



Media Relations and Strategic Communications

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Contents

In the Burg

- 4 Letters
- 5 The First Word
- 6 City Hall
- 8 State Street

Burg Biz

- 9 New Business
- 10 From the Ground Up
- 11 Doing Good

Street Corners

- 12 Neighborhoods
- 13 Around Town
- 15 Past Tense

Welcome to
TheBurg!
We'd love to
hear from you.
Send your
ideas and
comments to
our editor,
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com

Good Eats

- 16 Restaurant Row
- 17 Home Cooking

Culture Club

- 18 Creator
- 19 Passing Judgment
- 20 On the Outskirts
- 21 Happenings

Home & Family

- 23 Young Burgers
- 24 Bricks & Mortars
- 25 Wags & Whiskers
- 26 Game Boards

Sports & Bodies

- 27 Senior Health
- 28 The Great Outdoors
- 29 Move It!
- 30 One More Thing ...



Letters

General & Letters

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Readers Welcome Our Inaugural Issue

Congratulations on a successful first edition of *TheBurg*! I loved everything about it — the content, layout, contributing writers, overall appearance — everything!

I picked up my copy (well, two) at the downtown Y. After the two I took, there was only one left — and that was Saturday morning! So it seems like they are going quickly.

You really did a wonderful job and I look forward to the next issue.

Amy Whitney Harrisburg

Happy New Year. I liked the first edition. Well done. Good luck.

Dan Langan Lower Paxton Township

It's really nice to know that someone took an interest to put out a newspaper about the good things that are happening around the city of Harrisburg. A lot of the neighborhoods are really changing and coming together, and a lot of people are moving back into the city because of the affordable homes. My wife and I live in one of the newly built homes.

Charles H. Ray Harrisburg

I happened to pick up your new publication at Starbucks in Strawberry Square the other day and wanted to say THANKS!!! What a great paper! I'm of a certain age, so some of the other "cost free" papers don't appeal to me, but yours certainly did! A little history, some current events, lots of good info, etc.

Best wishes for continued success, hoping to see more issues in the future. I loved it! It's very attractive too. Clean looking and easy on the eyes.

Mary Bungo Hershey

Editor's Note:

We'd like to thank everyone for all the supportive comments we received on our first issue. We were astounded by the outpouring of good will from the community. The letters re-printed in this section were completely unsolicited. Really. We swear.

Some letters were edited for space.

Having lived in Harrisburg and the environs for more than five decades, I read with great interest every page of your first issue this afternoon. My sincere congratulations on your very constructive step forward for Harrisburg, by creating a genuine and independent community newspaper — one that contains an eye-pleasing layout and design, diverse articles and beholden to no individual or interest. Your operating philosophy and focus on 'helping people understand the city, not fear it' merits commendation. Your zeal for and stated journalistic commitment to accurately and thoroughly inform readers of both the myriad accomplishments and numerous challenges we face as a city are laudable. In these especially challenging times, I encourage you to keep that commitment to balance, fairness and accuracy in your reporting, attributes that seem to be painfully absent in too many publications of today's Fourth Estate.

M y best wishes to you and your colleagues for utmost success in 2009.

Edward Nielsen Harrisburg

I just picked up the inaugural issue of *TheBurg*, and it looks great! With every turn of the page is another interesting story — whether it's highlighting an important local issue, such as transportation, or spotlighting new and interesting businesses — both in the city and beyond. *TheBurg* provides us with glimpses of the people, businesses and organizations that make up the fabric of this wonderful community. I'm impressed! Keep up the great work!

Brett Marcy Mechanicsburg

The paper is fantastic. I love the single-page article idea. There is lots of space, white space, which gives value to the text. And the articles have familiarity, but depth. For example, I have lived in Harrisburg for 25 years and keep up on a lot of its pluses. I had already found La Kasbah. This Moroccan setting is my favorite midtown restaurant, but I didn't know it meant "Castle." You cover everything — mass transit and pets. I learned something from every article. Thanks so much for putting this out there. You cover our cultural variety without broadcasting what you are doing!

Ruth Hoover Seitz Harrisburg

Cover: Capitol Winter by Nick T. Ruggieri (1908-1996). Nick was one of Harrisburg's most popular and devoted artists — days before his death he was still teaching art class. For a remembrance of his life and work by his daughter, Rosemary Ruggieri Baer, please turn to page 18.

In the Burg

The First Word

Want to Meet New People? Start a Newspaper.

Lawrance Binda

January 1 had finally arrived. For months, we had anxiously awaited the first day of the New Year, when we would begin to distribute the inaugural issue of *TheBurg*. Now, at long last, it was here. We didn't know exactly what to expect or how we'd be received. We only knew this — it was cold. Really cold.

So, *Burg* editor Pete and I bundled up against the chill, packed up the van and began to visit about 100 locations in the Harrisburg area. We wanted to do the distribution personally so that we could introduce ourselves to the people who would carry the paper — and maybe meet some other folks in the process. It turned out to be an excellent plan.

Almost immediately, we bumped into a well-known Harrisburg broadcaster and blogger. Standing on a street corner just across from the Capitol, he asked us about *TheBurg*, wished us good luck with our new venture and snapped our photo, which he immediately uploaded to his website. Five minutes into the process, and we were already becoming known around town — a promising start for our new community newspaper.

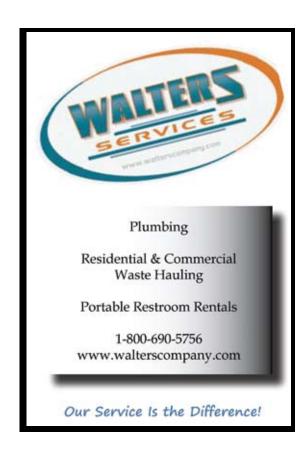
The next day was equally cold, and we continued our rounds. We drove and stopped, dropping off bundles of papers throughout the city, as well as to some locations on the outskirts. Along the way, we met up with great people like Bill at Transit News, Chris and Surina at the Downtown Café and Pat at the Caffeine Connection — and thanked them all for carrying our papers. We took a long elevator ride up to the fourteenth floor of Harrisburg

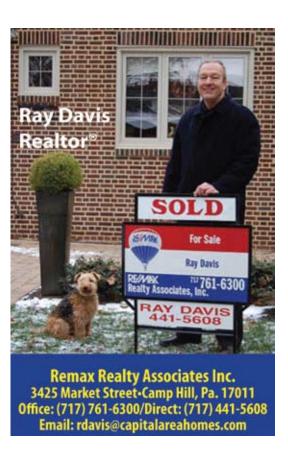
University's new Academic Center, where we chatted for awhile with Steven Infanti, the school's marketing and communications vice president. We later met hotel clerks, convenience store owners and just random guys on the street. If you ever want to really, truly meet the people in your neighborhood, start a local newspaper. Okay, maybe that's not practical advice, but it is one way to do it, we learned.

At night, exhausted and hungry, we badly needed sustenance and some relaxation. So we thought — hey — let's try La Kasbah, the Moroccan restaurant that we featured in our first issue. It was a terrific choice. The owners, Ty and Mohamed Safouan, were just as warm and inviting as our reporter had said they were. And the food was excellent. Fortunately, they didn't seem to need any more publicity from us because the place was packed, which we were happy to see.

So, after many months of planning and writing and designing and worrying, *TheBurg* has hit the streets. We'd like to thank everyone who read our first issue, especially those who sent us comments on what, admittedly, is a different type of local newspaper, one that will continue to grow and change as the years pass. And thanks, Harrisburg, for such a warm welcome on such a cold weekend.

Larry Binda is the art director of TheBurg. Our editor, Pete, welcomes any and all comments. Please write to him at pdurantine@theburgnews.com.





City Hall

A Life of Service

Chief Konkle Reflects on 27 Years as a Firefighter

Peter Durantine

When Donald Konkle became Harrisburg's fire chief in 1982, arson was frequent, often causted by people setting fires to their own properties in the midst of unprecedented social and economic woes.

Much has changed in 27 years. The city is rejuvenating and property owners, even in these tough economic times, are more confident in their investments and their neighborhoods. It also helps that the Fire Bureau has made a point of going after arsonists.

"We've been a lot more aggressive in investigating arson and in prosecuting people," Konkle said.

He relaxes on one of his last days as fire chief in his Walnut Street office, where the signs that a long-time occupant is moving out are evident. Most pictures and plaques of a career are gone from the walls; only nails and hooks are left.

The 57-year-old firefighter grew up in South Williamsport and graduated Penn State with a degree in public policy. He began his service in 1974 and recalls his early days battling blazes on city blocks.

"We were doing more than a thousand fires a year, so it was really an interesting place to learn the trade because of the volume of fires," he said.

Eight years later, he became fire chief of one of the region's only full-time, paid fire departments, elevated when Mayor Stephen Reed first took office.

As a firefighter on the line, Konkle said he found great satisfaction in having the ability to help people. "It's really a challenge," he said. "You show up to an out-of-control situation and get people organized. It's really rewarding when it's successful."

Konkle believes his biggest achievement as chief has been in fire safety and prevention initiatives, which have significantly reduced accidental and arson-related fires over more than a quarter century.



Chief Konkle: major advances on his watch.

"The successes in fire fighting and prevention that have occurred over the past several decades are very much related to the relentless and visionary efforts of Chief Konkle," Reed said.

This was accomplished, Konkle said, by working with the mayor in getting a strict fire code in place that mandated smoke detectors and retrofitted sprinklers in all high-rise buildings, residential and office.

Getting such regulations through the political process was a fight because many in the business community were opposed to the retrofitting, believing it was too costly. But, today, Konkle believes the fire code has helped to re-invigorate the city's business district.

"That's been a significant factor in reducing fire loss and fire deaths," he said. "I think the fire code and smoke detectors have done more than any single thing that we've done to make people safer."

Although he's retired as fire chief, Konkle will remain involved in fire prevention and safety efforts, but at the statewide level. In spring, he will take the helm as executive director of the Pennsylvania Fire and Emergency Services Institute, where he now serves as board president.

John Brenner, who headed the institute for six years in the late 1990s, said Konkle is well-suited for his new role.

"The fire service emergency groups across the state are pleased he's taking that leadership role," said Brenner, the mayor of York. "He's a firefighter's fire chief."

Looking at his career as chief, Konkle sounds most proud of the city's firefighters and of the training program that teaches them to always remember the human element in their work. "We try really hard to have some empathy and understanding," he said.

Baseball Park Slated for Massive Upgrade

Commerce Bank Park will undergo a two-year, \$45 million renovation that will improve everything from the stadium's entrance to its scoreboard.

The work will be performed in two phases so that play at the park will not be affected.

The first phase, running from now through April, will include: a new public plaza and entrance along the left-field corner; a new, 8,600-square-foot operations building; a new outfield wall; complete scoreboard upgrades; a boardwalk surrounding the outfield; a new left-field seating area; an outfield bar area; and irrigation improvements.

The second construction phase will run from August 2009 to March 2010. It will include: the replacement of bench-style seating with individual seats; 20 new luxury suites; new concessions and restrooms; expanded picnic areas; a new sound system; a new press box; renovation of existing buildings; development of a reserved parking lot; and an expansion of total seating capacity to 6,000 seats.

In addition to providing a better fan experience, these improvements are needed to comply with the requirements of Major League Baseball for an AA facility, said Mayor Stephen Reed.

Construction is expected to cost \$32 million, while the total development budget for the project is \$45 million.

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City Hall

City Names Community Policing Coordinator

Neighborhood groups again have a community policing coordinator to work with, after the post was cut a few years ago because of budget constraints.

The city hired Michael Parker, who had been the coordinator about a decade ago before leaving to pursue a career as an educator, said Matt Coulter, a city spokesman. The coordinator "is a key link on a daily basis" with crime watch groups, according to the city.

Funding for the coordinator and at least 10 additional officers was approved in the 2009 budget passed by the City Council in December. Both expenditures are a response to an increase in crime over the last four years, said Mayor Stephen Reed.

Reed contrasted the rise to the preceding 23 years, when crime generally fell. "The crime rate in 2007, for example, was 48.7 percent less than in 1981, and 19.7 percent less than in 1997," he said.

Parker will oversee the posting of all reported major crimes on the city's website, identifying the type of crime and the place it occurred. The all-volunteer crime watch groups cover more than 120 blocks in the city.

Virginia Pianka, who leads the crime watch in Riverside from her Lewis Street home, welcomes having a coordinator again to work with.

"We need one," she said. "It's quiet up here, but with a coordinator, he can always check to make sure it's quiet here."

Councilwoman Gloria Martin-Roberts, chairman of the Public Safety Committee, said the coordinator also needs to educate the public about police procedures so residents understand their rights and the officer's responsibilities.

"They really don't understand the nature of policing," the councilwoman said. "We need a dedicated person to do a whole lot of public education, especially with our children."

Martin-Roberts is working with the mayor on a crime prevention advisory board, which will allow watch group leaders and

others residents to better work with police on safety and prevention efforts.

The board also may serve as overseer of an anti-crime inspection program for homes and businesses, according to an idea favored by Reed. This function would identify effective, but inexpensive, ways to prevent burglary, theft and other criminal opportunities.

SciTech Student Wins Citywide Essay Contest

Abiola D. Osibadu, a 10th-grade student at SciTech High, has been given the city's prestigious award for the best essay honoring the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.

A panel of judges awarded Abiola the first-ever Evangelene L. Wormsley-Kimber Award for Excellence. Her submission bested 260 essays submitted by public and parochial school students throughout Harrisburg. This year's theme was: "What has become of Dr. King's Dream?"

For her essay, Abiola received an award plaque, a \$50 Visa gift card and a special framed picture of Dr. King commemorating the 1979 15-cent "Martin Luther King, Jr. and Civil Rights Marchers" stamp from the U.S. Postal Service.

The essay contest began in 1985, and the Kimber award was created by the city last year after the untimely passing of Evangelene Kimber, beloved principal of Harrisburg High School, who died suddenly in September 2008.

For the contest overall, other entries received plaques and Visa gift cards for first-place, second-place and third-place winners. Winners also received a congratulatory letter from the Harrisburg postmaster, postal gift items and gift certificates for pizza.

In addition to the city, sponsors included PinnacleHealth, Commerce Bank, the U.S. Postal Service and Pizza Hut.

Grants Issued to Improve Housing, Neighborhoods

The city has announced four grants to three organizations to augment their housing rehabilitation, educational and neighborhood development work.

Habitat for Humanity is receiving \$35,000 for a portion of the costs related to restoring 1441 Zarker Street and a separate \$20,000 grant to do home repairs at low-income households. The Zarker Street residential structure will then be assigned a low- to moderate-income new homeowner. The repairs will be done at homes already occupied by lower-income homeowners unable to afford the basic repairs neeeded to allow them to keep their homes.

Keystone Service Systems of Harrisburg has been awarded \$20,000 for structural improvements at its Head Start Center at 13th and Market Streets, where dozens of pre-school youngsters receive weekday care and educational activities.

The Greater Harrisburg Area YMCA is receiving \$19,178 to cover costs related to the operation of the Weed and Seed Program in the city's South Allison Hill neighborhood. The Weed and Seed Program is designed to improve public safety and foster economic development in targeted areas.

¿Se Habla? Firefighters Learning Basic Spanish

City firefighters will learn basic Spanish words and phrases in an effort to better and more efficiently serve Hispanic residents in the area.

Jose Espinar, an information and referral specialist with the Community Action Commission, will hold four training sessions in the next 30 days to do the instruction. Espinar is holding the classes at no cost to the city and will teach firefighters basic phrases and commands that may be necessary to better communicate with the area's Hispanic residents.

Classes are more necessary now than ever since the Fire Bureau responds more often to medical emergencies than it does to actual fires, according to the city.

State Street

State Issues Warning on Railroad Safety

With the turn of the New Year, the state is reminding residents to practice railroad safety, a warning of particular importance in rail-centric areas like Harrisburg.

In the past five years, 88 people have been killed crossing railroad tracks or trespassing on railroad property in Pennsylvania, with 23 fatalities in 2007, according to the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation. Eighteen people were killed in collisions between trains and vehicles in the past five years.

"People may be tempted to walk or play on railroad tracks, but many don't realize how dangerous this can be, and they may not know that it's illegal," PennDOT Secretary Allen Biehler said. "PennDOT encourages people to educate themselves about rail safety and to always be vigilant when traveling near railroad tracks."

Here are a few tips for safety around railroads:

- Railroad tracks are private property and can be dangerous; never trespass on or around railroad tracks, trestles or bridges. Remember the only sure way to be safe is to "Stay Off! Stay Away! Stay Alive."
- When crossing at-grade railroad tracks, pedestrians and motorists should exercise caution. Trains always have the right-of-way.
- Only cross railroad tracks at designated crossings, and obey all warning signs and devices. If you see flashing lights and lowering gates at a crossing, stop that means a train is approaching.
- Never play on rail cars or attempt to crawl under a train at any time; you never know when the train will start moving.
- School buses, commercial buses and trucks carrying hazardous materials are required by state law to stop at all at-grade railroad crossings. Exercise caution when driving behind them.

For more information on rail safety initiatives, call Operation Lifesaver at 1-800-537-6224 or go online at www.oli.org.



February marks the annual celebration of Presidents' Day, an occasion with special importance this year with the recent inauguration of Barack Obama as the nation's first African-American president. In this spirit, we thought we'd share a slice of presidential history that occurred in Harrisburg. Both photos feature President Theodore Roosevelt, who attended and spoke at the 1906 dedication of the new state Capitol building. Many thanks to the Pennsylvania State Archives and the Capitol Preservation Committee for providing us with these historically important photographs. Happy Presidents' Day!



Burg Biz

The Eagle Takes Flight

New Supermarket Finds Niche in Underserved Community

Bill Osborne

To paraphrase Astronaut Neil Armstrong, the Eagle has landed in Harrisburg with the opening of Eagle Supermarket at 2304 N. Third St. While the landing may not be a leap for mankind, it is certainly a step toward providing several thousand residents of Midtown and Uptown Harrisburg with access to a full-line grocery store.

Eagle Supermarket opened its doors Nov. 7 and occupies a site on which several other grocers have failed. So why does owner In Pak think he can thrive where others have fallen short? While Eagle Supermarket boasts deli, frozen foods, produce and meat departments, it certainly cannot hope to compete with the uber supermarkets in the suburbs.

Size matters, but location trumps size in this case. The store's neighbors, especially those without transportation to outlying areas, are glad for a store, any store. And some people prefer a supermarket of a manageable size. Dave Aitkin, an Eagle Supermarket patron, says, "The mega stores can be intimidating."

Pak readily admits, "I will not have everything you want, but I will have 70 to 80 percent of what you are looking for." The store stocks 30,000 items. Pak is willing to consider stocking items that patrons request.

Because many patrons rely on public

transportation, Pak recently initiated a delivery service for regular customers or those who purchase \$100 or more.

Pak cites 30 years in the grocery business as a predictor of his success. He also owns a smaller store at 13th and Derry streets on Allison Hill.

Even a brief interaction with Pak reveals a wellspring of optimism and good will, which may contribute as much to his success as his years of experience.

He has faith, too, in his customers and neighbors. He says he sought advice from friends and neighbors before remodeling the store "from top to bottom." Previous stores on the site were fortress-like. Access to Eagle Supermarket is open and inviting.

While Pak, like most retailers, maintains a surveillance system, he says he has had no serious shoplifting problems.

Some of Pak's friends were skeptical when he set the store hours from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., seven days a week. Pak's faith was justified. "We do more business after dark than during the day," he said.

Some critics level the charge that grocers in underserved communities overcharge. Pak takes exception to that criticism. "If I wanted to get rich, I would definitely pick another business," he said. "I try to maintain prices comparable to the big supermarkets." He directs your attention to advertised weekly

From soup to nuts: Owner In Pak (left) in front of a well-stocked dairy case at the new Eagle Supermarket in Uptown.

New Business

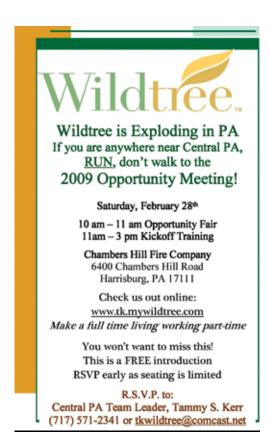
specials. "I don't want to battle with the customers," he said. "I'll save my fight for the vendors."

Pak believes in giving back to the community. In previous years, at Thanksgiving, he has distributed turkeys to needy neighbors. He regularly sponsors two or more youth sports teams.

Pak heaves a sigh of thankful relief that he financed the \$2 million investment when he did. "If I had waited longer, in this economic situation, financing could have been a problem." He also attributes the mountain of job applications on his desk to the current economic environment. Pak currently employs 18 people at Eagle Supermarket, but he expects that number to grow as business grows.

Eagle Supermarket recently opened its lottery service. Pak plans to add money order and bill pay services shortly.

Pak says business is growing gradually. Many people, even in adjacent neighborhoods, "do not know we are here yet." He looks forward to his grand opening, scheduled for Feb. 2, to attract attention. Local dignitaries will attend. And he anticipates many grand opening specials.



From the Ground Up

Shopping for a Home: a Few Simple Tips

Be Realistic, Stay in Budget and Enjoy the Experience

Ray Davis

ow many homes should I look at before I buy one?

This question is frequently asked by nervous and anxious first-time homebuyers, especially in today's market where housing inventory is generally plentiful.

A real estate columnist once answered this question with: "How many people should you date before you marry?" Sometimes it is love at first sight, and sometimes it takes years to find your soul mate. Hopefully, it will not take years to find the perfect house, but everyone's homebuying experience is different.

The advice that I give to my clients is: "When you are sure this is 'IT,' buy it. Don't wait, don't second guess yourself. When you are not sure — wait." Plain and simple.

Often, buyers ask if they should walk in the house and immediately know that "this is the one." Not necessarily. For some buyers, a particular factor weighs much more heavily than another, and if that element is lacking, a buyer will know this is not the one, shortly after walking in the door. Conversely, for buyers weighing more factors into their decision, the decision may take more time.

Here are a few simple tips when house hunting:

Location, location, location. It's the golden rule of real estate. You can change almost anything about a house, except where it is. And remember, you will be going to and from your home many times while you live there. Don't look at homes in areas you do not want to live because, sure enough, you will fall in love with one of them.

Shop within your budget. Don't begin by looking at homes at the top end of or out of your price range. It is very difficult to drop down in price range and find a better home at a lower price.

Be realistic with your expectations. If you are looking at many homes over a long period of time, perhaps you expect too much within the parameters of your search. For example, you expect too many modern amenities, if you are looking at older homes, or you may have an unrealistic expectation of what you can get in your price range.

Look at the big picture. Don't focus on the minute details during your first visit to a home. Leave the notebook in the car. Look the place over and get a feel for the space, flow, amenities and overall condition. You can measure the rooms on your second visit, if the home is promising. Sometimes it is difficult, but focus on the house and not the personal items, which will be gone when you move in.

Accept the things you cannot change. Unless you are lucky enough to be building your dream home with an unlimited budget, remember that you may not get everything you want, particularly if you are buying your first house. Prioritize your wish list.

Change the things you can change.
Remember, there are many things in a house that are easily changed, so try to avoid ruling out a house because you don't like the wallpaper or the color of the front door. If you cannot visualize yourself living there, bring a friend or two who is creative and knows you well. They will see things much differently. And remember, home remodel workers, painters, etc., are looking for jobs, and you may be able to pay someone to complete projects you cannot do yourself.

Buyer's remorse? Not an uncommon emotion. Often times, after the decision is made, and the deal is done, buyers second guess themselves. They hear all sorts of, "you should haves" from family, friends and co-workers, and they think they made a big mistake.

And that leads to my final piece of advice. Take a deep breath, relax, trust yourself and enjoy the experience.



Ray Davis is a real estate salesperson with RE/MAX Realty Associates, Inc. He has lived in Harrisburg since 1986 and has been a realtor for 17 years. rdavis@capitalareahomes.com.

House Prices Stable, Sales Down in 2008

Median home-sale prices in south central Pennsylvania decreased slightly in 2008, down 0.8 percent from 2007, according to Central Penn Multi-List, Inc.

The median sale price of residential homes fell to \$164,717, compared to the median cost of \$166,000 in 2007, the organization said. Median home-sale prices also dropped in the fourth quarter of 2008, slipping 1.3 percent to \$158,000. The median home-sale price in the fourth quarter 2007 was \$160,100.

"While the country as a whole is experiencing a troubled housing market, our local market continues to reflect some stability," said Frederick Briggs, president of the Greater Harrisburg Association of Realtors.

The number of residential housing units sold in 2008 was 7,159, down from 8,730 in 2007. In the fourth quarter of 2008, 1,482 units sold, compared to 1,923 units sold in the fourth quarter of 2007.

"We did see a significant decline in home sales compared to 2007," Briggs said.

Listings stayed on the market an average of 72 days in 2008 — an increase from an average of 57 days in 2007.

"Homes are selling at a rate of just over two months on average," said Briggs. "That statistic, coupled with steady prices, reinforces the fact that our market continues to show stability, particularly relative to other areas of the country."

Doing Good

"Rescue Is Our Mission"

Bethesda Mission Serves Poor, Homeless with Mercy and Grace

Scott Dunwoody

The Harrisburg area has 400 to 500 homeless people, of whom about 100 live on the streets. About 60 percent of those who are guests at our shelters have worked, lived or gone to school in the city and region.

Since our humble beginning in the rear of a saloon on N. 5th Street in 1914, under the leadership of a feed and grain merchant named James Barker, Bethesda Mission, which means "house of mercy and grace," has brought help, hope and healing to more than 1 million lives across the central Pennsylvania region.

Motivated by Matthew 25:40, "I tell you the truth, whatever you did for the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me," Bethesda Mission continues 94 years later to reach out. Yet, to the general public, the extent of our services to the homeless and poor are not well known.

We meet them in the streets, through our Mobile Mission Ministry each weekend, providing food, clothing, blankets, personal care items and encouragement. Each evening our public soup line offers a full-course meal. To reach the impoverished outside the city, our Rural Outreach program distributes annually more than 5.5 million pounds of food and essential household products to 30 to 40 churches and social service agencies from rural parts of Dauphin, Cumberland and Perry counties.

We've come a long way from the Depression days of 1934, when Bethesda Mission moved to its present location, 611 Reily Street, where we provide a transitional living Men's Shelter for poor and homeless men, having converted the former Railroad YMCA that had catered to the men of the railroad for more than three decades.

Since those days of the traditional "three hots and a cot," Bethesda Mission has adopted a holistic approach to address the needs of poor and homeless men and women.

We developed a long-term, Christian-based recovery program with counseling to address the emotional, spiritual and physical needs of hurting people. Twenty-four percent of the men staying at our shelter last year were veterans of the U.S. military; 77 percent of our guests at the shelter have been incarcerated, on average six times.

About 70 percent of our guests at the men's and women's shelters have a history of substance abuse — the drugs of choice today are crack cocaine, marijuana, and alcohol; homeless teenagers have nearly a 100 percent incidence of drug and alcohol use.

Mental illness affects approximately 33 to 40 percent of the homeless, while 33 percent have a disease, injury, or disability that restricts or makes their daily life difficult.

We opened a Women and Children's Shelter in 1990, converting a former school building. Donated by a local businessman and his wife, this building has provided a safe haven for women, some with children, who have suffered from abuse and addictions.

To help prevent abuse and addiction from surfacing as adult men and women, we opened a Youth Center in an old fire station at 1438 Herr Street in 1993. A mighty battle wages for the lives of our youth – family breakdown, drug culture, violence, and a vacuum of values. The Youth Center serves about 75 youth living around Herr Street.

Two years ago, Bethesda Mission undertook renovation of the 105-year-old



Scott Dunwoody is director of development for Bethesda Mission.

Reily Street building, which had significant deterioration and obsolete mechanical systems. The \$4 million project is nearly complete, rendering this historic landmark fully capable of continuing to be a beacon of hope for countless hurting people for many years to come.

Part of the capital campaign that included the renovation project is a new Life Transformation Center. It will be adjacent to the Men's Shelter. We hope to complete this building when the economic climate improves. It will include an expanded medical clinic with better accommodations for the nurses and Penn State Hershey Medical Center doctors who volunteer their services, and an educational/vocational training facility for our guests to develop work skills.

We are excited about what the future holds for Bethesda Mission. We trust God for His provisions, granting us the privilege of offering the opportunity to these hurting people to see their lives rescued from destruction, redeemed through the power of God, and restored to stability. Community support affords us the opportunity to live out our motto: "Rescue is our Mission."



Under construction: This space inside the men's shelter of the renovated Bethesda Mission will become its chapel.

Street Corners

Neighborhoods

Rustic Setting, City Style Endure in Bellevue Park

Peter Durantine

Tree-lined lanes wind and dip down hills and cross cockeyed intersections. These country roads carry residents of Bellevue Park, a quiet enclave off East Market Street, to their warmly lit homes and manors on a blustery winter day.

A little more than a century old with 265 single-family homes, the neighborhood has five grassy common areas, or reservations, and two ponds, formed when the developer dammed three streams that trickle down the slopes of a natural valley.

It's hard to believe, driving past the elms, chestnuts, magnolias and other trees that provide ample shade in the summer, that this neighborhood is situated in a busy urban setting. But it's been here, practically unchanged, since 1907.

"You're sort of in your own little cocoon here. If you went outside the Park, you'd feel that you were far away," said Clark Bucher, who has lived 48 of his 58 years in Bellevue Park, with the 10 years he was away spent in nearby Union Deposit.

Bucher was born in his parent's Market Street home, as he arrived too quickly for his mother to get to the hospital. Bucher describes growing up in the Park as "fantastic." Marveling at the convenience of living in the Park, Bucher said, "I can walk downtown, which I used to as a kid."

It's still a fantastic place for kids, said Debbie Nifong, who, with her husband, Tom, a physician at Penn State Hershey Medical Center, are raising their daughter and two sons.

"The outdoor spaces are wonderful," said Nifong, who moved to the Park in 2001, after living out of state for several years. "We've never felt unsafe. We've never had those concerns."

Initially, when the Nifongs returned to Pennsylvania, they lived in Hummelstown, but Debbie said that, when she sought cultural events and activities for her children, she kept finding herself driving into the city. So they decided to move to Bellevue Park.

"I love the fact that it's in the city," said Nifong, president of



Debbie and Tom Nifong, with their children, Madeline, 8, Julien, 12, and Jude, 14, in front of their large, brick Bellevue Park home.



City or country? A typical street in Bellevue Park: winding, woody.

the Bellevue Park Association, which organizes popular annual events such as Oktoberfest and Sillybration. "It has a real neighborhood feel."

According to the association's website, the Park "reflects the genius of two of America's pioneering advocates of urban beautification and landscape conservation." Those men were J. Horace McFarland, a local businessman and civic leader, and his partner, Warren H. Manning of Reading, Mass., a pre-eminent landscape designer in early twentieth-century America.

With Bellevue Park, McFarland and Manning created the first landscaped urban suburb in Central Pennsylvania.

McFarland's home, built in 1876, still stands at the edge of the park on the corner of 21st Street and Bellevue Road, having undergone recent renovations, and is now up for sale. Its size, close to 5,000 square feet, seems too large for a home, but zoning does not permit any other type of use.

"My understanding is that it would be sold as a residence," said Garrett Rothman of RSR Realtors. "Based on its size, it would be great for weddings, catering or a B&B."

Before McFarland and Manning began designing the 132acre tract, and before the long-since-defunct Union Real Estate Investment Co. began to build and sell homes, the Park was a vineyard, said Bucher, who serves on the board as a director.

Bellevue Park was also the first community in the nation to abandon overhanging utility wires and bury power and phone lines, Bucher said. "The only problem with that is, when you have a problem, you have to have it dug up."

A recurring theme comes up when residents discuss why they choose to live here — convenience to city amenities, jobs and housing prices, which Bucher estimates is about 30 percent less than homes in other tony places like Camp Hill.

"I got a lot more home for my money than I would have elsewhere in the area," said Deborah Musselman, chief lobbyist for the Pennsylvania Newspaper Association. "It's so quiet at night. In the summer time you can hear owls in the dead of night."

Musselman moved from Cumberland County into her 1938 brick colonial eight years ago, in part because it's convenient to her office just over the northern city line. "I didn't need to be driving in from Mechanicsburg anymore," she said.

Around Town

See Spot Run?

Pet Owners Howling for Midtown Dog Park

Michael Walsh

Picture the scene along Riverfront Park: strangers stop to greet each other and dote on the canine companions they each hold on a leash. After they ask each other the usual perfunctory questions — about the dogs' names, breeds and ages — the conversation inevitably will turn to something that is missing: dog parks. Usually, one dog owner will ask the other: "Have you been to the Lower Allen dog park?"

More often than not, the answer is in the affirmative. Why? Because despite all of its great attributes, the City of Harrisburg has yet to join the ranks of dog friendly municipalities that allow for some "off leash" space for its four-legged inhabitants. This may be a case where Harrisburg finds itself on the "tail end" of providing a popular amenity.

Big cities and small towns alike have created parks for people and pets to enjoy the outdoors. To our east, Philadelphia has at least five dog parks. While supported by the city, they are mostly maintained by community volunteers. Philly City Parks Liaison Barb McCabe says this has worked well. So much so, that a "dog committee" was recently formed by community park advocates who want to serve the growing number of dog owners looking for open spaces (and clean drinking water) available for their pups.

Closer to the mid-state, the city of Lancaster has had a popular dog park for nearly a decade. The space was partitioned out of the city-owned Buchanan Park that borders Franklin and Marshall College. City Clerk Jane Spleen said it's been a popular attraction.

And our neighboring townships have also gotten in on the act. You can find a multi-acre dog park at the Lower Allen Community Park on Lisburn Road, and another is under construction near Union

Deposit Road in Lower Paxton Township. It seems that making the trip out of town for this rather simple pleasure has many city dog owners wondering when Harrisburg will join the pack.

Roy Christ has lived in Midtown for nine years and thinks the pieces are starting to come together. "While I was hoping it would have happened sooner, there was not a strong coalition of interested folks in the past," Christ said.

Like many, he thinks the issue is important enough to people to make it a priority for community advocates and city leaders. "The city is growing in every conceivable way — more positively than negatively — and it's a great thing for the community. Dogs bring different folks together who ordinarily would not meet. So, it would be a great thing to help bring all types of people together."

So, it's not for lack of interest and seemingly not for lack of available space either. Numerous vacant lots throughout the city have been discussed by residents as potential parks. But City Councilman Brad Koplinski says he would prefer the space to be created within a city park. He recently asked the Parks and Recreation Office to study viable options and report back with their findings. In the meantime, he suggested that City Island might be a suitable location.

"City Island has great infrastructure and seems to make sense. There is ample parking, and it has the open space necessary for a dog park," said Koplinski.

Being a dog owner himself and having heard from area residents, he thinks it's a great opportunity for the administration, council and citizens to come together and get this done. "A dog park would be just one more reason to move to and live in Harrisburg."

Mike Murphy agrees. He recently moved back into the city and would like some open space for his 10-month-old lab, Penny, to exercise. For now, he's walking her along the river and sometimes visiting the Lower Allen park. "It's 20 miles round trip to



Doggie field of dreams? Some owners want to see a dog park on this lot at 3rd & Verbeke.

Lower Allen, and that's a lot of time and effort for 30 minutes of play," said Murphy, who lives in Uptown. "I would like to see the city have a place close by for the dogs to run."

Still, the prospect of a dog park may face some hurdles. City officials cited insurance liability issues and the city's ongoing financial difficulties as a concern. City spokesman Matt Coulter remained noncommittal. "The creation of a dog park would cost a significant amount of money and, as you know, money is at a premium right now," he said.

Christ remains hopeful. "With a little bit of creative thinking, it will happen."

Mike Walsh lives in Midtown with his black lab/border collie mix, Monty.



Penny, a yellow Labrador retriever, takes owner Mike Murphy for a walk along the Susquehanna River.

Around Town

Still on Duty

Old Riverside Station Serves a New Mission

M. Diane McCormick

You've probably noticed, but there's a neat, old firehouse in the heart of Riverside. It's where Riverside votes, and it has hosted countless flea markets, Night Outs, and Halloween parties sponsored by the Riverside United Neighbors crime watch.

But there are probably some things you didn't know about the charmer at Fourth and Lewis streets. Most notably, Riverside Firehouse is not one of the city's four active fire stations, where the city's 25 or so professional firefighters work. Those pros are augmented by about two dozen active volunteers, who must be certified and trained. In that sense, a newly acquired truck housed at Riverside is playing an active role.

The Harrisburg Fireman's Relief Association bought the gently used 1988 Mack Truck from a fire company in Jericho, N.Y., and spent another \$52,000 adding equipment, such as hoses, nozzles, and air packs, said HFRA President Bill Hoyer, Jr.

HFRA saw the need for the truck because training for volunteers was tying up city equipment, when pieces would have to leave their stations and be sent to Harrisburg Area Community College or some other training site. Plus, two or three paid firefighters are assigned to attend every vehicle, so training consumed that manpower.

The new training truck was housed in Riverside because the city had the space there. It "keeps their piece in their station, and they're available to answer alarms in the city," said Hoyer.

Pennsylvania's fireman's relief associations are state-regulated groups that administer funds generated by a 2 percent fee paid on fire insurance bought from out-of-state firms. Hoyer is a firefighting lifer who became HRFA's president recently. Previous boards, he said, were excellent stewards of the funds but reluctant to actually spend.

"Management of the Harrisburg Volunteer Firefighters' Relief Association must recognize that it has accumulated over \$13 million and that only a small portion of these funds have been used to benefit the volunteer firefighters and the citizens of the city of Harrisburg," said a 2004 state auditor general's report. "Management should consider how it can take some of the burden off the city

budget by maximizing the authorized use of association funds."

Hoyer vowed to put that money to work, and under his watch, HFRA bought the training truck housed at Riverside and has helped the city buy a new, \$580,000 fire engine and a \$700,000 tower truck. "We decided that instead of us having a beaucoup of money to sit on, let's do what we're supposed to be doing with it," Hoyer said. "What good is money in the bank if you're not using it?"

Hoyer justified the training investment by rattling off a long list of certifications required for volunteers — "hazmat annually, air packs, CPR, AED (automated defibrillators), vehicle rescue, water rescue training, structural work, familiarization with equipment. It's a wide range of things."

And then he kept going. "Ropes and rigging. These guys gotta know how to tie their ropes. Confined space equipment. The volunteers have a lot of different training."



The old Riverside Firehouse: a local landmark.

Training sessions are usually held Thursday evenings, at the firehouse or HACC, for about 15 firefighters, Hoyer said.

This training function is just the latest incarnation for the firehouse. The station actually has a very long and interesting history.

Riverside Fire Co. 15 was founded in 1915, "in a district in which there are fine homes," noted an early history. The firehouse, built in 1923, stopped housing city-owned apparatus in 1970, when Harrisburg consolidated many of its fire companies.

The bell in the bell tower dates back to the middle of the nineteenth century, when it sat atop the Pennsylvania Railroad Station in downtown Harrisburg. It was donated from another firehouse that was torn down in 1959.

Today, the city owns the front half of the building and the land, and pays the utility bills. Riverside Fire Co. 15, an allvolunteer organization, owns the back.



Harrisburg firefighters Scott Still, Rob Kumpf, Capt. Gary Neff, Capt. Gary Shannon and Lt. Dave Ritter, in front of their new training vehicle stationed at the old Riverside Firehouse.

Past Tense

Birth of a Landmark

From the Ashes of Fire, a New Capitol Rose

Jason Wilson

arrisburg's signature building, the massive structure at the end of State Street, rose from the ashes of another state Capitol nearly 102 years ago. In recent years, it has undergone extensive renovation, but the construction of Pennsylvania's crown jewel of architectural achievements is no less impressive a story today.

In December 1901, Joseph M. Huston of Philadelphia was chosen as the architect of a project that took the better part of four years to complete. His design was selected as the best from a pool of six submissions.

Huston faced an enormous challenge. He had never executed work on a scale so large, though his design was monumentally grand.

He incorporated numerous architectural styles into the building, including Italian Renaissance, French Renaissance, Tudor and ancient Greek and Roman motifs. The green-tiled dome replicated at one-third-scale that of Saint Peter's Basilica in Rome, and the grand staircase was modeled on the one in the 1868 Paris Opera House.

Construction began in late 1902, five years after fire destroyed the previous Capitol. Workers removed the old north and south office buildings to prepare footers for the new structure. Excavations in this period were done by horse and cart. Assistant architect Stanford Lewis reported 125 men and 60 carts were at work on the footers alone.

The biggest problem after excavation was finding a steady supply of granite with which to face the steel and brick structure. The granite had to rise equally among adjacent tiers to ensure the stability of the walls. Steam winches lifted all granite into place.

By April 1904, the Capitol was under roof except for the dome and smaller domes over the north and south wings — the Senate and House of Representatives, respectively.

Citizens could now see the massive pillars that would support the 272-foot, 52-million-pound dome from any vantage point in the city. The steel skeletal structure of the dome was completed before cold weather halted construction in January 1905.

The dome was still an open steel frame five months later when workers hoisted the gold-painted figure of "Commonwealth" onto its pinnacle using derricks and winches. A workman placed three Indian head pennies under the statue's base, which were found when it was restored in 1998.

On Oct. 4, 1906, Gov. Samuel W. Pennypacker dedicated the Capitol. Its total cost was \$4.5 million. Furnishing its rooms cost another \$8.5 million.

President Theodore Roosevelt attended the dedication. He stood in the soaring, white-marbled Rotunda, and, according to accounts reported by the newspapers of the day, called it the "most handsome" or "handsomest" building he had ever seen.

Today, it's considered among the nation's most beautiful state Capitol buildings, and in 2006 was declared a National Historic Landmark.

Jason L. Wilson is a research historian for the Capitol Preservation Committee.







A new state Capitol rises: workers on an arch; the dome is prepared for the Commonwealth statue; and a city view of the nearly finished building.

Good Eats

A Taste of the Big City

Bricco Brings Culinary Arts, Fine Dining to Harrisburg

Carol Maravic

If you are in the mood for a great dining experience at a stylish upscale restaurant, you could drive for several hours to New York or Philadelphia. Or you could head to Bricco, located on 3rd and Chestnut streets, a modern, Tuscan-themed restaurant that specializes in Mediterranean cuisine, boasts an extensive and affordable wine list and has the look and feel of a big city restaurant.

Bricco is part of International Place, which includes housing for foreign students; the bakery, Ciao!; and Olewine's Meat and Cheese House. The restaurant boasts 6,000-square-feet of space and seats 160 guests.

Opened in 2006, Bricco also serves as a classroom to local college students. It works in partnership with the Olewine School of Culinary Arts at Harrisburg Area Community College (HACC) and Harrisburg Hotel Corporation, managing general partner of the Hilton Harrisburg.

The restaurant helps students learn a wide range of culinary and restaurant management skills as they work alongside Bricco's chefs. Each semester, 25 to 30 future chefs learn everything from sanitation to prepping food and running the hot line. HACC has its own culinary coordinator who is frequently on site to monitor students' progress and make sure the curriculum meets their needs.

"Bricco is a bit off the beaten path, so when we were in the start-up phase, we wanted to look for a unique way to market the restaurant," said Brad Jones, vice president of community development for Harristown Development Corp. "This is such a neat concept because students get hands-on training in every area of the restaurant business."

Jones said they were also looking for "a certain wow factor and a big city feel" when designing Bricco.

"We wanted to market it as a destination restaurant, much closer to home than New York City," he said. "The restaurant has a really unique design, an open kitchen and a lot of space. We want people to walk in here and feel like they are in a totally different city."

So far, he says the success has exceeded expectations, even in tough economic times. This New Year's was the restaurant's most successful ever.

Jason Viscount, general manager and executive chef of Bricco,

says much of the restaurant's success is due in part to the students who work alongside his chefs.

"We can do a lot of things that smaller restaurants don't do because of their participation," Viscount said. "And we work



Elegant, urbane dining rooms at Bricco.

Restaurant Row



Chef Viscount: Food Facts

What he cooks at home – I like to do simple grilling and braised dishes like short ribs.

What he likes to eat – I love trying different kinds of food, particularly Thai.

What he collects – Cookbooks. I have 400 or 500, and I like to have them signed as collectors' items.

Most unique food eaten – A chocolate cigar at Alma De Cuba in Philadelphia. An almond cake wrapped in chocolate mousse and dusted with chocolate.

What he still likes for breakfast – Lamb kidney stew on an English muffin and a slice of tomato — my grandmother's breakfast specialty.

through the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, through its PA Preferred Program, to emphasize the use of local products in our cooking. So we are working with the freshest and best quality ingredients.

Bricco's extensive bar even features a Pennsylvania-produced vodka, and a popular "butcher shop special" at dinner offers diners the finest cuts of meat. Viscount said the restaurant's "seafood tower" is a popular item. He estimates that he shucks 500 to 600 oysters a week, "because you really can't get them anywhere else."

Viscount, a York native, has been in the hospitality industry his entire life. He spent several years as a young boy living in Philadelphia with his grandmother, who took him to some of the finest restaurants in the city. In his middle school years, he worked in two of his father's restaurants, and he went on to attend the Restaurant School of Philadelphia.

"It was a lot different back then — you didn't have the Internet or the Iron Chef," he said. "Being a chef was not considered a glamorous profession by any means."

Since starting at Bricco, Viscount has earned a reputation as one of the best in the business. In 2008, Viscount was named Chef of the Year by the Hershey Harrisburg Tourism and Convention Bureau.

"If you don't have a passion for it, you won't enjoy it. It's not a job where you collect a paycheck and take the weekend off," he said.

Viscount takes a more laid back approach to managing his restaurant and teaching his craft to students. "I have the same high standards, and I expect a lot from the people who work for me and with me," he said. "But you don't see a lot of chefs like that anymore — it's just a different generation. I think you earn the respect of your staff by treating them with respect and helping them succeed."

One thing Viscount would like to do is help more people, particularly young people, find the enjoyment in culinary arts.

"We're hoping to offer educational cooking classes for families in the spring, particularly for young kids," he said. "I'd like to take people to the farmer's market and buy fresh foods, then make the meals, and they can take them home."

Viscount said the restaurant also plans to start opening on Sunday for a family-style luncheon, so that people can experience Bricco at an affordable price.

"We have a lot of ideas for Bricco and are excited about the restaurant," he said. "Our goal is to showcase the great products we have here and to put out food that is fresh, delicious and unique."

Home Cooking Rosemary's Cucina

The Italian **Bread of Life**

A Dying Tradition Finds New Life in Harrisburg

Rosemary Ruggieri Baer

hose of you who read my first column in TheBurg surely noticed that my family was often mentioned. It is hard for me to think, talk, or write about Italian food and cooking without thinking of them. And in reminiscing about the love and great food we shared over a lifetime, it struck me how important bread was to us. We probably had very few meals (the exception being our concession to the great American summer cookout), without Italian bread.

I hear a lot about "low carb diets" these days, a phrase that would be astonishing to the "old-time" Italians. And while I understand the need for many people to follow such a diet for medical reasons. I believe that wonderful bread can have a place for most of us in the meals we eat today. But save the calories for the real thing.

The Harrisburg of the 1950s and '60s had its share of wonderful Italian grocery stores and bakeries. A fair number of Italians settled here, although not as many as in Hershey, and finding foods close to those in their native country was important to them. When I was a little girl, we all piled into the family car each week and visited a small Italian bakery on S. 17th Street in the city. Owned and run by first-generation Italians, this dark little cave of a place was a special experience. The bread was baked in real wood-fired ovens, emerging fragrant and golden brown. My mother would buy round loaves, "mother's loaves," for sandwiches and dozens of hard-crusted small rolls, which she would take home and lovingly wrap in foil to stay fresh in the freezer.

Occasionally, we would run out of our wonderful bread. I remember once, when my mother tried to sneak a grocery store imposter on to our dinner table, the poor quality bread was deemed to be "library paste" by my most unhappy father. So,

with that history, I still look for good bread today, both at home and when dining out. If a restaurant is an Italian one, the bread brought to the table is often an indicator of the food to come.

The old, wood-oven bakery in Harrisburg is gone, and there was a long period of time when good Italian bread was hard to find here. But another generation of bakers now has emerged in the Harrisburg area, which is seeing a new availability of artisan and specialty foods. Two of them are my favorites.

Casero's at the West Shore Farmers Market is owned by two brothers who bake real Italian bread right on the premises Fridays and Saturdays. There, I find still-warm ciabattas, long crusty baguettes and plump dinner loaves in various shapes. Some are dusted with flour and look like they have just emerged from grandmother's kitchen. Sometimes, they offer loaves studded with dark olives or filled with Italian meats. I told one of the brothers that I hadn't had bread like his since I was a child. He smiled and said that I couldn't find better bread. He is right. Flour, yeast, salt and a little olive oil. No additives, no preservatives and no chemistry lab list of ingredients.

The second is Alvaro's, which is in a section of Harrisburg currently experiencing a renaissance. New and renovated homes are taking their place on once dreary and downtrodden streets now called "Old Uptown." It is small and narrow, as many old

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

city homes are, and, on holidays, the line of waiting customers might stretch to the door. In addition to the irresistible pizza, meatballs, pasta, Italian cookies and pastries that line the small shop is a baker's rack way in the back piled high with perfect Italian bread. Alvaro's bread has a wonderful thick crust and a tender heart. Dip it in a fruity olive oil for a delightful treat.

In future columns, I hope to share with you many of the wonderful uses I find for Italian bread. But I urge you to find out for yourself what the authentic version tastes like. Look a little further than the local grocery store, and you may never go back to "library paste" again.

Che buono! Authentic, crusty Italian bread is back in Harrisburg, thanks to Lina and Sal Alvaro of Alvaro's in Old Uptown.



Culture Club

The Artist and His City

Retrospective: Nick T. Ruggieri and His Visions of Harrisburg

Rosemary Ruggieri Baer

When I think of my late father, Nick Ruggieri, or see his work — whether in my home, in a downtown office or on the cover of *TheBurg* — my heart smiles. I never met a person who lived with more gusto.

He arrived in America in 1920. He came with his family from Vieste, Italy, a small fishing village on the Adriatic Sea. His father, a shoemaker, settled in Harrisburg when Nick was 12 and, by all accounts, already drawing and painting.

Nick graduated from the former William Penn High School and studied art in New York City and Florence, Italy. Family finances forced his return to Harrisburg, where he held a variety of "art jobs," including designing the San Giorgio spaghetti box! Sometime in the 1940s, my father became art director of *The Patriot-News*, a job he held until 1980, when he retired at 72.

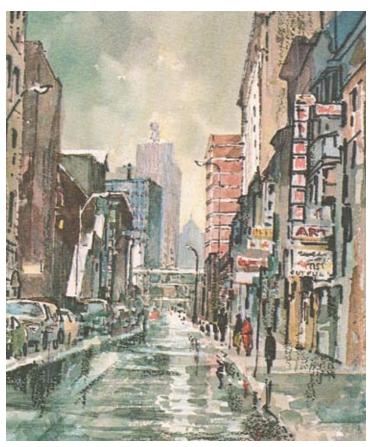
My father immersed himself in the culture, life and energy of Harrisburg. He engaged in numerous community activities, including the Capital Area Science Fair, Scholastic Arts Awards, the Harrisburg Camera Club, the Harrisburg Art Association, the Harrisburg Exchange Club, the city's Centennial celebration and the annual Bal Masque. He taught countless students over the years at his "Monday Night Art Class" in downtown Harrisburg. Many of these individuals are respected and well-known painters in their own right today.



Capitol Park, circa 1970s

Paintings reprinted, courtesy Rosemary Ruggieri Baer

Creator



3rd Street Looking North, circa 1970

In 1971, Nick began his most ambitious undertaking, conceiving and executing an art project commemorating America's Bicentennial. It took four years to complete his "Spirit of 76" Bicentennial art collection: a painting representative of each of Pennsylvania's 67 counties, and a few more besides. At the

completion of the project, his long-time friend and *Patriot* coworker (and co-conspirator in many community projects) William Lunsford spoke of the awe one felt at the "prolific productivity of just one man." Following a stint at the State Museum in Harrisburg, the exhibit toured statewide in an "art mobile" for a year, ending at Valley Forge for the Bicentennial celebration itself.

Nick Ruggieri had many loves: his family first, then his faith, his friends, his beloved Italy and all manner of Italian foods, his art, of course, and taking photographs as a basis for so many of his works. But I will always remember his love of Harrisburg. He thought the little city on the river extraordinarily beautiful and painted it in all its seasons. From his well-known scenes of the Capitol to all the nooks and crannies and rainy streetscapes he could find, my father's paintings of this city cause us to take a second look at the many places here we take for granted.

My only regret is he cannot be here to experience Harrisburg's renaissance of the last several years. He would be thrilled. I can see him now, strolling down Second Street with his cameras around his neck, just waiting for the right angle of the setting sun.

The Burg welcomes work by city artists. Contact our editor or art director.

Passing Judgment

ForthThe Verve

Back in college, I learned in psychology class that our personalities tend to be fixed by early adolescence. Sure, we may tweak a behavior here or there, but the basics probably won't ever change.

That thought occurred to me while I listened to Forth, the long-awaited release from the on-again, off-again British alt-rockers, the Verve. The acrimonious foursome formed in 1989, and, amid repeated break-ups, released several moody, synth-rich albums to broad critical acclaim. Forth is the band's first full-length recording in a decade and, while generally solid, remains perhaps too ensconced in late-1980s-style electronica.

Now, that may be your thing. And, if it is, you'll love songs such as "Love Is Noise" and "Columbo." The opening track, "Sit and Wonder," is the standout among this group. Yes, it relies heavily on musical distortion, but the sound has been nicely updated so the song seems fresh. Meanwhile, the masterful guitar work of Nick McCabe is simultaneously haunting and screeching, giving the track a forbidding quality that someday might find its way into a movie scene in which a character descends into drugs or insanity. And that's meant as a compliment.

Otherwise, the album is uneven. "Noise Epic," for instance, is basically a musical experiment, eight minutes of increasing cacophony. "Valium Skies" is a fine song until the reverb and overdub take flight. By far, the best tracks allow the estimable songwriting talents and passionate vocals of Richard Ashcroft to shine, unburdened by over-produced synthetic distractions. "Rather Be" is simply terrific, a five-and-a-half minute gem, encased by a thundering piano and Ashcroft's plaintive voice. Then there are the back-to-back tracks, "Numbness" and "I See Houses," which surely will please even the most demanding fan of psychedelic rock. No doubt this pair will become favorites of the dorm-room stoner set.

Forth wraps up with a song called "Appalachian Springs." Interestingly, the final track contains everything that's great and not-so-great about the disc. This complex

song sometimes sounds modern, sometimes dated, sometimes melodic, sometimes not. It's a fitting end to an album that could've been excellent, but fell just short as it overreached in its ambitions.

Little HoneyLucinda Williams

Lucinda Williams has been called a female Bob Dylan and the comparison, while overstated, does hold some truth. Yes, the singular songwriting is there, as is the raspy, person-next-door voice. But perhaps the greatest similarity is that, while music snobs generally salivate over Williams, many ordinary listeners simply don't understand the appeal.

Williams' latest CD, Little Honey, will change few minds. In it, Williams continues a decade-long trend to add more rock to her alt-country tendencies. And Williams devotees will be interested to know that their girl, deep into middle age, has finally found a man who might stick around awhile, as we discover in the opening track, "Real Love." In fact, the entire album is more upbeat and – dare I even say it – happier than usual.

Otherwise, *Little Honey* abounds with what fans most love about Williams, but others find challenging: complex songwriting, shamelessly personal lyrics and widely ranging song styles. "Circles and X's" begins *a cappella* before evolving into a country swing; "Tears of Joy" moans with a sexy blues vibe; and the rocker "Honey Bee" sounds as if it could be a missing track from deep within the Beatles' *White Album*. Elvis Costello even makes an appearance, singing the part of a reprobate junkie in the fabulously profane duet, "Jailhouse Tears."

And on it goes like this, shifting gears with each song, until wrapping up with "It's a Long Way to the Top," which recalls some of the best mid-70s work of the Rolling Stones, mixed in a Lucinda-shaped blender. Wow.

Some critics have called Lucinda Williams one of America's best songwriters. Little Honey further gels that reputation. The record, in fact, may be the most creatively diverse and fascinating release of her lengthy career. Lawrance Binda





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On the Outskirts

Love in a Glass

Romance and Kitsch Meld in the Poconos

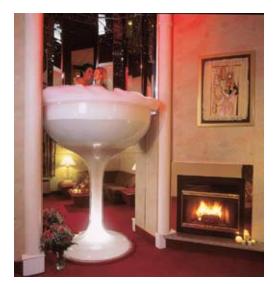
Ellen Perlman

There's something to be said for a hotel room with a heart-shaped swimming pool, a sauna and a swirling, seven-foot champagne glass whirlpool tub. And that something would be: Don't pack a lot of clothing.

A recent visit to Niagara Falls, where dozens of motels beckon with the promise of a soak in a bubbling red heart, left me strangely drawn to the outlandish kitsch of the heart-shaped-tub scene. And so one night, on my way home from a visit to friends in Massachusetts, I found myself checking into Caesars Pocono Resorts' Cove Haven in Lakeville, Pa., a k a "The Land of Love."

The champagne glass tub was the first thing I saw when I got to my room. It was next to a fireplace in the living room. Behind a glass wall to the left was the heart-shaped swimming pool, four-feet deep. Next to that was the in-suite sauna.

But before I jumped in, I headed for the buffet dinner in the resort's cavernous dining room, where I got my first taste of what it's like to be alone in Couples Land. The tables for eight were really tables for four couples, with pairs of chairs pushed together on each side. No one would be joining me, I told my tablemates somewhat defensively. I



Super-sized stemware at Caesars Cove Haven.

was just here to check out the tubs.

At my table were a middle-aged honeymooning couple from Baltimore; a young couple from Columbus, Ohio, who'd been married for four years; and an unmarried couple from New York, whose female half explained that her mother would "kill her" if she got married right now. She was 19, he was 25.

I thought you needed a sense of humor to be here. Maybe not. These couples viewed the resort as the ultimate in romance. "The heart-shaped tub is very romantic," said newlywed Jacqueline Johnson of Baltimore. "I could see how anyone getting one for Valentine's Day would be in Cupid's Land."

Her extremely muscular and macho new husband, Tee, was more amused and intrigued by the idea of the champagne glass tub, but he and his new wife did not have one in their room. "I could slide down the glass like a fireman," he said.

Note to Tee: The stem is closed off to water. In fact, not to burst anyone's bubble, it's not a real stem at all. It does not hold up the tub. It is a piece of plastic attached to the mirrored wall to complete the look of the champagne glass.

Sigh. Reality shatters illusions once again. But that didn't stop me from heading straight for my champagne glass when I got back to my room.

You may be wondering how you get into a seven-foot-tall champagne glass. Over the rim, of course. Oh, you mean, how do you get up to the rim? No ladder needed. There's a staircase that leads up to the bathroom on the second floor. You step down into the tub from there.

So what's it like to luxuriate in a seven-foot-tall bathtub? For starters, those with a fear of heights should think twice. When I moved to the side of the "glass" that protrudes into the living room, I had the sensation that my weight would knock it over, and I and all the water would go tumbling onto the red carpet. You don't have to sit over there, but even on the "safe" side you feel up in the air.

And a note to the prudish: You can see through the tub. It is made of the clear hardened plastic used for helicopter bubbles. On the other hand, there won't typically be a crowd in the room below.

According to the resort, you won't find champagne tubs anywhere else. Morris B. Wilkins, who dreamed them up in 1971, patented the idea, after learning the hard way by not patenting his other brainstorm, the heart-shaped tub. Those tubs now can be found in hotels around the country, from Dubuque, lowa, to Norman, Okla., to Eureka Springs, Ark.

After my bath, I fell asleep on my round bed under the "celestial ceiling," which I flicked on with a switch. The pinpoints of light were pleasant and worked great as a night light.

At breakfast, I met more couples. One of them, Cindy and Kevin Watkins from Massachusetts, are considered "Forever Lovers" because they've visited the resort at least three times. Cindy offered sage advice for new visitors. "Be careful when taking pictures in the room. There's a picture of me in the bubble bath with Kevin fully exposed because there are mirrors everywhere."

All three couples told "I Love Lucy"-like tales of runaway bubbles spilling over the sides of their tubs. Clearly, a little bubble bath goes a long way when several powerful jets are feeding the tub. "We were laughing so hard with those bubbles," said the 56-year-old male half of a couple from New Jersey. Cindy, she of the exposed photo-snapping husband, nodded in hearty agreement. "It sure made memories."

There are other things to do at Cove Haven. After breakfast, I watched as couples with helmets sped around on snowmobiles. There's an indoor ice-skating square, archery, billiards, a workout room and more. Off campus, there are several local ski resorts and a couple of riding stables. At night, the likes of Lewis Black, D.L. Hughley, Bobby Vinton and the Temptations pass through. There's also a lounge act by staff members, who pass out awards for archery contests or the winners of the Triple X Newlywed Game.

Back home, I moved my heartshaped-tub search to the Internet. But none seemed to offer the same over-thetop kitsch, the effect of staying in an adult playhouse, as Cove Haven in the Poconos.

Ellen Perlman blogs about her adventures as a solo traveler. She can be reached at boldlygosolo.com.

Happenings

State Museum Shows New Deal Mural Art

Are you looking for a free, yet fascinating, event during this recession? Then come see how a previous generation depicted its own tough economic times.

The State Museum of Pennsylvania offers guided tours of "A Common Canvas: Pennsylvania's New Deal Post Office Murals." Tours highlight some of the stories behind the murals and artworks installed in post offices across Pennsylvania during the Great Depression.

With 88 artworks in 88 post offices, the Commonwealth boasts the second largest collection of New Deal post office murals in the country. This special exhibition, which runs through May 17, brings them together for the first time. Of special interest: the many artworks depicting everyday life in Pennsylvania during the 1930s and early 1940s

"Second Saturday" tours, led by the exhibition curator and educator, will be offered on the second Saturday of each month through May. Tours begin at 1 p.m. and 2 p.m. and are free to the public. No registration is required.

The State Museum, located at 300 North Street, is open Tuesday through Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sunday, noon to 5 p.m. Closed Mondays. Individuals who need special assistance should call 717-787-6887 or the Pennsylvania TDD relay service at 800-654-5984.



Bad times, great art: Susquehanna Trail (1939), by George Rickey, from the Selinsgrove Post Office and featured at the State Museum exhibit.

Museum Musings

Harsco Science Center. "How People Make Things." Investigate the workings of everyday objects. This colorful, limited-engagement exhibition takes kids right to the factory floor to experience the roles of designer, engineer, maker and manufacturer. Included in the price of admission.

National Civil War Museum. James Hayney, a living historian who portrays President Abraham Lincoln, will attend the Museum's annual winter Community Free Day. The day also will feature "One Brush Stroke," a collaborative art and civics project bringing the legacy of Abraham Lincoln alive. Feb. 14. Free.

The museum also is showing "Personal History: Stories of War." This exhibit highlights the personal story behind each of the artifacts on display, giving visitors a true glimpse into the lives of several individuals. Through Mar. 14. Included with museum ticket. One Lincoln Circle at Reservoir.

Susquehanna Art Museum. The DŌSHI Gallery at the Susquehanna Art Museum presents "Fresh Light," an exhibit of photography by Carlisle artist Guy Freeman. Feb. 12-Mar. 15. Artist reception: Feb. 12, 5 p.m. to 7 p.m., open to the public.

The museum's Main Gallery features "Art and Illusion: Selections from the Frederick R. Weisman Art Foundation," which showcases more than 70 works from the Frederick R. Weisman Art Foundation, one of the country's most prominent collections of modern and contemporary art. Through Apr. 19. 301 Market Street.

H.U. Offers Summer Courses for Educators

Harrisburg University will offer graduate courses in Learning Technologies to educators interested in strengthening their technology integration skills.

The Summer 2009 Clinic courses provide hands-on exploration of learning technologies, and incorporate best practices for teaching and learning as part of technology integration.

Cost for each multi-day course is \$1,660 and tuition reimbursement deferrals are available. Cost includes tuition, all materials, lunch, refreshments and parking.

Sign up for information updates and registration details at EdTechClinics@HarrisburgU.net or call 717-901-5125.

Whitaker Watch

Wayman Tisdale. Former NBA icon performs selections from his numerous jazz records, including from his newest CD, *Rebound*. Hear how Tisdale's fascinating life has informed his music. Feb. 5, 7:30 p.m. Tickets: \$41.50.

Three Girls & Their Buddy. Roots-country musician Buddy Miller is joined on stage by three of America's greatest female singer-songwriters: Emmylou Harris, Shawn Colvin and Patty Griffin. At the Forum. Feb. 5, 7:30 p.m. Tickets: \$49 and \$59.

Guitar Blues. Guitar masters Jorma Kaukonen, Robben Ford and Ruthie Foster combine talents to deliver a blues-packed evening. Feb. 6, 8 p.m. Tickets: \$34 and \$38.

The McDades. Family fivesome brings a fascinating mix of folk, jazz and world music to Stage 2. Feb. 6, 7:30 p.m. Tickets: \$20.

Ruthless! The Musical. This spoof of Hollywood and Broadway classics takes to the stage for a week of performances. Feb. 13-22. Wed. and Thurs., 7:30 p.m.; Fri. and Sat., 8 p.m.; Sun., 2 p.m.; Tickets: \$17, \$28 and \$32.

The Fab Faux. Premier Beatles tribute band rocks Harrisburg, joined on stage by the Hogshead Horns and the Creme Tangerine Strings. At the Forum. Feb. 14, 8 p.m. Tickets: \$35 and \$45.

Bruce in the USA. It's an all-Boss evening from this Bruce Springsteen & the E Street Band tribute group. Feb. 27, 7:30 p.m, \$25.

Maria Bachmann & Jon Klibonoff. Enjoy the world premier of a sonata for piano and violin by renowned composer Philip Glass. This work was commissioned in honor of Lucy Miller Murray, founding director of Market Square Concerts. Feb. 28, 8 p.m.

Young College Artists and Collegiate & Resident Concert Artists. The Wednesday Club presents recitals of classical music by its performing members. Mar. 1, 2 p.m. and 4 p.m., respectively. Free, \$5 donation suggested.

Josh Blue. The *Last Comic Standing* participant comes to town for a night of fun. Mar. 7, 8 p.m. Tickets: \$28.

The Peking Acrobats. Experience gravity-defying feats with this team of world-renown acrobats. Mar. 8, 3 p.m. & 7:30 p.m. Tickets: \$28 adults, \$20 children 12 and under.

Happenings

City Celebrates Black History Month

arrisburg plans a full slate of activities during February to mark Black History Month, an annual celebration of African-American history and culture.

Events will be held throughout the city, culminating on Feb. 21 with the Tenth Annual Black History Gala, which benefits the Black History Enrichment Series.

The gala at the Hilton Harrisburg kicks off at 6:30 p.m. It features an exhibit of photos from the 2008 "Kids' Photo Camp," a cocktail reception, a hot buffet dinner and a performance by young participants in the 2008 Black History Enrichment Series. Afterwards, local favorites Diane Wilson and Dred "Perky" Scott will perform a special cabaret show, backed up by a jazz quintet. Following the show, local D.J. Robert Williams will keep the party going well into the night.

The recent inauguration of President Barack Obama is certain to make this year's gala memorable. Other city events for Black History Month include:

Feb. 7, 14, 21 — Nate Gadsden conducts drama and self-esteem workshops as a follow-up to Wombworks performances and towards creating Harrisburg's own original dramatic piece for performances in schools. Brownstone Building, Reservoir Park.

Feb. 6-Mar. 31 — Black History Art Exhibit in Reservoir Park Mansion and City Government Center, exhibit of winners of Third Annual Harrisburg School District Art Contest, grades 5-12, entitled "Images of Africa."

Feb. 6-Mar. 31 — Black History Month Art Exhibit, featuring student photos from 2008 Summer Photo Camp with Harrisburg Camera Club. Exhibit also features artist Judith Neil and photographer Danny Huston at the Reservoir Park Mansion.

Feb. 7 — Black History Month Art Exhibit Reception and High School Contest Awards Ceremony, Reservoir Park Mansion, 2-4 pm.

Feb. 7 — AKA Sorority/Literary Council, "Read In," 10:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m. MLK City Government Center Atrium.

Visit www.harrisburgevents.com for more information on all events.

Music Conference Rocks Harrisburg

The 13th Annual Millennium Music Conference & Showcase kicks off Feb. 12 at the Radisson Penn Harris Hotel & Convention Center in Camp Hill, as well as 28 showcase venues around Harrisburg

The conference will feature two full days of music business panels, clinics, workshops and a trade show. The afternoon conference is open to the public.

The event also celebrates new music with four nights of performances by more than 250 original acts and artists at 25 bars, restaurants and coffee houses.

"We'll showcase over 250 original acts and artists from all across the country, so we're really going to rock the recession," said Event Director John Harris. "All of the shows at night are open to the public and most are free of charge."

For more information, visit www. MMC13.com or call 717-221-1124.

Gilbert & Sullivan's *Iolanthe*Performed by HSO This Month

The Harrisburg Symphony Orchestra continues its Capital BlueCross Pops Series on Feb. 7 and 8 with Gilbert & Sullivan's *lolanthe*.

A comic opera about an exiled fairy, *lolanthe* is wrought with social commentary and satirical jabs. Maestro Stuart Malina is bringing his cousin Joshua Malina, of television's *West Wing* fame, and brother Joel Malina back to the Forum stage for this Gilbert & Sullivan classic.

Tickets for *lolanthe* are available online at harrisburgsymphony.org or by calling 717-545-5527.



HSO Maestro Stuart Malina

The Stage Door

Gamut Theatre

Aristophanes' *Lysistrata*, an ancient story of the battle of the sexes. Due to mature themes, no children under 12 will be admitted. Students under 17 will not be admitted without a parent or guardian. Gamut Classic Theatre, Third Floor of Strawberry Square in Harrisburg. March 7-29. Tickets: 717-238-4111.

Popcorn Hat Players at the Gamut

Pinocchio, the classic tale of a wooden boy who dreams of being real. Feb. 4-28. Wed. and Thurs., 10:15 a.m., Sat., 1 p.m. Tickets: 717-238-4111.

Open Stage of Harrisburg

Rabbit Hole, winner of the 2006 Pulitzer Prize for Drama. 223 Walnut Street, Harrisburg. Feb. 6-Mar. 1. Thurs., Fri. and Sat., 8 p.m.; Feb. 15 and Mar. 1, 2:30 p.m.; Feb. 18 and Feb. 22, 7 p.m. Tickets: 717-214-ARTS.

Rose Lehrman Arts Center

- Shakespeare's *Henry V,* a historical romance set in 15th century England. Feb. 18, 7:30 p.m.
- Rennie Harris Puremovement. Rennie Harris and his electrifying dance company have thrilled audiences with their popular dance styles of hiphop, house, popping, locking, stepping and break dancing. Feb. 27 and 28, 8 p.m.
- Hormonal Imbalance, with the 4 Bitchin' Babes. Prepare for a side-splitting, hot-swinging musical revue starring singer/songwriters Sally Fingerett, Debi Smith, Nancy Moran and Deirdre Flint. Mar. 21, 8 p.m.

All shows: One HACC Drive, Harrisburg. Tickets: 717-231-ROSE.

Theatre Harrisburg

- Ruthless! The Musical. Feb. 13-22. See details on previous page under "Whitaker Watch."
- Rodgers & Company. Mar. 6-7, 8 p.m.; Mar. 8, 2 p.m. At Theatre Harrisburg's Krevsky Center, 6th and Hurlock streets, Harrisburg. Tickets available only through Theatre Harrisburg's business center, 717-232-5501, ext. 21.

Oyster Mill Playhouse

Dial "M" for Murder asks the question: is there such a thing as a perfect murder? Opens Mar. 6. Individual tickets go on sale Feb. 9. Call 717-737-6768. 1001 Oyster Mill Road, Camp Hill.

Home & Family

Mural Honors First SciTech Principal

Students, faculty and city officials recently gathered to unveil and dedicate a mural in honor of Lisa Waller, the first principal of the Harrisburg High School of Science and Technology.

The large mural is painted in bold colors and occupies a prominent wall in the Lisa Waller Student Center, also named for the late principal. It was created by several SciTech students under the coordination of local artist Nataki Bhatti.

Waller took the reins of SciTech High upon its founding. She continued as principal until her untimely death in February 2007 following a brave struggle with cancer.

"This mural is an impressive example of what can be accomplished with partnerships like the one between the district and artist Nataki Bhatti," said Gerald W. Kohn, superintendent of the school district. "It not only gave the students a fantastic hands-on learning experience, but also will preserve Ms. Waller's memory for generations of students"

Funding for this project was provided by the Lisa Waller Fund at the Harrisburg Public School Foundation (HPSF). Total project costs for the mural were \$3,500, which included funding from HPSF and from the district's summer school program.

Lisa Waller was born in 1967 in Harrisburg, and, according to family and friends, knew from early on that education was her way out of a difficult home life. As a teen, she was active in the community, volunteering for multiple worthy causes. It was during this time that she learned to mentor young people and even to create lesson plans. Afterwards, she was determined to become a school administrator.

After graduating from Harrisburg High School, she earned a bachelor's degree from the Pennsylvania State University and a master's degree in education administration from Temple University. She began teaching in the school district in 1990 and quickly established herself as a rising star on Harrisburg's educational scene, according to city officials.

"We will always be grateful to Lisa Waller for her vision and dedication in both the academic planning and early leadership of this school, an extraordinary example of what can be accomplished when the absolute best educational practices are put into action," said Superintendent Kohn.



In memoriam: student artist Miriah Vaughn and project leader Nataki Bhatti in front of their creation, a new mural honoring Lisa Waller, SciTech High's first principal.

Young Burgers

At the Libraries

Pajama Time

Wind up and wind down with stories, music and activities. For children ages 3-6 and their adults. Registration required. Call 652-9380, option 5. Thursday, Feb. 5, 7 p.m. East Shore Area Library, 4501 Ethel Street

Family Explor-a-Story

Stories, songs and a craft for the whole family. Registration required. Call 232-7286, ext. 108. Saturday, Feb. 7, 1 p.m. Olewine Memorial Library, 2410 N. Third Street

Twos at Twilight

Explore rhythm, rhyme and wordplay with stories and activities just right for your inquisitive toddler. For two-year olds and their adults. Registration required. Call 652-9380, option 5. Thursday, Feb. 12, 6 p.m. East Shore Area Library, 4501 Ethel Street

Daddy Saturday

Join other dads and their kids, ages 3-6, for a lively session of stories, rhymes, songs and activities. Registration required. Call 652-9380. Saturday, Feb. 14, 11 a.m. East Shore Area Library, 4501 Ethel Street

8 to 12 Book Club

Volunteers from Idearc Media will lead a book club for children ages 8 to 12. Registration required. Call 232-7286, ext. 108. Wednesday, Feb. 18, 3:45 p.m. Olewine Memorial Library, 2410 N. Third Street

Born to Read - Books for Babies @ MOM

A special program for newborns up to 6 months old. Begin the fun of sharing rhymes and music with your baby. Registration on an ongoing basis. Call 232-7286, ext. 104 Thursday, Feb. 19, 1 p.m. Olewine Memorial Library, 2410 N. Third Street

BookRATs

Read a book and talk about what you've read. You'll also do a craft or activity, have a snack and pick a book for next month's meeting. BookRATs meetings are for kids 6-10 years old. Registration required. Call 652-9380, option 5. Thursday, Feb. 19, 6 p.m.
East Shore Area Library, 4501 Ethel Street

Born to Read - Ones Upon a Time

A free library program to help families discover the joy of reading together. For parents, grandparents and babies up to 23 months of age.
• Tuesdays, Feb. 17 & 24, 10:30 a.m.
East Shore Area Library, 4501 Ethel Street
• Thursdays, Feb. 19 & 26, 10:30 a.m.
Olewine Memorial Library, 2410 N. Third Street
• Fridays, Feb. 20 & 27, 10:30 a.m.
Kline Library, 530 S. 29th Street

Bricks & Mortars

Coal Heat: Back to the Future?

Many Older Houses Already Equipped for Return to Traditional Fuel

M. Diane McCormick

Many city dwellers may have noticed that curious little chute in their homes that leads from the sidewalk to the basement. That's where the coal that once heated most homes — especially the anthracite abundant in northeastern Pennsylvania — was delivered.

Today, with high energy prices, coal heat is making something of a comeback locally. Kuntz and Son, based in Hummelstown, reports increasing residential demand for anthracite coal, including from people who live in old homes in and around Harrisburg, said owner Ed Kuntz.

"It's still the cheapest way to heat," Kuntz said. "It's a good, warm, dry heat."

Sure, there are some downsides. Some hoppers don't work longer than two days at a time, so the fire will go out when the homeowner goes away, Kuntz said. And preventing coal dust from floating into the house requires careful handling — a process that today's homeowners aren't accustomed to.

"Over the generations, people forgot how to stoke because they didn't learn it from their dad," Kuntz said.

Despite these drawbacks, coal is regaining some traction for whole-home and supplemental heating. Natural gas and oil heat most northeastern U.S. homes, and even though last year's high prices have fallen to 2005 levels, many homeowners and renters are still reeling from dizzying cost increases and uncertainty over future heating bills.

While residents can turn down thermostats and bundle up to save a few dollars, they can also change their heating systems for savings of up to 50 percent, and that's where coal and other alternatives enter the picture.

Coal is abundant, nearby (customers aren't paying high shipping costs to get it from Lackawanna County) and provides the most heat per unit than any other source.



Ed Kuntz, delivering on a frosty morning, reports more Harrisburg homes using coal.

One ton of anthracite cost about \$120 when this winter began, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, roughly equivalent to \$380 worth of heating oil.

Last winter, Mike Grabuloff heated his Linglestown-area home all winter on three tons of coal — at that time, about \$600 worth. Where did he put it all? In a basement bin about four-feet square and eight feet high.

"It's inexpensive, and it's an even kind of heat," Grabuloff said. "You stay warm. If you have an oil furnace, it blasts on every 10 or 15 minutes."

Many other homeowners are starting to realize that they don't need to heat the whole home at once, so they use coal, wood or pellet stoves as supplements. Today's generation of stoves — some of which can convert between, say, coal and wood — heat first floors or family rooms, while the thermostat stays low and keeps the wholehouse furnace from running overtime.

Furnaces and stoves that run on coal and pellets, which are usually made from sawdust, can come with hoppers that automatically load the fuel.

"You put coal in the hopper and clean the ash pan," Grabuloff said. "It doesn't take a lot to run the furnace."

He even likes the fact that one delivery covers the whole winter, so he doesn't have to worry about missing an oil delivery during a blizzard.

Coal has drawbacks, of course.

Hoppers run on electricity, so they fail during blackouts (although Grabuloff gets around that with a generator on hand). Coal stoves release fine particles into the air that can aggravate asthma and other respiratory problems. And debates continue to rage on the environmental price paid to extract coal from the earth and burn it into the air.

But for pure warmth and value, coal is certainly an option. Residential consumption is still only a tiny fraction of coal's use nationwide, but coal-using homeowners are a growing minority.

Want to know more about using coal — or, for that matter, any other heating source? Check out the U.S. Energy Information Administration's outstanding Web site at www.eia.doe.gov. If the answer isn't there, it probably doesn't exist.

Wags & Whiskers

When a Pet Dies

Take Time to Grieve, Cope with the Loss

Todd Rubey, DVM

Most of us have lost someone or something close to us, a family member, a friend, a co-worker. The loss of a pet is not much different. Everybody copes with death in his or her own way, and there is no right or wrong process. Grieving over a pet is a natural feeling.

I am frequently asked by clients how to grieve when their beloved pet passes away. I'm often at a loss for words when asked this question. This is something that they don't really prepare us for in veterinary school. We're given all of the book smarts, and even some ethics instruction, but you can't extract from a book what to say to a client when they ask what they are going to do now that "Fido" is gone.

Most of our pets have a very short lifespan compared to us. Every pet owner is going to have to deal with loss, probably many times over. When a person gets another pet after one has died, I feel it is important to not think of it as "in the place of," but rather "in addition to" the lost pet. The memories will always be there. Comparisons will certainly arise, but that is what keeps the deceased pet alive within us.

When a pet dies, a piece of the owner goes along with it. This creates a void, an emptiness. So, I suggest to people ways to begin to fill this void. First, they should give it some time. Don't expect it to be okay tomorrow. Secondly, it is fine to cry over a pet; it's not embarrassing. Crying is a natural release of emotion. Third, find someone to talk to – try not to bottle up your emotions. Fourth, don't be afraid to get another pet.

Helping the children and other pets in the family is another factor to consider. The death of a pet is often the first experience with death that a child will encounter. The age of the child drastically affects how he or she will react. We, as parents, need

to be prepared for varying questions and emotions, but we also can't hide our feelings from our children. The other pets in the house may be affected as well. If there are two pets that have grown up and lived together for many years, it is common for the surviving pet to show changes both emotionally and physically. This is going to require some special time and TLC to help. Who knows if the surviving pet knows precisely what is going on or that "Fido" isn't coming back? It's up to us to do our best to provide comfort during this time of change.

As a veterinarian, I have the ability and legal right to put animals to sleep, euthanasia. It is one of the toughest things that I do on a daily basis and one of the biggest differences between veterinary medicine and human medicine. In presenting euthanasia as an option for the family, it opens the door for the grieving process. The decision, for most people, is agonizing, as well it should be. Sometimes the family is prepared ahead of time, and sometimes they are forced into a decision on the spot. Regardless, some level of grief will set in.

Whether the death is sudden and unexpected or planned and prepared for, it is natural to feel grief. Problems arise when



Todd Rubey, DVM, a veterinarian for 11 years, works for the Colonial Park Animal Clinic. He has a wife, three kids, one dog, two cats, one tortoise, five snakes and fish.

the grief is allowed to take over all emotions or allowed to run someone's life. This is when help is needed. It's not wrong to ask for help or to talk about the loss of a pet. My shoulder has absorbed many tears over the years, and the amount of stories and memories I've been told is immense. That is one of the rewards of my job.

Do you have a question for Dr. Rubey or a suggestion for this column? Please send it to our editor Pete at pdurantine@theburgnews. com.

TheBurg Pet of the Month



Lexie, a German shepherd, and owner Clark Bucher inside their Bellevue Park home.

Game Boards

New Board Games: Give Them a Spin

Erik Arneson

It's the depth of winter in Harrisburg, a time when families begin to get antsy for interesting indoor activities. Here's my suggestion: give a new board game a go.

Just about everyone is familiar with some board games and card games. If not Monopoly, Scrabble and Uno, then Backgammon, Checkers and Poker.

But literally thousands of new games are published every year by hundreds of companies. Most of these games will sell a couple thousand copies and quickly fade into obscurity. Many of them are financed by second mortgages, with cars displaced from garages to make room for box after box packed with a game that its creator believed was sure to be the "next big thing."

A precious few games will become hits, selling hundreds of thousands — maybe even millions — of copies. Hasbro, now the corporate parent of both Parker Brothers and Milton Bradley, dominates the U.S. game market. But a growing number of small and mid-size publishers are releasing very compelling games.

My goal is to introduce you to fun and interesting games which may have flown under your radar until now.

Wits & Wagers - Trivia/Party Game

For 3 to 21 players, ages 10 and up.

This exceptionally fun and clever game mixes gambling with a trivia format, which means you don't need to know the answers to win. Every question can be answered numerically (e.g. "In dollars, how much was each extra paid to run across the beach and scream in the movie Jaws?"), and players all answer secretly on small dry-erase boards.

The answers are then revealed and sorted from high to low onto the casino-style betting mat, and you have 30 seconds to bet on which is correct. You can bet on up to two answers, and you don't have to bet on your own. The answers in the middle of the range are most often correct, but they also pay the lowest odds — so you might want to take a

chance on a more extreme guess.

When the sand timer runs out, the winning bets are revealed and the players get paid according to the odds. After seven rounds, the player with the most chips is the winner.

If you typically don't like trivia games, give Wits & Wagers a try. I always have a blast playing it, win or lose.

Designed by Dominic Crapuchettes, Satish Pillalamarri and Nate Heasley, published by North Star Games, www. northstargames.com.



Pandemic - Strategy Game

For 2 to 4 players, ages 10 and up.

Now I will try to convince you that a game about infectious diseases is fun ...

Pandemic is a cooperative board game in which everyone works together to eradicate four diseases. Players travel the world to contain ever-spreading infections while developing the cures. Each player has a unique role and a special power. For example, the scientist can cure a disease more easily, while the medic is skilled at containing outbreaks.

Every time I play Pandemic, the game is packed with tension and drama. Reading the rulebook might take a little longer than usual, but it is definitely time well spent.

Designed by Matt Leacock, published by Z-Man Games, www.zmangames.com.





Erik Arneson works in Harrisburg and writes about board games and card games for About.com at http://boardgames.about.com.

Snorta - Children's Game

For 3 to 8 players, ages 6 and up.

This children's party game comes with 12 plastic animals, 8 plastic barns and a big deck of cards. You first choose an animal and — after everyone sees all the choices — hide it in a barn. The cards are dealt as evenly as possible in face-down stacks.

The game itself is very fast-paced, as players take turns flipping a card face-up. When a new card matches one already on the table, the two players involved race to be the first to make the noise of the other's hidden animal. The trick is that your brain wants to make the noise of the animal on the paired cards — but that's probably not the right one. The loser of a challenge takes all of the cards in front of both players. The goal is to be the first to lose all of your cards.

Because Snorta has a strong memory element, children often can compete evenly with adults. I've always found this game to be enjoyed by all ages.

Designed by Chris Childs and Tony Richardson, published by Mattel and Out of the Box Publishing, www.snorta.com.



Sports & Bodies

Senior Health

Preventing Medication Errors

A Few Simple Steps Will Avoid Common Mistakes

Dr. John Goldman

One of the most common types of medical errors is a *medication* error.

A drug error can happen to almost anyone. Four out of five adult Americans use a prescription medication, over the counter drug or dietary supplement on a regular basis, and nearly one third of all adults take five or more medications.

The potential for prescription errors is increased because most patients are seeing multiple doctors, all of whom may modify their drug regime. Consequently, the Institute of Medicine estimates that 1.5 million preventable drug errors occur and 500,000 people are injured as a result of these errors each year in the United States. A medication error is less likely if you take an active role in your own care and follow a few simple steps.

Know your medications — Maintain a list of the drugs you take. This list should include the names (both generic and brand), doses and frequencies of the drugs you are on. Remember: if the dosages of any of your medications change, or if a new medication is added or an old medication is deleted, you should ask the doctor to explain why. Asking will help you understand your own care and ensure the change was not made in error.

Bring your medication list to all appointments — The highest risk of errors occurs during "transitions," when you go from one doctor to another or you go in or out of the hospital. Communication between your inpatient and outpatient physicians is often poor, and even communication among your different outpatient doctors can be problematic. Consequently, you should bring your medication list with you to all appointments.

If you are admitted to a hospital, bring your drug list to the hospital to make sure you are admitted on the correct medications. When you are discharged from the hospital, you should be given a complete list of your new prescriptions. You should compare your discharge medications to your pre-admission medications. If any drug was added, stopped or the dose was changed, find out why. This will ensure that no medications are accidentally omitted and help your outpatient doctor understand any changes made while you were hospitalized.

Keep track of your old medications —
One of the most common mistakes is for a physician to give a patient a medication that a previous doctor prescribed that caused a side effect. You should maintain a list of



Dr. John Goldman is the Internal Medicine Program Director at PinnacleHealth and Vice-Chairman of Internal Medicine.

drugs that caused an adverse reaction and what that reaction was. This list will prevent you from being given a medication that you did not tolerate twice.

Keep track of your allergies — Know the name of any medications you are allergic to and what happens when you take them. If you have a serious allergy — your throat swells, your blood pressure drops or you stop breathing — you should have a medical alert bracelet so that you are not accidentally given the medication in an emergency situation.

It is estimated that at least 7,000 Americans die from drug-related errors each year. By taking an active role in your care, tracking your medications, tracking your allergies and tracking your side effects, you can ensure you are not one of them.



Staying fit: a recent seniors' water aerobics class at the East Shore YMCA. See related story on the benefits and popularity of swimming on page 29.

Reach your community with an ad in TheBurg.

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The Great Outdoors

On Frozen Pond

When the Weather Outside Is Frightful — Go Fish!

Kermit G. Henning

admit it. When the winter wind is howling and the snow is drifting, I would much rather be inside by the fire with a hot cup of coffee or a piping-hot bowl of soup. After shoveling the sidewalks, clearing the driveway and cleaning off the vehicles, I am anxious to beat a path inside to warm my bones.

But just let me hear the fish are biting, and I'm all about the outdoors. Giving up the warmth and comfort of the family room to spend the day on the ice may seem contradictory, but a day of ice fishing gives a chance for good catches and a welcome relief from cabin fever.

Ice fishing can be both fun and rewarding, but also dangerous. Taking a few precautions and being prepared for any situation will ensure a safe day on the ice. Before venturing out, make sure you have told someone where you are going and when you expect to return.

The foremost concern when venturing out on the hard water is the thickness of the ice itself. This is especially true early and late in the season. Never venture out on less than four inches of solid ice — even more on ice over flowing water and currents. It's always a good idea to wear a life preserver and test the ice with a chisel as you proceed. Late season ice tends to rot in patches and is not always noticeable from shore. Be careful, too, of ice around weeds, beaver lodges and other obstructions.

Dressing properly for a day on the ice is essential. The onset of hypothermia is not always noticeable, but once you start slurring words, shivering uncontrollably and becoming disoriented, it's time for immediate help. Fishing with a friend is always a good idea.

Your ice fishing clothes should include several layers. The first layer is to wick moisture away from a sweaty body. Walking to your spot on the ice, setting up your rig,

even running from tip-up to tip-up when the fish are really biting can work up a sweat that will freeze your clothes and your body. Polypropylene is an excellent choice here.

The second layer is for warmth — either wool, fleece or down. This insulates the body and keeps warmth in. A good, warm hat and mittens work here too, and, on those bitter days, a hood or ear flaps, a facemask and neck warmer.

Your outer layer should be designed to break the wind. A nylon jumpsuit or parka is ideal. Felt-lined pac boots and large socks will do well to keep your feet warm from the constant contact with the ice.

Gearing up for ice fishing is not as complicated as you may imagine. First of all, make sure you have your new 2009 fishing license. You'll need a good sharp ice auger to make your holes and a skimmer to keep the holes free of ice while fishing. If you move around a lot or the ice is thick, a power auger sure does make the job easier.

Your choice of fishing style dictates whether you want to use a light jigging rod or tip-ups. For smaller panfish, crappies, perch and trout, I prefer to use a rod with tiny jigs, spoons and ice flies. Light wire hooks in sizes 10 to 12 are good for small minnows, meal worms and other baits.

If larger fish are targeted, like pike and walleye, tip-ups rigged with large minnows work well. Use light wire leaders and 2/0 to 6/0 size hooks.

Oh, one last thing. In the cold weather that is ice fishing, high-energy food and hot drinks will keep you comfortable. Nothing beats a thermos of hot chocolate, coffee or soup when the temperatures drop.

It's snowing outside right now, and the wind is whistling. My wood box is full, the fire is roaring and the coffee brewing. It sure is comfy in here, but I know it's only a matter of time before I'll be bundled up and perched on a 5-gallon bucket, trying to persuade the fish to cooperate.

A nice mess of fresh-caught fillets makes the whole trip worthwhile. Get out there and give it try. And be safe.



Kermit G. Henning, host of abc27 Outdoors TV, is a past president and chairman of the board of the Pennsylvania Outdoor Writers Association, and a member of the Outdoor Writers Association of America.

Ice Fishing in Our Area: the Cold, Hard Facts

There are several excellent bodies of water in the Central Pennsylvania area where ice fishing is both popular and productive. On all waters, make sure the ice is safe before venturing out.

Gifford Pinchot State Park in York County is home to 340-acre Pinchot Lake. Pinchot has a minimum ice thickness of 7.5 inches before access is granted to fishermen. Targeted species include largemouth bass, walleye, muskellunge, perch, crappie and bluegill. Contact the park at 717-432-5011.

Lake Marburg, in Codorus State Park, is a 1,275-acre lake in southern York County. The park recommends at least 4 inches of ice thickness before fishing. The entire lake is open to fishing except for the skating area. Large numbers of white and yellow perch are taken here each winter, along with big walleyes and northern pike. 717- 637-2816.

Memorial Lake, in Lebanon County, is surrounded by Fort Indiantown Gap Military Reservation. The park issues ice condition updates at www.dcnr.state.pa.us. The 85-acre lake has good populations of muskellunge, pickerel and perch. 717-865-6470.

In Perry County, near the town of Newport, lies Little Buffalo State Park. The ice on 88-acre Holman Lake is not monitored, but they recommend a 4-inch minimum thickness for safety. This lake is known for a high panfish harvest, but also has trout and other warmwater species. 717-567-9255.

Move It!

Take a Dive

"Phelps Phenom" Washes Over Harrisburg Pools

Dee Fisher

A recent article in *LifeScript* asked the following question: "Have you ever watched the Olympics and found yourself in awe of the professional swimmers' physiques? Their long, lean and toned muscular bodies seem to glide through the water effortlessly. Swimmers are in fantastic shape and those who swim regularly know that they not only look great on the outside, but feel just as great on the inside. The health benefits of swimming are almost unmatched by most any other sport."

It's been six months since Michael Phelps set his record eight gold medals in the 2008 Olympics games in Beijing. As aquatics director for the East Shore YMCA, I was excited to see someone with this amazing talent bring a revived interest to swimming as no one had since Mark Spitz, when I was a child.

The Phelps Phenom, as those in the field called it, created a surge of phone calls inquiring about swimming lessons and competitive swim teams throughout the local area. I wondered if this was something specific to Harrisburg. So, to get a better feel, I asked some of my aquatic cohorts for their observations.

LuAnn Hetherington, head coach of the Susquehanna High School Swim Team (which, coincidentally uses the East Shore Y pool for practices) and the East Pennsboro Aquatic Club, told me that, while she didn't feel that numbers on the high school team had anything to do with Phelps, the numbers at East Pennsboro are significantly higher — and that the kids on that team are very motivated.

Kathy Wulfers-Kroon, head guard/ instructor of the East Shore Y pool, and mother of one swimmer on the Aquatic Club of the West Shore, told me that there has been a definite increase of swimmers on her daughter, Maria's, team this season. She is attributing it to the Olympics and, specifically, to Michael Phelps.

Rich Shinnick, senior director of the Southern Branch YMCA and head swim coach for the Susquehannock High School responded: "I had several reporters contact me about Phelps and whether I saw an increase in participation due to his accomplishments and national pride. (While) we do have a larger amount of swimmers this year, I cannot attribute it to Michael or any other Olympic-caliber swimmer. Most of the swimmers are swimming because they either want to try something new or want to share the team experience with each other. We don't have a lot of fast swimmers, but their hearts are in the right place."

Speaking of the YMCA, did you know that historians credit the YMCA with not only creating the first formalized swimming lessons (1910) and pioneering a course in lifesaving (1913), but also with housing the first indoor swimming pool (1885) and inventing the first filtration system (1909)?

No? How about this one: did you know that the mission statement of the YMCA is "to put Christian principles into practice through programs which build a healthy spirit, mind, and body for all?" Yes? Well, did you know that learning how to



Dee Fisher is the Aquatics Director at the East Shore YMCA. Read more about the benefits of swimming in Dee's May column.

swim at the YMCA is more than just stroke mechanics and water orientation? It also incorporates personal safety, personal growth, water sports and games, and rescue skills

As Betty Owings, volunteer Deep Water Power Hour instructor, told me: "My water exercise class is not exactly swimming, but, for me, it is a lifeline to being ambulatory. (I suffer a disability of avascular necrosis in bilateral knees and ankles.) It is non-weight-bearing; thus no pain. And I can still build muscle, which adds support to my frame. It is aerobic and helps keep body weight down, a real enemy to almost any physical problem, for anyone."



Cicily Waeger of Lemoyne and Russell Roebuck of Harrisburg take to the water at the East Shore YMCA. Many pools have experienced membership growth since Michael Phelps snagged eight gold medals at the summer Olympics.

One More Thing ...

Biker Buddies

A Woman, a Bicycle, Agony and a Few New Friendships

Beth Fitzpatrick

Why do I do this?
It's hard. It takes a big chunk of time out of an already busy life. It hurts. It's not the safest thing I could be doing with my time. It can be expensive. I occasionally have to drive all the way across the Susquehanna River for it. My attention to it can border on obsession. Did I mention it's hard?

I ride a bike. There are days, like today, where the legs just don't want to work with me; where every mile hurts; where complete mental focus on maintaining a clean cadence to the rhythm of the background music in my brain is the mantra that keeps the pedals turning. Where the only things getting the body and the bike up the biggest climb are the utter unwillingness to stop or walk, and the awareness of the beautiful descent and winding roads ahead through Pine Grove Furnace.

So, once again, why do I do this?
Today, it's all about the people on the bikes. I decided a few years ago that people who ride bikes are just about the kindest, most open-minded, caring people I've ever known. That perception may have a lot to do with the fact that when we're out there, we're out there together doing something we all inexplicably love. Everyone's happy, even in the suffering. The bond is strong. The trust is huge.

Connected primarily by the Harrisburg Bicycle Club, my partners come from both sides of the "great divide" known as the Susquehanna River. There are the East Shore/Hershey people. There are the West Shore/Mechanicsburg/Carlisle people. Occasionally we meet for a ride from City Island. More frequently, some will take the journey all the way Across the River to suffer the torments of being led on unfamiliar roads.

We all suffered on our Saturday West Shore ride today. Having limited daylight to get the miles in during the week is putting the pressure on the long weekend rides. I am so thankful to have these partners today (as well as many others), from both the East and West shores, in suffering, humor, conversation, trust, and support:

"Rabbit." The brother I never had, our leader, and weekend ride organizer. This guy knows every road, every bathroom stop and every convenience store in the free world. He is also going to buy us all new bikes when he wins the Powerball. I trust him utterly and completely, and respect and admire his cycling skill.

"Big Momma and his Disco Queen." I am so thrilled to know the Disco Queen; another girl out there, a like-minded friend who has rapidly become one of my favorite people (and tops the list of best riding partners ever). Big Momma is the steadiest, coolest cyclist I know. His steady cadence and smooth riding style, as well as his calm, cool demeanor and sense of humor make even a suffer-fest a pleasure. And I love that these two are a couple. Perfect.

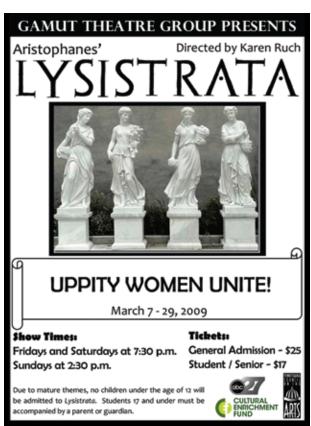
"The Other Old Person." A new acquaintance and partner this year, we've ridden together just a few times. Instant friendship, though. I think we became friends the day we lost the rest of the group and found ourselves as a group of just three riders, talking about Three Mile Island and our whereabouts in 1979 during the "incident." We both remembered it clearly; the third person in our little group hadn't been born yet. Hrrummphh! When the youngun' backpedaled and told us we were in better shape than his parents, we both willingly took the praise. He is also dealing with a very difficult health situation in his personal world; I am grateful to be able to be part of that which helps him maintain balance.



Beth Fitzpatrick is an avid bicyclist and teaches spinning classes at the East Shore YMCA.

Why do I do this? Because it's hard. And it hurts. And it feels so good when the ride is done.

And . . . because it has brought some amazing, wonderful people into my world.



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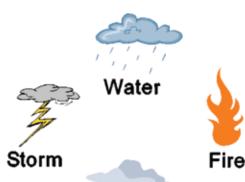
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