Is it for the money, or because it's the top?" asks Terry Byrom, the Harrisburg Senators announcer and media relations manager.

The question implicitly rejects the possibility that Jimmy doesn't aspire to play in the Majors. He opens his mouth to respond, but stops to rethink.

I'm at Arooga's with Senators outfielder and utility man Jimmy Van Ostrand and Terry. The two are talking about life in the Minor Leagues.

Jimmy waxes nostalgic about some of his career highlights. A favorite memory is playing for Team Canada in the 2008 Beijing Olympics. "It was an amazing thing to be a part of," he says, recalling how strange it felt to be in the presence of so many of the world's most accomplished athletes; Kobe Bryant responding to his greeting in the cafeteria line by saying, "Hi, Chief," and eating dinner with Rafael Nadal and his dad.

Van Ostrand, even seated at the stool in front of me, is a brick house. At 6-foot-4 and 210 pounds, he's large even by professional baseball standards. Genes alone, however, don't dictate someone's rise to "The Show," as the Majors are called informally, a process I hear about soon enough.

Following his graduation at Cal Polytech State University in 2006, he's been in the Minor Leagues, a seven-year-itch that has included stints in the Houston Astros farm system and, since 2011, the Washington Nationals. He has bounced between the Senators and the Syracuse Chiefs, Double- and Triple-A teams, respectively, for the Nationals.

This means that, for almost half the year, April to August, Jimmy lives and works wherever his parent organization tells him. The rest of the year, he resides in San Luis Obispo, Calif., not far from his alma mater.

The Friday after that first meeting at Arooga's, I went to the ballpark to shadow Jimmy at the stadium on City Island.

He shows up around 1:30, coming from the Staybridge Suites Hershey-Harrisburg, where he has been sleeping since he last re-joined the Senators earlier this season. He tells me he was playing acoustic guitar in his room earlier this morning.

Before the game, the players spend much of their day in a clubhouse beneath the bleachers. It's a posh locker room of sorts where the players relax, eat, play cards and poke fun at each other and visiting members of the press.

When I meet up with Jimmy, he's reviewing tapes of the opposing team's pitchers with an employee of the Nationals. He then plays a few hands of Pluck at the

card table and ridicules other player's opinions about the previous night's NBA final. Seniority allows such privileges.

After about an hour, Jimmy heads outside for the batting cages, meeting up with hitting coach Eric Fox, who introduces himself to me as the team's "chief psychologist." Fox pitches several buckets of balls from behind the net. Jimmy makes contact with nearly all of them. Few words are spoken during the ritual, which Jimmy repeats before every game.

While Jimmy bats, another player walks up. "Whaddya think?" he asks. I comment that there's a certain peacefulness to the routine—almost a meditative quality.

He gives me a quizzical look. Then shrugs, "He must be in a good mood."

"Why do you say that?" I ask.

"There's a lot of stress that goes along with this job."

"Because you're traveling all the time?"

"Hell no. That's the easy part," he says, "It's the pressure to deliver. Let me put it this way: Three out of 10 is great. Two out of 10 is terrible. Two-and-a-half out of 10 is enough to keep you in the game."

I think about that for a minute. He throws back a handful of sunflower seeds. "Sorry to rain on your Zen parade," he says, walking away.

After batting practice, Jimmy hangs around the clubhouse for awhile longer until it's time for stretches and field practice.

Out on the field, things are starting to pick up. Players, coaches, groundskeepers, scouts and other employees are bustling around. A corporate group that was touring the field is clearing off, and the team spends about an hour on the field warming up.

Then it's back to playing cards, eating his pre-game meal of salad with chicken and watching the buzz of ESPN for another hour.

Seemingly by pure instinct, Jimmy gets up from watching TV, heads over to his locker and starts getting into his uniform. While he does, a teammate calls out, "Rave in five minutes!"

Sure enough, five minutes later, dance music is blasting from the speakers, and someone is flickering the lights on and off. Jimmy begins taping up his bat.

"Is this a regular occurrence?" I ask Jimmy over the cacophony. He nods. "You're not a raver?" I inquire.

"Sometimes," he deadpans, never looking up. As he finishes his task, several teammates are doing a rowdy interpretive dance while the lights flash and the music blares. Jimmy suppresses a smile and heads out to the ballpark.

The stadium is filling up as we step into the dugout. The air is hot and sticky. The Senators will face the New Hampshire Fisher Cats tonight. As the designated hitter, or DH, Jimmy will only bat.

The game starts off poorly for the Senators, who are losing 4-1 by the fifth inning. In that time, Jimmy has hit the ball twice, but never made it safely to first base. In baseball statistical jargon, this means he's 0-for-2 or simply, no hits.

I think about what I was told about the stress of the job. Each player's batting average is prominently displayed next to his face on the screen when he's up to bat—silently screaming whether that player is "excellent," "terrible," or "staying in the game." Jimmy says that you just don't think about it too much.

As the game goes on, I can't help marveling at the sheer quantity of cultural artifacts that converge to create the total experience of one Minor League game. As Terry told me several weeks earlier, "Everyone here knows we're in the entertainment business."

He's right. At times, the crowd seems more excited for the T-shirt cannon than they do about a great play



on the field.

In between innings, children play competitive games on the field, ranging from the athletic (catching fly balls in the outfield) to the absurd (dressing up in hot dog and condiment costumes and chasing each other around the bases).

Short clips of popular movies and songs from the past century are played, rapid-fire, throughout the game. Most serve to reference, dramatize or poke fun at something that's happening on the field.

The experience as a whole is an enormous mash-up of everything that defines mainstream American culture: competition, patriotism, music, cinema and unapologetic commercialism.

While the commercialism is a bit off-putting to someone like me, I couldn't help but feel there's something nostalgic, even reassuring, about the experience.

The game is played more-or-less the same as it has been played for more than 100 years; new players are always viewed within the context of the game's history and legendary players; and cultural clips draw indiscriminately, everything from Gladys Gooding's original organ music to Kanye West, from "Braveheart" to "Anchorman."

Together, it creates the sense of a larger narrative that the players and fans alike are all part of. It reassures us that present adds to—rather than replaces—the past.

In the sixth inning, things start looking up for the Senators, starting with a home run deep into left field by Jimmy (it falls just short of the giant inflatable "Ollie" of Bargain Outlet fame, although Jimmy tells me he's hit it before). It was Jimmy's fourth home run this season, and the team rallies around him to celebrate.

The next inning, he hits a single for an RBI, pushing the Senators to a lead that they will hold for a victory. Jimmy is clearly the game's MVP, and he finishes 2-for-4 at the plate. The word "excellent" comes to mind.

By the game's end, the sun has gone down and the air has cooled.

The coaches and players briefly celebrate in the dugout, but, without much delay, the players head in to shower. I stay outside to watch fans throw tennis balls onto the field in a post-game competition, which is then followed by fireworks.

It's a Friday night, and an exciting comeback victory. The team is holding their standing at the top of their league. I imagined the night would be ripe for partying.



But, in a season of 144 games in 154 days, I discovered, it takes more than that. The players trickle out one by one. Jimmy is going to watch the Stanley Cup with a buddy from the other team who had played on the Canadian National team with him back in 2008.

Jimmy is a quality player by anyone's standard. But, at 28, his odds of being called up to the Majors are increasingly slim.

Nevertheless, Jimmy has made the most out his Minor League years. He makes much more now than he did in his rookie year for the Astros, which, like most starting Minor League contracts, paid low monthly wages, as little as \$900 per month.

One of Jimmy's teammates says that his accountant couldn't understand how he provided for himself. "I stay with a host family during the playing season, and I stay with my parents in the off season. That's how," he shrugs.

As one of the managers put it to me, "By and large, these guys are barely making enough to get by."

Jimmy now earns a salary more in line with a professional career. "Most people realize it's not a fair system," he says. Tight-lipped about this topic, I assume it's to protect potential conflict in the clubhouse and future contract negotiations.

Whatever happens, Jimmy seems impervious to the stresses of life in the Minor Leagues. He says that, whenever his playing career ends, for whatever reason, he will simply continue his career in sports and athletics. He sees himself as a trainer or coach.

But he doesn't worry too much about that. The tagline on his twitter page (@Dr\_VanOstrand, a Seinfeld allusion) epitomizes what I saw in him that day. "Plan for the future but live in the moment."

Jimmy didn't answer Terry's question at Arooga's right away. He thought for a minute. After a few bites of quesadilla, Jimmy explained that he does hope to get called up, but it's not necessarily just for the money or the status.

"It would mean more for me to make it to the big leagues for the people around me—coaches, family, friends growing up—than for me. I want them to see their efforts and support rewarded," he says.

"If I don't make it, that won't bother me. I've had a great career." **B**



# A POLO PONDER

*Chukkers & water balloons: An afternoon is spent with the horsey set.*

BY PAUL BARKER

**O**n a Sunday in late June, I went to some polo grounds outside Lancaster. The grounds hold Sunday afternoon matches through the summer and are open to the public at five bucks a head. I know next to nothing about polo and nothing whatsoever about the connection between sport horses and Lancaster. But I'd been anticipating the matches for so long, after learning about them online around Christmas, that the two seemed inextricably linked somehow, like Izod and alligators.

The polo grounds are located in Rothsville off Route 772, between Lititz and Brownstown, all of which is meaningless if, like me, you're not from the area. On the way there, cars piled up behind the horse-drawn buggies of the Amish, waiting for a chance to pass. You might imagine the buggy horses at a leisurely Sunday walk, but the ones we passed were at a speedy trot, reins flapping. I don't know if the horses think about it, but it felt like a slap to accelerate past them with such ease.

I've never owned a horse. I've ridden horses maybe three times in my life, and I remember liking it, though it's been a long time. I've fed horses, and I've read about feeding horses, and in one case the thing I read was so well-wrought that I remember it more vividly than my own experience (Steinbeck: "daintily nibbling hay with lips like two flounders").

I'd seen a polo match before, just once. It was in England, at the end of a year I spent there. My dad had come to collect me, and, before we left, we made a detour to an old farmhouse owned by my uncle's old boss, an investment banker named Martin.

It was there I learned the term "nouveau riche." Martin had a lot of nice paintings on the walls, and he told us their provenance and what they cost, in the tens of thousands of euro.

"Nouveau riche," my dad muttered, when we had a moment to ourselves.

Martin also had polo ponies and a team of Argentine breeders. On the day of our visit, one of his mares had just foaled. He pointed out the placenta in the grass.

Later that afternoon, Martin played in a match with several other bankers and a man everyone called "General." The match both looked and sounded like warfare. The riders galloped in a mass, like Huns bearing down on a village. But the impulse to pillage seemed to bottleneck around the white ball. It was so bloody small and elusive!

The stampede would stall, the mallets would go up like stripped flagpoles, and the horde would wheel around clumsily, like a parading high school band at a bend in the road. Then someone would connect and send the ball sailing, and a fresh raid would surge down the pitch, rattling your skull.

In my memory, we stood closer to the horses than was probably possible. I seem to remember a taut thigh streaked with foam—though some author may have planted this, too.

The glistening shank of a horse is a potent thing. In the play "Equus" by Peter Shaffer, an English boy named Alan develops an erotic love for horses. "I couldn't take my eyes off them," Alan says. "The way their necks twist, and sweat shines in the folds..."

Perverted, sure. But you can see where he got the idea.

On the day of the match outside Lancaster, the weather was fitful, in a distinctly unpleasant way. It was hot without being sunny, and the clouds threatened rain without actually raining. On the drive, the sky sneezed once or twice on the windshield, and my shirt bunched up at my shoulders. This made me tense. I was ready to watch a war.

Unfortunately, the Lancaster match was more muted than the one I saw in England. There were three ponies per side, on a massive pitch that we sat far back from, on the edge of the flipped-open caboose of a van. To our right and left were other spectators, in a row going all the way down the sideline.

Most of them seemed like regulars. The ones to our right sipped sparkling white wine and discussed which cheese they liked better, this time's or last time's.

They also had a giant rubber slingshot that they took out at halftime, to launch water balloons at spectators on the other side. It was all in good sport. After a couple of volleys, somebody ran the thing over to the enemy, so they could fire back.

The teams rode out in opposing livery—red and white for Lancaster, blue and gold for the away team, from Brandywine, in northern Delaware.

Polo is a sport of Persian descent. The game is played in rounds called chukkers, which last 7½ minutes each, separated by breaks in which riders swap in fresh ponies. The announcer referred to the sport as "hockey on horseback." Riders swipe at the ball with mallets and can check other riders, though they cannot, so far as I can tell, dismount and punch each other.

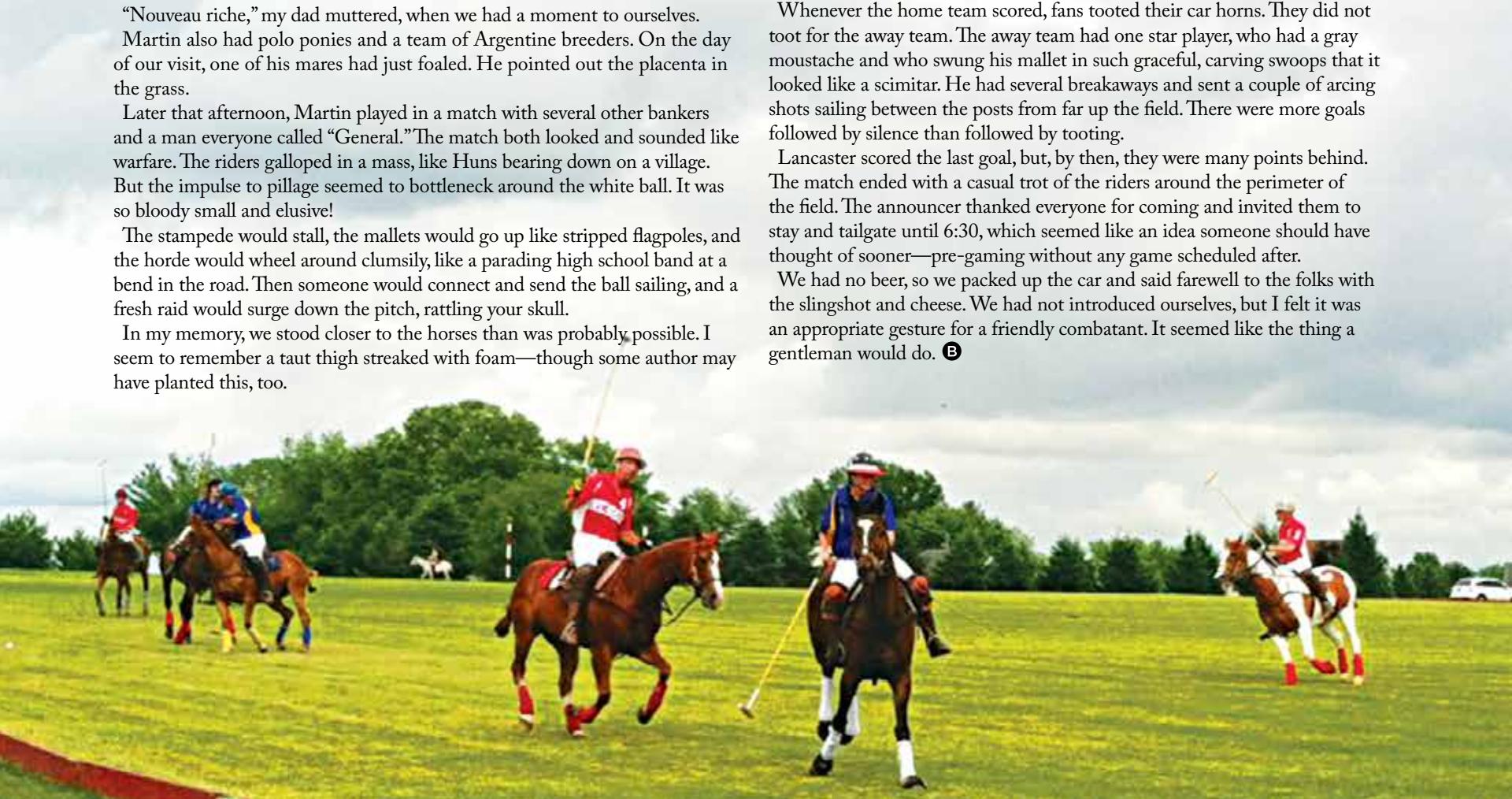
Polo is also sometimes called the "Sport of Kings," presumably because it's expensive to learn and play. At the match, in between chukkers, spectators are invited to wander the pitch and stomp down divots with their feet. This struck me as quaintly egalitarian at first, but, on reflection, seems like a trick of the ruling class. "They'll do any chore you want, as long as it seems like a privilege"—something like that. Whatever. It felt like a privilege at the time.

We ate some bread and nibbled at some chocolate. I began to wonder if I was not tense, but merely thirsty. It drizzled, then let up, then got sunny, then cloudy again. A water balloon sailed over our heads and exploded in the grass.

Whenever the home team scored, fans tooted their car horns. They did not toot for the away team. The away team had one star player, who had a gray moustache and who swung his mallet in such graceful, carving swoops that it looked like a scimitar. He had several breakaways and sent a couple of arcing shots sailing between the posts from far up the field. There were more goals followed by silence than followed by tooting.

Lancaster scored the last goal, but, by then, they were many points behind. The match ended with a casual trot of the riders around the perimeter of the field. The announcer thanked everyone for coming and invited them to stay and tailgate until 6:30, which seemed like an idea someone should have thought of sooner—pre-gaming without any game scheduled after.

We had no beer, so we packed up the car and said farewell to the folks with the slingshot and cheese. We had not introduced ourselves, but I felt it was an appropriate gesture for a friendly combatant. It seemed like the thing a gentleman would do. **B**



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## "WHAT BUGS MY BURG: QUARTERS ARE STILL KING"

Dan Webster on Harrisburg's "new" meters, which still don't accept credit cards:

As I approached the new money-eating totem, I saw what appeared to be a credit card slot, but alas, a written notice at the bottom: "Meter Accepts Quarters and Cashkeys Only."

"What the heck is a cash key?" I thought to myself.

A cash key is like a food card at universities or colleges. You mail in a form with a deposit of \$15, plus the dollar amount you personally allot, on said key. Each time you pull into the space, you insert the key and go on your "merry" way. Except, in reality, there are lots of problems with this turnkey system.

One, it's entirely too bureaucratic. You have to fill out an order form and then mail it to the Harrisburg Parking Authority. JC Penney catalogs were very successful until the Internet. Get it?

Two, it's not helpful for the tourist or occasional daily commuter. Imagine carrying around a day's worth of quarters. Maybe you've done it.

Lastly, it's very parochial, creating a town-centric mentality that is and will continue plaguing our reputation in the area. By not providing an efficient and modern parking system, you risk moderately peeing off the general public, especially if quarters aren't available, and they end up with a parking ticket. It's the little things that add up, like say, potholes...

## "PAVED PARADISE IV: THE FINAL JUDGMENT"

Lawrance Bindon Bethel AME's hearing before the Harrisburg Zoning Board as the church attempted to locate a parking lot at the corner of N. 6th and Herr streets:

"I don't believe we should have the lot just sitting there until we determine what the lot will do five to 10 years from now," testified the Rev. Micah Sims.

Oh, wrong answer.

That is not what zoning board members wanted to hear. Sure, a few members of the Old Fox Ridge neighborhood group proceeded to speak against the parking plan, but it probably didn't matter. The fact that the church clearly had no plan to put this well-located land to better use sealed the fate of the special exception.

The board unanimously denied the request.

So the parcel at the corner of N. 6th and Herr streets will sit vacant until the church decides to either develop the land, which seems unlikely, or sell it.

To the activists of Old Fox Ridge, that seemed like the best outcome, as having a large surface lot in the midst of their neighborhood for the next decade was intolerable. It also was not acceptable to members of the zoning board, a valuable piece of information that church members would have been wise to know going in...

## "FIREWORKS FLAP"

Lawrance Bindon on the uncertain start time of Harrisburg's annual fireworks display.

Official word was that the fireworks would follow the Senators game at Metro Bank Park. Estimated time: 9:30. In fact, the city's promotion flyer firmly stated the show would commence at 9:30, a time repeated by most media outlets (including TheBurg).

However, the game moved along briskly, with the home team falling to the Bowie Baysox by a 6-2 count at about 10:15. Fifteen minutes later—at 9:07 p.m.—bang, zoom! By the appointed start time, the show had already wrapped up, with the hordes migrating to their cars and back to the 'burbs.

Unfortunately, the people most affected ended up being Harrisburg's own loyal city dwellers, who often scamper down to the waterfront just minutes before start time.

Given Harrisburg's other problems, the July 4 festival is a relatively minor matter. Nonetheless, it does indicate a chronic problem of the administration—the ability to plan and execute something substantial. In fact, many of the city's other festivals and rituals have experienced similar issues, to the extent that residents have come to wonder each year if there actually will be a Kipona or a holiday parade.

The next mayor would do well to learn from this administration's mistakes in so many ways. As per the July 4 celebration itself—raise more funds, re-emphasize the music, court more vendors (too many vacant stretches), retire that silly, empty mayor's tent and retain the wine area (a big hit). Perhaps these moves will help build back the MusicFest from the rather sparsely attended affair it has become.

Lastly, please, please make sure you have the fireworks plan down solid. Sure, Harrisburg has far bigger issues to deal with, but, when it comes to July 4, it gets no more mission-critical than that...

# BEST OF THE BURG BLOG

*Some highlights from our blog posts over the past month.*

*Read the full posts at:*

[WWW.THEBURGNEWS.COM](http://WWW.THEBURGNEWS.COM)

## "SAFE SPACES"

Paul Barker on Mayor Thompson's announcement of "Safe Zone 6," the latest area in Harrisburg targeted by the Neighborhood Safety Zone program.

The Neighborhood Safety Zone program has at times had something of a confused execution. Safe Zone 2, for instance, at 14th and Vernon Streets, was erected one afternoon in late March and dismantled an hour-and-a-half later. In addition, the targeted areas were initially announced in advance, but are now concealed from the public, to maintain an "element of surprise," according to Thompson.

But now, she said, the program is running smoothly. "It works. It's a new and improved way of building and rebuilding the neighborhood."

Asked about recent trends in violent crime—the city saw its 11th homicide of 2013 last Saturday—Thompson suggested that she was not overly concerned.

"Some of our homicides are unpreventable," she said. She pointed out that this year's homicides so far have involved victims and perpetrators who knew each other and often were the result of domestic disputes. She cited one murder that was the outcome of a fight inside a home. "No amount of cops would have prevented that," she said...

## "WHY NOT ME? CAPITAL CITY SYNDROME, PART 2"

Lawrance Bindon on Harrisburg's very ambitious politicians.

Awhile back, I wrote in my monthly Burg column about a potentially debilitating condition that I had identified called "Capital City Syndrome."

This is a sickness that causes people who live or work in a state capital to think that they're more consequential than their positions may actually warrant. Some folks in these capital cities have easy access to legislators and governors and lobbyists and grand buildings and suddenly think to themselves: "Heck, why not me?"

Well, Harrisburg City Hall should be quarantined and everyone there inoculated pronto because this illness is spreading at an alarming rate.

Today, Brenda Alton, the city's director of Parks, Recreation and Enrichment, became the second Harrisburg official to declare for the Democratic nomination for lieutenant governor, joining Councilman Brad Koplinski in the quest.

That's right: two people from this tiny, troubled city believe they can become the commonwealth's next second-in-command.

When I first coined the term "Capital City Syndrome," I was actually referring to former Mayor Steve Reed and current Mayor Linda Thompson, who, surrounded by marble and gilding and rich people at swanky affairs, both seemed to get caught up in exaggerated notions of the importance of this small city and of their own positions, in the process getting both into deep trouble.

However, this illness now seems to extend to the level of City Council and the Department of Parks & Recreation. Was declaring municipal bankruptcy such an astounding success on the part of council—or has the Thompson administration been such a model of municipal efficiency and pride—that either now should serve as the bases of huge promotions for their members?

Recently, I went to the cashier's office to pay a parking ticket and found the clerk's service to be both efficient and pleasant. Please, someone gauge his plans for 2014...

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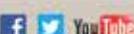
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