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Greater Harrisburg's Community Newspaper

January 2009

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inaugural  
issue of  
TheBurg!  
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hear from you.  
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ideas and  
comments to  
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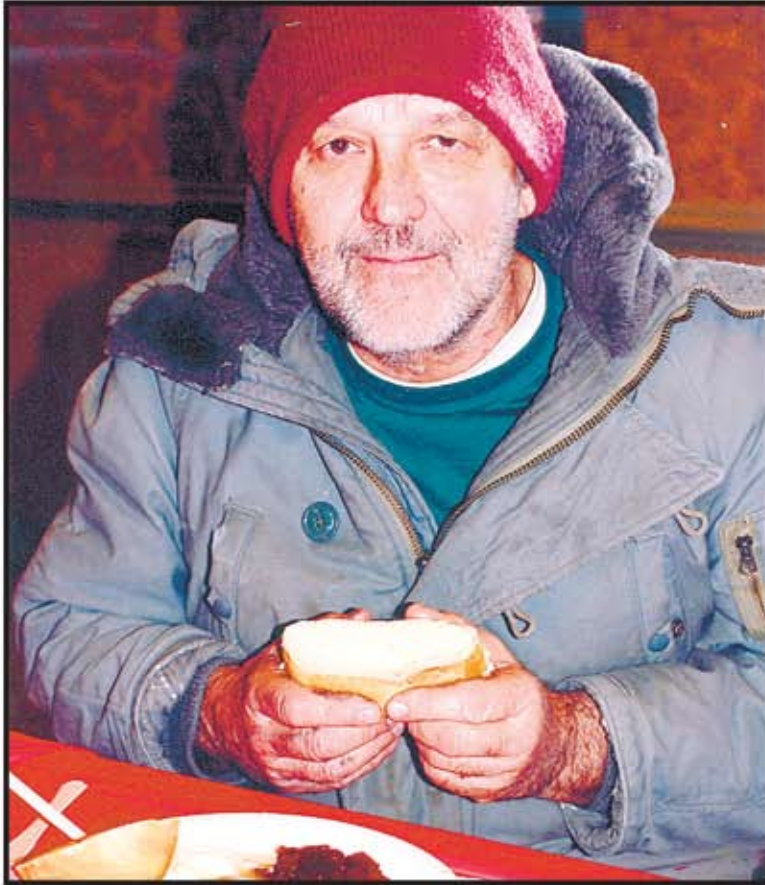
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# In the Burg

## The First Word

Pete Durantine

Harrisburg was once a great city that, a few decades ago, almost died ingloriously. It was an era when many American cities staggered under the weight of change that brought economic and social upheaval.

Harrisburg once again is becoming a great city, one into which good things flow. Its citizens and suburban residents again are growing proud of their urban core – and rightly so. Today, as in the past, the city has so much to offer, and certainly there are many wonderful days and years ahead.

Indeed, a new, 21<sup>st</sup> century city is rising along the banks of the Susquehanna River, creating a vibrant, promising quality of life that is seeping, though sometimes too slowly, into neighborhoods hardest hit economically and socially.

Such a great city needs a community newspaper, not just a newspaper of record. It needs a newspaper that informs, entertains and enlightens residents and visitors about their city more intimately, reporting neighborhood by neighborhood and street by street.

"There are eight million stories in the naked city," began the narrator for the 1948 film, *The Naked City*. "This has been one of them."

As we launch *TheBurg* this month, we hope to begin telling the millions of stories that, put together, describe the community of Harrisburg – the people who live, work and travel here; the families that make their home here; the businesses that sell here.

Each issue will feature an array of diverse people, topics and voices. We want

every issue to surprise and delight readers, while informing them about Harrisburg and its close-in suburbs. Our core philosophy: Harrisburg is the center point for the communities around it. Without the city, the region's spokes would have no hub in which to connect.

Each month, we will print news stories and features, providing the information that people require to lead their lives a bit better, a little easier and more efficiently. *TheBurg* intends to tell stories about the city and its neighborhoods that aren't being told today. We will reach deep within the community to feature the shopkeeper, the school teacher, the artist — whoever is working to make Harrisburg a better place to live, work and visit.

The city has its greatness, but it also has problems, and we will report those, as well. However, our coverage is about helping people understand the city, not fear it. Harrisburg is not to be avoided, but embraced, supported and championed. It is on its way to becoming a city where all of its neighborhoods are welcoming places. It has a future bright and hopeful, and *TheBurg* will be there every month.

As the ancient Greek politician Pericles said of Athens: "All things good on this Earth flow into the City, because of the City's greatness."

*Pete Durantine is the editor of TheBurg.*

*Pete welcomes your questions, comments and suggestions. Please send him an email at [pdurantine@theburgnews.com](mailto:pdurantine@theburgnews.com).*

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## Fire Chief Don Konkle Retires after 34 Years

Donald H. Konkle will retire on Jan. 16 after 34 years as a Harrisburg firefighter, including 27 years as chief of the city's fire bureau.

During his lengthy service, Konkle experienced a city in flux. The 1970s were particularly challenging, as the city recorded a very high rate of fire, many caused by arson. He took the reins of the bureau in 1982, spearheading a city-wide effort to cut the number of arson fires and fires caused by neglect, disrepair and accidents.

He had great success. Konkle helped slash the fire rate by 70 percent during his tenure as chief, according to the city. In many recent years, Harrisburg received the Residential Fire Safety Institute's annual Life Safety Achievement Award for recording zero fire-related deaths within city limits.

In addition to fire chief, Konkle has served as the city's emergency management coordinator and as the sponsoring agency chief for Pennsylvania Task Force One, a federally funded urban search and rescue team that deployed to New York City after the 9-11 terrorist attacks and to New Orleans, La., and Galveston, Tex., after devastating hurricanes.

"Chief Konkle has been a dedicated, devoted and fearless public servant and has virtually devoted his life to fighting and preventing fires and saving lives," said Mayor Stephen Reed.

Reed expects to name a new fire chief by mid-January.

## City Upgrades Uptown; More Rehabs Ahead

Housing upgrades on the 600 blocks of Oxford and Schuylkill Streets, as well as the 2400 and 2500 blocks of N. 6th Street and the 2300 block of Jefferson Street, have largely been completed. They're the latest renovations of a \$13.4 million city-wide housing project that has been ongoing for five years.

Most of the funding was provided under the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Development Block Grant program. The project

includes acquisition and current or future rehabilitation of more than 25 properties, the demolition of 23 blighted properties, and an overall investment of more than \$2 million in the Uptown area.

Ten of the rehabilitated homes are now for sale; four more units are being acquired through the Vacant Property Reinvestment Board; and one city block has been cleared for development.

Improvements have included lead abatement, housing demolition and rehabilitation, new sidewalks, light fixtures, and a host of other improvements.

The area is near a series of other neighborhood-wide residential developments that stretch from N. 6th and Maclay streets to south of N. 6th and Reily streets, including Governor's Square (293 units), Capitol Heights (181 units) and Market Place Townhomes expansion (71 units).

Since 1982, the city has been prime developer, as well as co-developer or investor, in new construction or rehabilitation of more than 6,000 residential units.

## Work It! New Fitness Gear Comes to Riverside Park

Capital BlueCross has given \$53,000 to the city to remove the old fitness equipment located throughout Riverfront Park and to replace it with new, state-of-the-art equipment. Crews began removing the old equipment in November and installation of the new equipment should be completed this spring.

The new fitness center will be named Riverfront Park Capital BlueCross Fitness Center. It will feature an innovative series of metal fitness circuits and clusters.

The GameTime FitCircuit system that will be installed consists of a series of 15 exercise events occurring at eight separate stations, which will be located throughout Riverfront Park. Users walk or jog to each station, each of which provides instructions and apparatus for the specified exercises.

Included in the series of exercise sta-

tions are apparatus for the following exercises: Achilles stretch; hamstring stretch; sit & reach; knee lift; log hop; half knee bends; body curl; chin-up; bench curl; sit-up; vault bar; push-up; bench leg raise; bench dips; and leg stretch.

Capital BlueCross has agreed to pay the city \$38,000 immediately to install the new equipment, as well as \$5,000 every two years for the next six years, to fully cover the project's cost. As part of the sponsorship agreement, the equipment will be converted to a custom blue color, and multiple signs of differing sizes will be displayed throughout the course with information on the front and the Capital BlueCross logo on the opposite side.

For more information on the new fitness equipment, contact the City's Department of Parks and Recreation at (717) 255-3020.

## Harrisburg Partners with Georgetown U.

Dozens of visits by foreign students and business executives to area businesses and City Hall are planned this year as part of a newly-formed partnership between the city and Georgetown University's Center for Intercultural Education and Development.

During each of the visits, Georgetown University and city officials will escort the delegations to different businesses in the area to meet with executives and learn more about their business practices. The delegations also will hear presentations from local officials on a range of business topics.

Georgetown officials estimate at least 30 additional group visits next year to Harrisburg and surrounding businesses. Delegation visits and seminars are not open to the public, but local business interested in contributing to future visits should contact Marko Primorac in the Mayor's Office of Economic Development and Special Projects at (717) 255-3027.

# City Hall

## Parking Garage Deal Dead — For Now

The Harrisburg city council may have unanimously rejected a private firm's \$215 million proposal to lease the city's 8,500 parking spaces in November, but the issue remains in question.

The New York real estate developer who wants to take the 75-year lease on nine parking garages has said he is working on a deal with the Harrisburg Parking Authority, despite the council's action.

Members on the seven-seat council questioned the deal itself and worried that it would mean handing over a public asset. They also wondered why the authority cannot find new and creative ways to use the parking facilities to increase revenues.

Meanwhile, the developer, Jacob Frydman, last summer purchased for \$4.8 million the 55,000-square-foot office building at the northwest corner of 2nd and Pine streets.

Mayor Stephen Reed is disappointed in the council's decision, noting the money can significantly reduce the city's debt.

In an unrelated matter, the parking rates that the authority increased last fall took effect this month, from \$120 to \$130 per month and from \$3 to \$4 for the first two hours for parking garages and lots. Meter rates are unchanged at 25 cents for 10 minutes.



Parking garage deal: still possible?

## Dumpers Beware: Someone's Watching

People who dump trash illegally in Harrisburg are warned: the authorities are watching.

To combat illegal dumping, the city has become more aggressive, setting up cameras at locations used by illegal dumpers. Last fall, at least four arrests were made in connection with seven separate dumping instances, and in at least half of the instances, the offenders had traveled from their home outside the city to dump.

Each of the seven recent incidents occurred in the Allison Hill area. Four of the incidents occurred in areas where cameras have been installed, leading to the identification of the perpetrators.

Mayor Stephen Reed said the new surveillance cameras were purchased through a "Weed and Seed" grant received from the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency. Rotating cameras have been randomly placed to track the illegal dumping.

The Weed and Seed Program continues to work at eliminating blight that occurs in their South Allison Hill neighborhood of the city, which is bounded by Cameron, South 18th, Market, and Paxton streets.

## The Blight Fight; City Ramps Up Remediation

In addition to installing cameras to curtail dumping, Harrisburg has formed a new team called the Mayor's Nuisance Abatement Squad, which continues ongoing efforts to address and remediate issues of blight throughout the city.

Last fall, the Squad addressed an area in the Uptown neighborhood on Saul Alley. In this location, workers removed 11,000 pounds of debris but were not able to identify the illegal dumpers.

Bob Jackson, owner and operator of Jackson Enterprises, is one contractor engaged by the city to help eliminate blight. Jackson said it took nearly five days to clean up Saul Alley.

"What made it bad was it was not isolated to one spot, it was the entire alley, including Curtin Street," Jackson said. "I think once the word gets out that there are surveillance cameras, you will see the illegal dumping slow down."

The Mayor's Nuisance Abatement Squad is tasked with addressing illegal dumping throughout all parts of the City. In September, the mayor signed into law Bill No. 17-2008, a city littering ordinance that will regulate littering and other related activities that adversely affect the aesthetic and visual appearance of the city's public places, neighborhoods and private premises.

The ordinance offers a reward of up to \$500 for information leading to the arrest and conviction of those who illegally deposit debris. For more information on this activity or to report illegal dumping, contact the city's Communications Center at (717) 255-3131.

## Lead Abatement Continues Unabated

In 2008, the city treated dozens of homes and apartments with lead paint hazards under its lead poisoning prevention program, funded by federal and state grants.

Since 1995, the city has conducted lead hazard control to remove or abate lead hazards in residential properties, provide code inspections for rental properties, and offer public education focused on lead paint poisoning prevention. The program is run in conjunction with the PinnacleHealth System's Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program.

More than 350 homes have been remediated through the city's efforts since the program began. In 2007, 47 units were cleared of lead, including 37 that were performed at rental properties, all at a cost of \$475,649.

For more information on the city's lead poisoning prevention program or its lead abatement efforts, contact Kathy Possinger, Director of Housing for the Department of Building and Housing Development, at 717-255-6480.

## Meet the Neighbors

### Who's the guy next door? It May Be a Lawmaker

*M. Diane McCormick*

So, your neighbor keeps odd hours. Leaves for work around mid-morning and comes home at midnight. Usually isn't home on weekends. Now that you think about it, she mostly disappears in the summer.

Is she in witness protection or something?

Not to worry. That elusive neighbor might be one of the Harrisburg area's 253 part-time residents known as state legislators. When they're in session, they live in Midtown row homes, suburban hotel rooms, apartments, and West Shore houses. Some rent. Some own. It's just a matter of personal preference.

This story is about where lawmakers live as they go about their dual-citizenship lives. At home, they live – well – at home. But in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania's legislators have crafted a number of creative solutions for finding places to lay their heads at night.

Some buy houses together, in groups of two, three, or four. They figure they might as well invest in real estate while they're in

town. Midtown Harrisburg is popular, with its affordable cache of spacious row homes.

Others buy a house on their own and rent it out to groups of fellow lawmakers, who tend to flock together in delegations from their home regions.

When they're not at their Harrisburg homes, lawmakers might ask neighbors to sweep the sidewalk or check the locks. One long-ago lawmaker with a Midtown house asked a staffer to keep an eye on his place one winter. The staffer did, but she never thought to peek behind the door to the attic stairs. Turns out, a hole in the roof had allowed in, say, 10 inches of snow. The snow was fine until the weather turned warmer. That's when the water damage happened.

Recently, House Republican Minority Leader Sam Smith lost a roommate, Sen. Joe Scarnati, in his Mechanicsburg house. That's because Scarnati got a better offer when he assumed the post of Pennsylvania's lieutenant governor and moved into the historic – and swimming-pool equipped – lieutenant governor's residence in Indiantown Gap. Both men are from Jefferson County.

The place is so nice, in fact, that Scarnati "might expect a nice roommate in Sam," said Smith's longtime press secretary, Steve Miskin.

Other lawmakers rent rooms at local hotels. Daylin Leach, Democrat from Delaware and Montgomery counties who just got bumped up to the Senate from his House seat, chose the Summerdale Quality Inn because then-Sen. Jack Wagner, now state auditor general, recommended the place. Though rates are inexpensive, the place "wasn't too skeevy," Leach said. "It's a reasonable rate. It's relatively clean. They've got cable TV."

"I have on occasion stayed at the Sheraton, which is much nicer but almost triple the price," Leach said. "You don't want to run up the price gratuitously."

If there's a lesson here, it's "be nice to your legislator-neighbor." They chose a job that entails regular exile from the comforts of home. So, offer to check the furnace occasionally. Take over a nice tuna casserole to heat up in the microwave. And don't forget to check for snow in the attic.

## State Takes Aim at Nuisance Properties

A law recently signed by Gov. Ed Rendell gives city residents and business owners a new tool for addressing abandoned and blighted properties.

Under the Abandoned and Blighted Property Conservatorship Act, a variety of entities may petition the Court of Common Pleas to request that a conservator take possession of a property. These entities include: the property owner, a lien holder or secured creditor of the building in question; a resident or business owner within 500 feet of the building; and a nonprofit corporation or a municipality or school district where a building is located.

In order to file a petition, the property must be in violation of any municipal code requirements or be declared a public nuisance.

The court then could appoint a conservator to bring the building into compliance if the following conditions applied: the building has not been legally occupied for the previous 12 months; it has not been actively marketed for 60 days prior to the petition filing; the building is not subject to an existing foreclosure action; and the current owner has failed to present sufficient evidence that he or she acquired the property in the previous six months.

The court also could authorize the sale of a building in conservatorship.

## Ask a Librarian—Online!

A free, online reference service hosted by the Commonwealth Libraries has become the fastest growing service of its kind in the nation after only two years in operation, says Education Secretary Gerald L. Zahorchak.

"Ask Here PA" provides reference and information service in real time, offering information and answers to questions 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. To date, "Ask Here PA" has conducted more than 125,000 sessions.

Librarians are waiting to answer your questions. Visit [www.askherepa.org](http://www.askherepa.org).



**Penn Street in Midtown, where many lawmakers set up house.**



## Rethinking Transportation in Harrisburg

### Metro Area Must Make Mass Transit a Priority

*Pete Durantine*

Pennsylvania is grappling with a nearly overwhelming problem of repairing and replacing its massive system of roads and bridges. Meanwhile, the federal government is facing an increasing overburdened passenger rail system because of soaring demand and lack of real funding for more than a decade.

It's time to re-think transportation infrastructure in the Greater Harrisburg region.

No longer should concrete and asphalt be the exclusive focus of policy. Mass transportation, in particular passenger rail, needs to be expanded and promoted as an alternative to commuting by car.

The moment to do this is now. It has never been more precise. While gas prices have significantly declined over the last few months, demand for alternate commuting – that is, bus and rail transportation – has not, and in fact, continues to climb.

In 2007, the number of trips taken on mass transit reached its highest level in 50 years, 10.3 billion, according to the American Public Transportation Association (APTA). In the second quarter of 2008, transit ridership continued to climb and rose by 5.2 percent.

Harrisburg experienced a 17 percent increase in Amtrak commuter rail ridership, second highest of the six cities with double digit increases, APTA cited.

Contrast this with the Federal Highway Administration report that vehicle miles traveled on the nation's roads declined

by 3.3 percent in the same quarter.

"Record numbers of Americans from small communities to large cities continue to ride public transportation to beat the high gas prices," said APTA President William W. Millar. "This large quarterly increase is remarkable, particularly since an economic downturn usually causes fewer people to ride public transit."

Harrisburg's bus system serves many commuters and in recent years, well before high gas prices, it expanded service to meet demand in outlying suburbs.

CORRIDORone, the proposed commuter rail line that would run from Lancaster to Harrisburg, appears to have been left in a political maw waiting for the state to provide \$10 million in annual operating costs.

The commuter line has its federal support for capital, but it cannot begin to make expenditures for equipment and infrastructure upgrades until operating costs are secured, and yes, every public transit system in the world operates on a government subsidy.

To think in terms of roads as the only solution to moving people and alleviating traffic congestion is outdated. Costs of just expanding existing highways are enormous,

and such projects' benefit to quality of life, economic development and moving people and goods more efficiently is questionable anymore.

A master plan to expand 11 miles of Interstate 83 from the New Cumberland Exit south of Harrisburg to the split at Interstate 81 northeast of the city is projected to cost at least \$1 billion – almost \$100 million per mile – based on estimates a few years old.

The project's purpose is to alleviate congestion, but like water, traffic quickly fills available space. The beltway around Washington, D.C. is just one example. Years of road expansion has left that highway even more congested and ridership on the Metro system ever increasing.

The project is a long way off, partly because of cost, but also because PennDOT's immediate and primary concern is repairing and replacing deteriorating bridges.

However, the idea of greater integration of rail in overall transportation planning is percolating in government.

Engineering consultants at McCormick Taylor, working on the I-83 master plan, have advised PennDOT that it's not possible to build your way out of congestion, and, in fact, recommended considering light rail as one additional



**Bridge to somewhere? Commuters may revive Cumberland Valley Railroad bridge.**

# Mayor's Turn

## *Transitions, continued*

means to alleviating traffic.

The state may not need to have been so advised. PennDOT chief Allen Biehler, an engineer who consulted on public transportation projects – including light rail – before he headed the department, has adopted a “smart transportation” policy.

The policy’s themes can be found at [www.smart-transportation.com/themes](http://www.smart-transportation.com/themes), and it encourages innovation and consideration of all transportation modes when planning. This policy is aimed at keeping communities together and vibrant – as opposed to old policies in which highways were built regardless of the damage to the community – and reducing travel times in order to cut fuel consumption and pollution.

Smart transportation also is about re-engineering existing highways and roads to make them more efficient, instead of building new roads that encourage dislocation of communities and housing sprawl.

The CORRIDORone project, which was renamed last summer as the Capitol Red Rose Corridor, makes sense for Harrisburg, considering the region’s population growth in 12 years is expected to increase by 50,000 people to a total of 599,000, or by about the current population of Harrisburg, according to U.S. Census figures.

However, with the mounting costs for general transportation infrastructure needs around the state and declining revenues to cover them, it may be several years before the Capitol Red Rose Corridor ever leaves the station.

*Pete Durantine is editor of the TheBurg. Please write to him if you have suggestions for future topics for “Transitions,” a monthly column regarding public policy issues of interest to the greater Harrisburg community.*

## A City, Reborn

### Once Left for Dead, Harrisburg Roars Back

*Stephen R. Reed*

Starting with this inaugural edition of *TheBurg*, readers can look forward to stories on the present and future of Harrisburg. But where was this city not so long ago?

Harrisburg has benefitted from a back-to-the-city movement, especially among young professionals, these past seven years or so. Very few of our more recent arrivals have any idea what this city was like – when Harrisburg was listed as the second-most distressed city in America, when over two-thirds of the downtown was empty and desolate, when in various parts of the city, one could drive for blocks and find only continuous rows of empty buildings, no residents and a totally surreal scene.

In circles of “conventional thinking,” Harrisburg was entirely written off – a self-fulfilling prophecy. Decades of decline had decimated the tax base as the city lost tens of thousands in population and much of its businesses and jobs. City government, wracked from the effects of patronage and decline, had no capacity to respond.

Change, reform and high purpose – embraced by the spirit and ardor of the belief that “Yes, we can” – may have been the theme of President-Elect Obama’s 2008 campaign, but it was the mantra of Harrisburg’s new initiatives to change the course of history beginning in the early 1980s – and it still is.

The city went into the economic development business, creating an array of programs to spawn commercial, residential and infrastructure projects, and to induce private investment. In the early days, absent the interest of private developers, the city served as its own developer. The roles undertaken by Harrisburg have been



precedent-setting for local governments in Pennsylvania, and many cities across the nation have studied and consulted Harrisburg on what has occurred here.

Over \$4.5 billion in new investment has occurred in this era. The number of businesses on the tax rolls has risen from 1,908 to over 8,600. The vacant property, fire and crime rates have dropped by large percentages.

In a city where once you could not give away open land or existing buildings, and property values had spiraled downward for many years, real estate values have steadily risen. The tax base has expanded from \$212 million to over \$1.6 billion. City government, once overly property-tax dependent, today has a budget of which only 23 percent comes from taxes. The development of alternative revenue sources, which has included the creation of alternate energy streams long before they became the overdue national priority they are today, was one of the three top priorities set forth when Harrisburg’s resurgence got underway.

Every American city has challenges, needs and issues, and Harrisburg is no exception. But what we face today pales in comparison to what once existed. Harrisburg is a vastly different city than those earlier days. The vision, courage, perseverance and can-do spirit that brought Harrisburg to its current level – a level unprecedented in city history – shall continue to prevail, and great new progress shall be the result.

Harrisburg’s best days are the future we seek and shall attain. May the gains of this era be an inspiration to every resident and business that call Harrisburg home.

*Stephen R. Reed is the mayor of Harrisburg.*



# Burg Biz

## Perfect Pour

### Veteran Coffee Slingers Open "Downtown Cafe"

*TheBurg Staff*

Starbucks may have closed its Market Street shop, but, just a few blocks away, an independent bean house has opened to the relief of downtown coffee drinkers.

Downtown Café opened last October in the Payne-Shoemaker Building at 3<sup>rd</sup> and Pine. Owner Lloyd Fought believed the business district still needed a high-quality café, somewhere people could relax, enjoy a great cup of coffee and have lunch.

After all, the Starbucks at 3<sup>rd</sup> and Market did a brisk business, despite corporate's decision to close what it regarded as an under-performing outlet.

Fought, the longtime owner of Downtown Deli & Eatery on Market Street, even hired the manager of the Starbucks, Chris Scott. Fought believed the Starbucks-trained Scott, who knew the principles of making a good cup of joe – everything from buying the beans to processing and brewing – was the perfect guy to run his new venture.

"He wanted to get into the coffee business, but he didn't have much experience in it," Scott says.

For the morning crowds, Downtown Café pours Seattle's Best and serves fresh-baked pastries and breakfast sandwiches. For the lunch timers, the choice of fare includes soups, salads and wraps.

Third Street, between Market and Pine, has seen its share of coffee shops in recent years. Besides Starbucks, there was Sparky and Clark's, dispensing from a little store across from the Whitaker Center; City Grind next to the Mary Sachs building; and Java's Brewin', which occupied the space Downtown Café now holds.

Nonetheless, Fought and Scott are optimistic. They believe that the Café, which is open from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Friday, could be the right business at



Caffeine fix: Manager Chris Scott, right, froths up a latte with help of Surina Colomba.

the right time.

"We've been working to get the basics down," Scott says. "Now, we'll see where this takes us."

Along 3<sup>rd</sup> Street that may be a challenge, although none of the previous coffee shops seemed to suffer from a lack for

business. In fact, the Caffeine Connection, a few blocks down at the corner of State, has been percolating for several years.

"We went into this knowing there's been a lot of hit and misses," Scott says. "With our experience, we know what we're getting into."

## Pittsburgh: All Aboard!

For business people or anyone who wants to get to Pittsburgh fast, a new luxury bus, the Steel City Flyer, is now boarding.

The Flyer is a business class service that arrives and departs Harrisburg twice a day, dropping off passengers at the Transportation Center at 4<sup>th</sup> and Chestnut streets, the Crowne Plaza Hotel on the Chestnut Street side and the east side of the Capitol along Commonwealth Avenue.

Arrival destinations in Pittsburgh are the North Shore and Monroeville as well as in downtown.

It takes a couple of railroad guys to run a bus service. Robert A. Pietrandrea and Henry Posner, president and chairman of the Railroad Development Corp., respectively, joined Pittsburgh tour bus operator George

DeBolt to provide the Steel City Flyer.

The service launched late last year and a one-way ticket for the three-and-half hour trip is \$69. Company officials say the Flyer enables travelers "to use their enroute time more productively." Amenities on the 50-passenger Mercedes model include wi-fi service all along the route, laptop desks, pillows, movies, and attendant service.

Greyhound offers round-trip service that costs about \$10 more, but takes about two hours longer. Because of limited track capacity west of Harrisburg, Amtrak offers only one train a day and it takes five hours or more to reach Pittsburgh.

For reservations, call 1-877-PHFlyer (1-877-743-5937).

# Shop Window

## Time Frame

### Family Art Shop Marks Five Decades — and Counting

*Carol Maravic*

Fifty years ago, Orville and Donald Walker Sr. purchased a building on Third Street, between Market and Chestnut streets, an area then known as "Paint Store Row." What started as a house paint store eventually evolved into Walker's Art and Framing, the longest continuing business in the capital city.

Rick Walker, who is Donald's son, and his mother Janet run the frame shop, a family-owned business that features their dog Waylon and many years of memories.

In the half a century since the Walkers set up shop, they have hosted a wedding in the store, been robbed at gunpoint, and hired countless homeless people – giving them a chance to make a few dollars.

They've also framed some very valuable works of art, many not-so-valuable ones and, in the process, served tens of thousands of customers.

"I've been working here ever since I could hold a hammer," said Rick Walker. "I would come in with my dad when I was a kid, and he would teach me how to frame. I've been doing it since as long as I can remember."

Janet, who works alongside Rick, said her children grew up in the store.

"My kids would come here and crawl among the art work and play hide and seek," she said. "They pretty much grew up here, so it's truly a family business."

Janet and Rick pride themselves on their customer service, something that large chain stores don't offer.

"We do it all – shipping around

the world, special orders, custom framing," Janet said. "When you come into our store, you are talking to someone who is really knowledgeable about all the mediums and will give you specialized service. You just don't get that at the large stores."

The Walkers also focus on quality materials and are proud of each and every print they frame.

"So many people now go for what I call 'Happy Meal' framing," Rick said. "People buy stuff that doesn't last. I like to frame something right, and I like to frame it once."

Rick and his late father have framed a number of valuable pieces in their day, including an original Picasso and one by J.M.W. Turner.

"If it was a very valuable piece, my dad would call the customer, and they would stay here while he was framing it," he said. "We would do the work right in front of them so we knew they were happy with the job."

They also have done framing for entire hotels and area restaurants, and Rick specializes in photos of the state Capitol.

Several years ago, when the dome was being refurbished, he shot photos of the work and had them custom framed.

"We have a real mix of work in here, which is why we are so unique," Janet said. "We have people who have been coming here since grad school and high school, and they just love the store. They say it hasn't changed at all, and they love it that way."

Janet and Rick say that today's tough economy is having an impact on small businesses, but they hope to keep Walker's Art and Framing in the family for a few more generations. Janet's granddaughters have worked in the store occasionally, and Rick's brother, Don Walker Jr., also helps out with the business.

"We aren't like the bigger businesses. We don't over-buy. We cater to specialized needs, and we care about quality," Janet said. "We are truly a small family business, and we have been for 50 years. I hope it continues, because we really enjoy it."



**Family portrait: Janet Walker and son, Rick, celebrate 50 years in business downtown.**

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# The Face of Business

## Testing, Testing

### Riverside Man Converts Old Drugstore to Test Lab

*M. Diane McCormick*

For decades, kids and teenagers hung out at Loper's Pharmacy, playing pinball and drinking fountain Cokes flavored with cherry or chocolate. Adults popped in for aspirin and, probably, some juicy neighborhood gossip.

Now, a Riverside resident has converted the old pharmacy at Second and Lewis streets into office space for his drug-and-alcohol testing business.

Richard DeVoe has owned Monard Testing, formerly at 919 Front Street, for three years. When he decided to stop paying rent, he sought a building that could be converted without disrupting the neighborhood. The pharmacy had closed in 1995, and the building went on sale when the elderly owner died last year.

DeVoe found the space only a block from his home, a stately, century-old brick single updated with touches of Art Deco and 1950s style.

Because the space was built as a joint home-business, DeVoe said the use didn't need zoning approval. Still, he got 52 petition signatures from supportive neighbors and passed zoning muster for his minimal parking needs.

"I didn't want to purchase a property I couldn't put a business in," he said. "My intention was to turn it into something that looked like the neighborhood."

The \$1.5 billion U.S. drug-testing

industry is expected to keep growing, to \$2 billion by 2012, according to market analyst BCC Research. DeVoe discovered drug testing as a career in the field's early years, around 1982, when a female friend with a government drug-testing contract needed a male test conductor who could work under same-sex requirements. DeVoe's Monard Testing conducts tests for employers, the government, and private clients.

Drug testers are recertified every four years. Much of DeVoe's business takes him to workplaces (where, he admits, people aren't always happy to see the surprise drug tester). The only testing on-site at Green Street will be instant urinalysis, using a strip that turns colors to detect five commonly used substances. Typically, test-takers are workers facing the prospect of workplace drug tests or parents checking on their children. Tests at the office, open 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. daily, will be conducted individually and by appointment only.

"Sometimes, we test five people a day, and sometimes we do no people in five days," he said.

Visitors walking into the lobby will notice the distinctive window on the left – a remnant of the old soda fountain, with "Drink Coca-Cola" painted in red and gold at the top. DeVoe also hopes to use the old "Family Pharmacy" sign that hung at the corner for decoration – with the word "Pharmacy" painted over. He added interior walls to create the lobby and a testing area. The old addition on the Lewis Street side, with new windows that replaced the jalousie slat windows, is now office space. Upstairs, the former owner's home is an apartment.

This spring will show the "best impact," DeVoe said, when he takes down aluminum siding, paints the exterior, and replaces concrete frontage -- "That concrete makes it so sterile and plain," he said -- with greenery.

"I can't wait to see all that," he said.



Drug sales to drug test: Rich DeVoe brings new life to long-shut Riverside pharmacy.

## The Common Good, a Pennsylvania Tradition

*Tony Ross*



Last year, United Way adopted the mantra of “Advancing the Common Good.” In our view, we must be collectively committed to the community, to advancing the community good through improving education, health and incomes.

Advancing the Common Good is a philosophy that reflects the “dangerous unselfishness” that Dr. Martin Luther King challenged us to possess in his “Mountaintop” speech of 40 years ago.

As Pennsylvanians, we have and continue to be uniquely positioned to meet the important challenges of Advancing the Common Good for several reasons. Throughout the state’s history, our commitment to philanthropy and concern for our fellow citizens has been extraordinary.

It’s not surprising when you consider that our nation was founded right here in Pennsylvania, based on the principle of liberty and justice for all.

The words: “We hold these truths to be self evident, that all men are created equal” were first uttered in Pennsylvania.

At the very core of being a Pennsylvanian is the belief that, if the least among us don’t succeed, then we don’t succeed. Not certain ones of us, all of us.

We are a state founded by Quakers who are also known as the Society of Friends. Pennsylvania’s charitable tradition embodies the Quaker spirit, which teaches that we all have an inner light that represents “that of God in everyone.”

Through our collective support of charities and other philanthropic

organizations we empower our fellow citizens to let their “inner light” shine. It is a philosophy that says, we go up together, or we go down together. It is a mindset that says: It is not about “me,” but about “we.”

Advancing the common good and a “dangerous unselfishness” are at the core of United Way’s work. First, our 80 plus United Way or United Fund organizations service all of Pennsylvania’s 67 counties and raise more than \$175 million dollars annually from more than a half million donors. The money goes to support the state’s health and human services infrastructure.

It is also important to note that Pennsylvanians’ support of United Way prevents “Philanthropic Darwinism.” As we all know from our days in school, Darwinism advances the theory of “survival of the fittest.”

In the case of charities, there are popular organizations that we all like to support:

- Organizations that fight diseases
- Organizations that help children
- Organizations that assist the disabled

What about charities that are not so popular but provide an important service or a charity that is too small to conduct needed fundraising?

United Way affirms the equality of people and advances the common good by ensuring that all agencies – regardless of their popularity, clientele or size – receive the necessary resources to improve the quality of life in our communities.

Through United Way, we have

democratized charitable giving. We empower working men and women by collectively leveraging their contributions to make the greatest impact. In other words, whether you give a little or give a lot, all of our donors are \$175 million donors.

We are living in extraordinary times in this Commonwealth. Last year, folks across Pennsylvania heard a lot about change, solutions, hope and straight talk. As the presidential candidates made their case, I was struck by one undeniable fact:

No single institution more represents positive change, solutions and hope to the people of Pennsylvania and America than charitable organizations such as United Way.

Philanthropy more reflects Dr. King’s “dangerous unselfishness” than any other institution in our state and country.

My colleagues and I from across Pennsylvania thank you for your support and look forward to working with you to “Advance the Common Good.”

*Tony Ross is president of United Way of Pennsylvania.*



# Street Corners

## Neighborhoods

### El Barrio in Harrisburg

#### Immigrant Community Makes Strides, Faces Challenges in South Allison Hill

Rick Kearns

Most people in our area know a little bit of the ethnic and racial history of Harrisburg, but very few know the story of a growing community, most of which is located just up the Mulberry Street Bridge.

The Latino barrio, which means "quarter" or "area" in Spanish, is a thriving community located in South Allison Hill and beyond. It is also an increasingly varied population of at least 10,000 people from Puerto Rico, Mexico, the Dominican Republic and almost every other Spanish-speaking country in the western hemisphere.

Harrisburg's barrio started in the South Allison Hill area approximately 50 years ago. The first large wave of residents consisted of Puerto Rican families who came directly from the island, from farm work in the region or from the already crowded barrios of New York and Philadelphia. They came to Harrisburg in search of work and

a good place to raise a family, just like the Irish, German and Italian immigrants who arrived in the previous century to work in the thriving mills and the Harrisburg Automobile Company in Mt. Pleasant.

By the early 1970s, community residents started to get together on a regular basis, often meeting in the home of Luis Vazquez, a carpenter who had arrived years before. This group started what would become the Puerto Rican Organizing Committee (PROC), the administrative arm of the barrio's first main community center, the Mt. Pleasant Hispanic American Center.

The Centro, as it was known for years, provided much-needed programs and advocacy for the community, including educational, nutritional, social, health and legal services, said Pedro Cortes, the current

Secretary of the Commonwealth and a former Centro board vice president.

"Despite the challenges, the Center, and el barrio as a whole, served as the catalyst for many successes throughout the years," said Cortes. "The Center's advocacy efforts resulted in local and state government officials paying more attention to the community's potential, dreams and aspirations. Numerous youngsters were kept off the streets and guided on the right path to contributing lives."

The vibrant neighborhood, though, isn't strictly Latino. At St. Francis of Assisi Church on Market Street, the pastor, the Rev. Kevin Thompson, said that Latino membership in the church is increasing, but so is membership from Asian, African and Caribbean families.

"The majority of parishioners are Latino, but it's a mixed, bilingual community," said Thompson.

Because South Allison Hill has such a large immigrant population, English language and general education are high priorities. In 2002, local community leader, Hector Ortiz, and a few colleagues put together *Estamos Unidos* ('we are united' in Spanish), an organization that provides college scholarships, mentoring, cultural activities and other opportunities for young people from the community. They also have developed a Latino book collection for the county library.

Since the Centro was forced to close its doors in 2006, the challenge to create a solid, multi-faceted organization has been taken up by PALO, the Pennsylvania Association of Latino Organizations. Their ADELANTE project has brought together Latinos from Dauphin, Cumberland and Perry Counties in a two-year training program that seeks to build a community center for the long term.

While the new center won't be operating for another year or so, the barrio of South Allison Hill will continue to grow and expand its influence and horizons.



St. Francis of Assisi church stands as a landmark on Market Street in Allison Hill.

# From the Ground Up

## Time to Buy, Sell?

### Harrisburg Realtor Assesses State of the Local Market

Ray Davis

With the end of 2008 came the end of one of the most volatile and tumultuous years in real estate's recent history. In the aftermath, buyers and sellers have questions, some of which I will address.

#### **What is the forecast for the real estate market in 2009? Is this a good time to buy? Sell? Invest in real estate?**

It's a safe bet that the economic picture will remain unpredictable in the years ahead. However, there's reason to believe the housing market is turning the corner.

Real estate in some of the country's hottest markets during the boom – California and Florida, for example – is again beginning to experience gains in property sales.

Existing single-family home prices have dropped by double digits in these hard-hit areas within the last 12 to 15 months. This drop in sale price, coupled with governmental first-time homebuyers tax credits and reduced interest rates, have given some reluctant buyers incentives to buy.

Harrisburg is a regional market, and somewhat insulated from the extreme peaks and valleys experienced in other parts of the country. During our "boom" we had a relatively short-lived period of double-digit appreciation, and, conversely, our price moderation has not been as extreme.

The housing market historically is a major contributor in the recovery of a weak economy. I am optimistic that real estate sales nationally and locally will contribute to the stabilization and recovery of our economy.

#### **Is this a good time to buy or should I wait for interest rates to drop?**

Interest rates are at near historic lows and when the market begins to rally

again, we may see a rise in those rates. Prices may also increase as the market improves. Whether purchasing your first home, moving up or downsizing, for qualified buyers this is a great time to buy.

#### **Is this a good time to sell or should I wait for the market to improve?**

Generally speaking, it's not wise to "time the market," whether buying or selling. Sellers risk losing potential buyers by waiting to list their home until the market "improves."

Also, as the market improves, housing inventory increases, creating more competition among sellers. There are always buyers who must make a move, so if you are a "ready, willing and able" seller, get a jump start on your competition.

#### **Is this a good time to invest in real estate?**

Many people have recently experienced large losses in their investment and retirement accounts. In most cases, these losses far exceed the modest declines in some real estate values in our region.

The tightening of mortgage money has made it difficult for some buyers to obtain financing, thereby increasing the pool of renters. Rents have not declined, which helps increase cash flow and profitability of rental properties.

In the current market, though, rehabbing and re-selling properties is not for investors unprepared for longer than average market times.

Investment in real estate is generally not for those who want to get rich quick, but provides a great opportunity to diversify your investment portfolio and experience long-term growth. If you have ever dreamed of investing in real estate, now is the time!

As we begin 2009, the coming year in real estate will require patience and perseverance by many. But I am cautiously optimistic that our regional real estate market will see slow, but steady recovery from this "corrective market."

*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. Inquiries: [rdavis@capitalareahomes.com](mailto:rdavis@capitalareahomes.com).*



## Harrisburg Sells Rehabbed Houses

Harrisburg has put 18 fully restored houses on the market, part of an ongoing effort to rehabilitate the city's housing stock and improve targeted neighborhoods. As of press time, 11 houses were still available for purchase, most in the Uptown neighborhood. These include:

- 609 Oxford Street (\$69,900 with 6% seller help)
- 612 Oxford Street (\$66,900)
- 613 Oxford Street (\$66,900)
- 614 Oxford Street (\$66,900)
- 616 Oxford Street (\$66,900)
- 619 Oxford Street (\$66,900)
- 2521 N. 6th Street (\$74,900)
- 2523 N. 6th Street (\$74,900)

Houses available for purchase in other neighborhoods include:

- 1420 N. 4th Street (\$89,900)
- 88 N. 17th Street (\$64,900 with 6% seller help)
- 90 N. 17th Street (\$64,900 with 6% seller help)

For information on these properties, visit the city's website at [www.harrisburgpa.gov](http://www.harrisburgpa.gov) or call (717) 255-6480.



## From Tragedy to Triumph

### Fire Fueled City Beautiful Movement, Ended 8th Ward

*Jason Wilson*

**H**ave you ever wondered what used to be where the state Capitol complex is now located? It's an interesting story, an essential part of the history of modern Harrisburg.

The 1897 fire that destroyed the Hill's Capitol – and the subsequent construction of Pennsylvania's current Capitol building – led progressive Harrisburg residents to make major changes to their cityscape.

Need for urban improvements was evident in the early 1890s, but the massive Capitol construction between 1902 and 1906 prompted the demolition of a residential area east of the Capitol known as the 8th ward.

Since the Civil War, the 8th ward had been known as one of Harrisburg's "seedier" sections. Both the Commonwealth and city residents were advocating its complete demolition to make room for the expanding state government.

After the Capitol's completion in 1906, the state began buying up the

properties between Fourth Street and the Pennsylvania Railroad tracks to the east. As each property was acquired, the government would raze the structure leaving a barren landscape behind.

By 1920, most of the buildings were gone, especially those to the southeast of the Capitol, where the first of four buildings designed by architect Arnold W. Brunner was to be built. Completed in 1923, the South Office was the first building constructed as part of the new Capitol complex. The North Office Building was finished in 1929, followed by the Education Building (Forum) in 1934 and the Finance Building in 1940.

Arnold Brunner had desired an overarching design scheme meant to link all the buildings in terms of their arrangement and style and by 1940 this was largely complete, save for what he termed "the People's Forecourt," which was completed in 1987 as the Capitol's East Wing Complex. Brunner never lived to see his vision come

to completion, and it was left to his successors, William Gehron and Sydney Ross, to complete the remaining three buildings.

The real significance of the Capitol complex is that it, along with the grass-root civic improvements implemented by noted Harrisburg leaders Mira Lloyd Dock and J. Horace McFarland, served as the seeds for the modern city. Without the public, city, and state government's progressive-era reforms, today's Harrisburg, including the downtown area, would have a vastly different landscape.

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



**City not-so beautiful: The neighborhood around the Capitol, including the 8th Ward, before completion of the Capitol complex.**

# Good Eats

## Restaurant Row

### Rock La Kasbah

You must remember this: two brothers bring flavors of Casablanca to Harrisburg

*TheBurg Staff*

Morocco conjures exotic, desert locales, the Atlas Mountains purpling in the sunset, ancient white-stone cities with narrow streets in kasbahs, delectable cuisines and dazzling culture.

Such an experience is not as far as North Africa. It can be found at La Kasbah, Harrisburg's only Moroccan restaurant, tucked away on N. Second Street, just off Forster Street.

Enter through a narrow doorway and step into a room easily found in Casablanca, Morocco's largest city, where the owners, Taieb and Mohamed Safouan, once ran a

restaurant.

Mustard colored walls, decorated with crimson tapestries and various art works, evoke the desert, and warm smells of delicate spices and lamb turning on a spit welcome a first-time visitor.

While serving delicious meals with mint tea, the Safouans provide patrons little familiar with Morocco an experience in cuisine and culture. Behind a curtain a tiny gift shop offers jewelry, trinkets and clothes, and weekend evenings a belly dancer performs.

"We're trying to share with the

American people," says 39-year-old Taieb, who goes by Ty.

Moroccan cooking centers around the tagine, a special heavy-clay pot for preparing lamb, chicken or beef, and couscous, a wheat grain dish that is dressed with vegetables and chickpeas and steeped in broth. Ty's father, Driss, a butcher, cuts the fresh, kosher meats.

La Kasbah entrees include chicken a l'orange, marinated in an orange sauce with herbs and spices, broiled chicken and lamp chop tagines. Ty says some of their dishes such as the broiled chicken are house specialties and can't be found in Morocco.

And Moroccan flavor is more subtle than Middle Eastern or Indian cuisine.

"It's not spicy, but if you like spicy, we can add some spice," says Ty.

The Safouans owned two restaurants in Morocco; a fast-food place in Casablanca that served sandwiches and French fries, and a formal dining room similar to La Kasbah in Marrakech.

The word "kasbah" means castle, but La Kasbah looks anything but. It has a warm, inviting atmosphere in a room where soft-cushioned benches line the walls. Mohamed built the benches. He said this type of setting is called Casablanca seating.

Ty says he likes to hear whether customers enjoyed their meals, but that's not always necessary. "Sometimes I don't ask people because they've completely finished their plates," he says, laughing.

*La Kasbah, 913 N. Second St. 717-909-4898;  
www.KasbahPA.com*



**Safouan brothers welcome diners to La Kasbah with Moroccan cuisine and culture.**



# Home Cooking

## Rosemary's Cucina

### The Perfect Sunday Sauce

#### Drop the Jar and Prepare an Italian-American Tradition from Scratch

*Rosemary Ruggieri Baer*

When I was a little girl, my best neighborhood girlfriend invited me to lunch one day. We had Franco-American spaghetti from a can. I thought it was wonderful. I wasted no time in running home and asking my Sicilian mother (who was, without a doubt, slaving over a hot stove) why we didn't ever have that. I've always wondered what she thought.

Pasta was the cornerstone of my Italian family's weekly diet, and, unlike many Italian immigrants, we didn't have it only on Sundays. Spaghetti, crowned with glorious "sauce" or "gravy," was what "pasta" meant to most Italian families back then. And every family's gravy was a little different: thick and rich or thin and watery (I hated this, unlike my father) but always slow simmered on the stove and laden with meat. Some cooks used tomato paste or puree, others just cooked down the lovely plum tomatoes Italians think of as their own. My mother proudly told me that a big piece of Italian bread, dunked in sauce, was the only after-school snack she ever knew.

I know very few people who make their own sauce or gravy today. They may toss pasta with exotic mushrooms or perhaps clams or (I'm sorry to say), smother it in the

library-paste concoction know as "Alfredo," but when it comes to "red," they think "jar."

I know there are some decent jarred red sauces out there (Patsy's from the restaurant of the same name comes to mind), but most ... well ... could we have chicken instead??

I think some folks might be afraid of making their own spaghetti sauce and grabbing that grocery store jar is so easy! But making sauce or Sunday gravy is not hard. It is, however, only as good as the ingredients that go into it.

I like my sauce slightly sweet, and that has startled at least one long-time Italian friend of mine. What follows here is my basic blueprint for red sauce. It differs from my mother's, although she ate it with gusto well into her nineties. And we did have it on Sundays!

#### ***Rosemary's Pasta Sauce***

Start with a very large pot (at least 8 quarts). Pour a thin layer of extra-virgin olive oil in the bottom (a fine, fruity imported oil will make all the difference in the world) and heat very gently over medium-low heat, watching carefully that it doesn't burn.

When the oil is hot, brown a piece of boneless pork (about 2 pounds) on all sides. I often use pork tenderloin because it becomes so tender after an afternoon of simmering in sauce. When golden brown on all sides, remove the pork to a plate and turn off the heat.

Add 5 large cans (28 ounces) crushed tomatoes to the pan. You can find many kinds in the grocery store, including organic ones. If you are lucky enough to find a gourmet vendor, the pricey San Marzano tomatoes are wonderful. More often than not, I use the Tuttarosa brand, mixing the smooth and chunky varieties. These tomatoes need no added salt. No tomato puree or paste goes into my sauce.



In a food processor, chop one very large sweet onion, a bunch of fresh, flat-leaf Italian parsley, and a large bunch of fresh basil. Add to the tomatoes in the pan along with a scant 1 cup of sugar and several grindings of fresh pepper. I no longer use fresh garlic because it tends to take on a burnt taste after several hours of cooking. And the more fresh basil the better!

Bring to a boil over medium heat and then reduce to medium low. Place the browned pork loin back in the sauce. You can keep the pot partially covered for an hour or so, but then remove and simmer uncovered over low heat for at least 3 hours so the sauce thickens. Stir frequently and don't allow it to burn or the fresh taste will be lost.

Serve over your favorite pasta along with a piece of the pork, which will be very tender by now. Sprinkle with freshly grated cheese, Parmesan Reggiano if you can find it. Enjoy! I hope you find, as we do, nothing like this can be found in a jar, and it will make any day of the week very special.

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

## Keystone Grape

### Local Wine Pioneer Celebrates 21 Years, One Tasting at a Time

#### *Our Wine Guy*

It's the fun of it, George Kline admits, that keeps his hands and interest in West Hanover Winery, one of only a few that call the Harrisburg area home.

"It's a challenge," he says, sitting behind his tasting bar on a quiet weekday morning in early December. "It really is a challenge, because each year is totally different depending on whether you have enough sunshine or not. You're always struggling to produce good wine in Pennsylvania."

Well, he has accepted that challenge for 21 years now, working out of a low-hung building next to his home that comes up suddenly as you cruise along Jonestown Road after departing I-81 at Hershey/Manada Hill. Kline grows 12 grape varieties on two acres and, with the help of juice he brings in from other wineries, has pushed his output to 5,000 gallons annually. "Three years ago, it was around 3,500 gallons. Last year, a little over 4,500. So, each year, it climbs a bit."

For years, the dot marking his winery on the Pennsylvania map sat alone, with others clustered to the south in York, to the east across Reading and into the Lehigh Valley. But, as the industry begins to mature over the East Coast, and particularly in Pennsylvania where the count soon will hit 100 wineries, Kline is finding new establishments on all sides of him. "There are a lot of good wineries out there," says the 67-year-old producer, referring to the state. "Pennsylvania wineries pride themselves, most of them, in making good wines."

Indeed, his personality can be as complex as a 10-year-old red, alternately prickly and entertaining and blunt. But it's obvious he has poured his heart into the business. "Forty-five years making wine; been

doing this 21 years, my grandfather's made homemade wine; so I've been around it all my life. First retail shop," he says. Then you see the grin. "First one that's legal, I guess."

His wine list is substantial, totaling more than 30 in all: red and whites; dry and sweet; fruit and dessert. Many winery proprietors across central and eastern Pennsylvania and Maryland will confess they produce more sweet wines than dry because that's what sells well here. Kline sees it differently.

"We've sold as many dry wines as we have sweet wines since day one," he says, crediting that to his location off the interstate. "We're getting a lot of people from all over the United States, so that's why we're selling a lot of dries. Now if it would be all local people, we'd sell more sweet. So (other wineries) are right in what they're telling you, but, right here, we're selling, I'd say, 50-50."

To grab that traffic, he opens seven days a week, with limited hours only on Mondays. Park in the enlarged driveway, head down the incline and through the front door, and you're met with barrels and bottles on both sides of you. Go into another room that Kline plans to finish off sometime in 2009 and then into the tasting room, which has been expanded. "See what I did here," he says, pointing at the tasting room. "I do this as I get the money. All in all, the business is holding its own. We're paying the bills monthly. We're a little tight right now, but we're hoping Christmas picks up."

What will help is the winery's participation in what will be the fourth annual "Tour de Tanks" in March 2009. Those who buy a "passport" for \$15 a person will get access during weekends that month to all 12 wineries that make up "UnCork York," one of

a number of wine trails that exist across the Commonwealth. "That really picks up sales. We did almost \$38,000 in March last year, the best year we had with the Tour. That was wonderful," he says.

While you can ask Kline anything, don't ask him to pick his favorite wine. There's no single answer. He mentions his double-gold winning Cabernet Franc, and his award-winning Chambourcin and Snow Bear, the latter a red blend of 10 different grapes.

"They're all good, let's put it that way," he concludes, splashing out a bit from a couple of bottles to be tasted. "Everyone told me on Tour de Tanks that they came here last because we have the best wines."



**George Kline reaches for another great wine.**



# Culture Club

## Passing Judgment

Lawrance Binda

### Death Must Be a Woman Dead Men's Hollow

With its third release, *Dead Men's Hollow* completes a journey of both time and place. Over six years, the sextet has won awards for music influenced by mid-20<sup>th</sup> century folk and gospel. Now, they've reached back even further, embracing the very roots of traditional American music.

It's a wonderful choice. In *Death Must Be a Woman*, the band captures in music the sad stillness of an autumn walk through an old battlefield. And there's no mistaking where that trek is taken, as the band's sound is inseparable from its native soil of northern Virginia.

This CD is largely thematic, with the songs, almost all original, emphasizing a combination of love, loss and war. The music and lyrics invoke conflicts of long ago, but a listener can't help but consider the tragedy of all wars, including those of the present. And that's part of the record's majesty, as the sound, while traditional, also has a modern sensibility.

Most songs are set up by the melancholy fiddle of Marcy Cochran, then brought to life by the lovely harmonies of singers Belinda Hardesty, Caryn Fox and Amy Nazarov. The best cuts are also the most heartbreaking, such as the superb "My Love Returned from War Today," and "William and Annie." Even when DMH sings the more optimistic, "Ain't Got the Blues," you can tell that the emotion is bittersweet. But that's a good thing, as the band is sublime when it's at its saddest. The achingly somber tunes, "Soldier's Return/Martha's Reel" and "John Doe's Bones," put an ethereal coda on this otherworldly set.

Listeners looking to expand their musical horizons could hardly do better. A spin around the graveyard with *Dead Men's Hollow* is highly recommended.

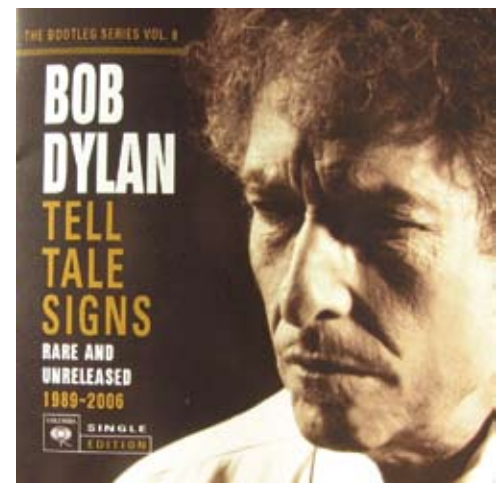
### Tell Tale Signs Bob Dylan

Within the unforgiving music industry, Bob Dylan is a rare bird indeed. The guy's been around seemingly forever without turning into either a nostalgia act or a pale imitation of his former self. Year in and year out, he continues to record, tour and sell, and, as *Tell Tale Signs* proves, his legendary talent has not waned a bit.

This double-CD is the latest release in Dylan's "bootleg series," which dates back four decades and includes seven other discs of alternative, usually acoustic, takes of previously released songs. *Tell Tale Signs* draws largely from two albums: 1989's *Oh Mercy* and 1997's *Time Out of Mind*. Fans of these recordings will recognize most tracks, but will appreciate how Dylan has evolved, changed and toyed with his creations.

*Tell Tale Signs* is about one thing: songwriting. Sure, listeners have never turned to Dylan for complex harmonic arrangements or production, but this CD is more stripped down than usual. Both "Dignity" and "Everything Is Broken" are bared to their elements, fully exposing the underlying melodies and lyrics. "Can't Wait" retains a bluesy sentiment, yet Dylan has polished some of the song's sharp, angry edge. In addition, the CD contains several hard-to-find songs, such as "Tell Ol' Bill," and "Huck's Tune," which have appeared on movie soundtracks. Musicians wanting to study the dying art of great songwriting need look no further than this album.

There is one complaint. After a rather disappointing mid-career, Dylan's late-period has been particularly fruitful and critically acclaimed. However, this entry of the bootleg series, as fine as it is, does not include a single song from 2001's *Love and Theft* and only two from 2006's outstanding *Modern Times*. Volume 9, anyone?



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# Passing Judgment

## Two Boys

by Robert Zausner

Illustrated, 302 pages

Camino Books, \$27.95

TheBurg Staff

**"F**irst thing we do, let's kill all the lawyers," is a generally misunderstood sentiment, referring to barristers who file lawsuits for such seemingly ridiculous claims as spilled hot coffee, claiming millions of dollars for their clients and themselves.

Actually, the quote, from Shakespeare's play *Henry VI (Part 2)*, was about getting rid of a professional group in Elizabethan society that blocked revolution. Whether or not one agrees with lawyers and lawsuits, *Two Boys* presents fascinating examples of why some, perhaps many, lawsuits and their large awards for damages are necessary.

Author Robert Zausner, a former Harrisburg resident and longtime reporter in the Capitol newsroom for the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, uses the stories of two young boys, grievously injured by everyday products, to illustrate the good that lawyers can do for society.

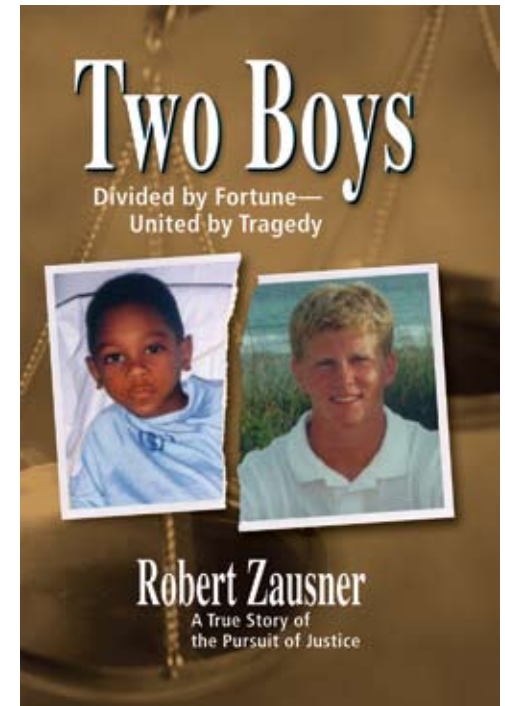
One of the boys, John "Tucker" Mahoney, is a white teenager, from an upper middle class family in the Philadelphia suburbs; the other, Shareif Hall, is a young black toddler of a single mother struggling to provide for her family in the inner city.

The subtitle of the book is "Divided by Fortune – United by Tragedy." The two boys are united only in the sense that they were, as Zausner writes, "struggling for their physical well-being," while they, their families and their lawyers, Shanin Specter and Tom Kline, faced "formidable foes – one a large government authority and the other a widely known U.S. corporation."

Tucker was the victim of a Daisy rifle BB gun that malfunctioned because of a defect in its design. Shareif lost his foot to a SEPTA subway elevator that not only had a design defect, but was only cursorily, if rarely, inspected.

The boys' stories are compelling not just for their personal struggles, but also for the defendants' responses: Daisy's refusal to acknowledge the lethally defective PowerLine air rifles or to recall them; SEPTA's decision to sue Shareif's mother instead of accepting blame, and then tampering with evidence and refusing to present documents pertinent to the plaintiff's case.

Zausner, who works for the prominent Kline & Specter firm, which he notes in the book, has an easy writing style, pacing the story like a suspense novel. As



a journalist, he believes that it's up to the Fourth Estate to expose wrongdoing in companies and government for the benefit of society. In *Two Boys*, he shows lawyers can play that same role.

Where to buy: [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com); [Barnes and Noble](http://Barnes and Noble).  
[www.caminobooks.com](http://www.caminobooks.com)

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# On the Outskirts

## Done DC? You Haven't! Four Stunning Sites Off the Tourist Path

*Lawrance Binda*

So you've visited Washington – what – a hundred times?

By now, you'd probably rather endure airport security than another slog through the Air and Space Museum. One more trip up the Washington Monument? Painful. Fortunately, D.C. abounds with interesting, beautiful places that few tourists ever discover. Here are four reasons to return to Washington, sites that are short on lines and long on appeal.

### **The National Building Museum**

*"Wow."*

That one word sums up the typical reaction when a person steps into the National Building Museum for the first time. In a city rich in beautiful architecture, this building's interior space stands out as among the most breathtaking.

A visitor can be forgiven for being surprised. The building sits in a rather nondescript location several blocks north of the National Mall, and its plain, brick façade holds little hint at what's inside. But, once within the Great Hall, a tourist can't help but to be awed by the towering Corinthian columns and large terra cotta fountain, which have provided the backdrop for 16 presidential inaugural balls dating back to 1885. It's the perfect place to stop for mid-afternoon snack, taking in the magnificent surroundings over coffee and cake at the café.



**Breathtaking: the National Building Museum**

Of course, the museum exists for more than a tour break. Its exhibits are mandatory for anyone interested in architecture, building construction and urban design. The museum also reminds visitors that public buildings once were meant to be grand, inspiring places. Originally, the building served the most mundane of functions – as headquarters for the U.S. Pension Bureau. The architects, though, specifically designed the structure so that its intended patrons, Civil War veterans, would feel welcome and respected when visiting.

As with many landmarks in Washington, the building fell victim to government neglect and urban decay, nearly getting razed in the 1960s. After a tough fight, preservationists prevailed, and this gem was restored to its original beauty. In 1980, the Pension Building became the National Building Museum, a treasure to be enjoyed by all.

*Hours:* Monday-Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sunday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.; closed holidays  
*Cost:* Free, \$5 donation suggested  
*Location:* 401 F Street, NW  
*Metro:* Judiciary Square  
*Web:* [www.nbm.org](http://www.nbm.org)

### **The Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens**

Can this really be DC? Are you really standing smack-dab in the middle of a major city, surrounded by lush aquatic flowers, wooded swamps and frisky water fowl? Yes, you are.

The Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens are a 14-acre urban oasis set along the banks of the Anacostia, a lazy, meandering tidal river that flows into the better-known Potomac. Originally a private garden and nursery, the land was acquired in 1938 by the U.S. government, which turned it into the only federal park focused on cultivated water plants.

Today, the gardens feature numerous artificial ponds that grow many varieties of water lilies and lotuses. For the best experience, show up during early and mid-summer, when the plants are at their succulent peak and the flowers are in full bloom. At any time of the year, visitors can enjoy a mile-long nature trail and, on the other side of the park, a boardwalk that meanders above a 77-acre tidal marsh. Wildlife abounds here, and bird-lovers may catch glimpses of warblers, ducks, orioles, hawks and eagles, among other avian species.

While gorgeous, the gardens do have one drawback – the location. The half-mile walk from the nearest Metro station passes through some troubled neighborhoods. Driving is the better option, and a large parking lot usually can accommodate all visitors easily.

*Hours:* Daily, 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. Closed holidays  
*Cost:* Free  
*Location:* 1550 Anacostia Avenue NE  
*Metro:* Deanwood  
*Web:* [www.nps.gov/kepa](http://www.nps.gov/kepa)

# Happenings

## On the Outskirts, continued

### Stephen Decatur House

Every year, tourists stand in line for hours for a brief glimpse at a few rooms in the White House. And across the street at Decatur House? Not so much. That's unfortunate because Decatur House is fascinating in its own right.

Visitors are richly rewarded for trekking across Pennsylvania Avenue to the northwest corner of Lafayette Park. Completed in 1818, Decatur House is one of the finest examples in Washington of a grand, federal-period residence. Here, you can see how the elite of the time lived and entertained and, in the case of the enslaved, toiled. The entire house is open for viewing, including living quarters, work areas, the ornate ballroom and a museum. Today, most visitors are particularly fascinated by the Gadsby Wing, a rear addition where the house's slaves lived and worked.

The three-story main house was designed by famed architect Benjamin Henry Latrobe and built for Commodore Stephen Decatur Jr., a hero of the War of 1812. Decatur lived in the building barely a year before being shot dead in a duel, and his widow subsequently rented it to a string of Washington notables, including Senator Henry Clay and future U.S. President Martin Van Buren. Subsequent owners added their own touches, gussying up the original style with Victorian flair.

In 1956, the house, endangered by plans for a major government office project, mercifully was saved one step ahead of the wrecking ball. Today, fully restored, it is owned and operated by the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

*Hours:* Tuesday-Friday, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.  
Weekends, noon to 4 p.m. Closed holidays  
*Cost:* \$4 for adults; \$2.50 for seniors and students  
*Location:* Entrance at 1610 H Street NW  
*Metro:* Farragut North, McPherson Square  
*Web:* [www.decaturhouse.org](http://www.decaturhouse.org)

### Hillwood Museum & Gardens

What do a Washington mansion, a box of cereal and a collection of jewel-encrusted Faberge eggs have in common? The answer: an heiress named Marjorie Merriweather Post.

It's strange how life can turn out. You may be born into a modest Midwestern family, yet, decades later, be hosting the likes of kings, prime ministers and ambassadors at your sprawling, leafy estate in D.C. Anyway, that's how it went for Post, who inherited her father's cereal business, helped build it into a packaged foods empire and became one of the world's richest women.

In 1955, Post bought the existing Georgia-style mansion just off of Washington's enormous, rustic Rock Creek Park, following decades of living in New York and Europe. She expanded and redesigned the house so that it could better showcase her extensive art collections. Upon Post's death in 1973, Hillwood was bequeathed to a private foundation and opened to the public.

Today, the mansion showcases a great assemblage of Russian imperial and western European fine and decorative arts. Visitors will discover such treasures as the Russian Empress Alexandra's diamond crown, two imperial Easter eggs by Faberge, Beauvais tapestries and thousands of other objects, among them Post's own jewelry, accessories and costumes.

Take time to walk the beautiful gardens, particularly in the spring, and make sure to tour the house to better understand the life of this uniquely American aristocrat. The holiday season is an especially festive time at Hillwood, with stunning decorations and many special events.

*Hours:* Tuesday-Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
Closed January and most national holidays.  
*Cost:* \$12 for adults; \$10 for senior citizens; \$7 for college students.  
*Location:* 4155 Linnean Avenue NW  
*Metro:* Van Ness/UDC (about 1 mile walk)  
*Web:* [www.hillwoodmuseum.org](http://www.hillwoodmuseum.org)

## Whitaker Watch

**Gregg Allman.** The frontman of the iconic Allman Brothers band rocks Harrisburg in a solo outing. Jan. 9, 8 p.m. Tickets: \$95 and \$49.50.

**Young Concert Artists and Collegiate & Resident Concert Artists.** The Wednesday Club for the Performing Arts features recitals of classical music by its members. Jan. 11, 2 p.m. for Young Concert Artists and 4 p.m. for Collegiate & Resident Concert Artists. Tickets: Free, \$5 donation suggested at door.

**James Hunter and Ryan Shaw.** Enjoy a night of modern takes on traditional American soul and R&B. A great double bill. Jan. 15, 7:30 p.m. Tickets: \$34.50 and \$28.50.

**Celtic Crossroads.** This acclaimed band delivers white-hot Irish music, dance percussion and rousing musicianship. Jan. 16, 8 p.m. Tickets: \$28.50.

**International Guitar Night.** Four guitar masters sample a variety of music styles from around the world. A must for lovers of the guitar. Jan. 22, 7:30 p.m. Tickets: \$27.50.

**Theatre Harrisburg.** Theatre Harrisburg holds its fifth annual *Superstar* talent competition. Come watch 25 local semifinalists and, a week later, the five finalists. Semifinals: Jan. 24, 7:30 p.m. Finals: Jan. 31, 7:30 p.m. Tickets: \$10 for adults, \$2 for children.

**Matthew Bengston.** Pianist Matthew Bengton performs J.S. Bach's seminal work, *Goldberg Variations*, as well as a new work by Harrisburg's own Jeremy Gill, composed in honor of Elliot Carter's 100th birthday. Jan. 25, 4 p.m.

**Tannahill Weavers.** A blend of the old and new from this Scottish music fivesome. Jan. 30, 7:30 p.m. Tickets: \$25.



# Home & Family

## Academic Center Debuts at Harrisburg University

Opening a Major Milestone for College, City

*TheBurg Staff*

Harrisburg University takes an enormous step into its future this month, throwing open the doors of its long-anticipated 16-story Academic Center at Fourth and Market streets.

The Center, sleek and ultramodern in design, will begin accepting students on Jan. 12, the first day of the new semester. The opening also is considered an important milestone for Harrisburg, which is positioning itself to become a regional center for culture, technology, education and entertainment.

The Academic Center now becomes the university's permanent home. The school previously had been scattered in various locales along Market Street since it opened three years ago. News of its completion has drawn an increase in inquiries from prospective students – 1,500 more than last year, said Dr. Eric Darr, provost and executive director.

"It sets the stage for us to truly move forward and realize our mission," Darr said.

At a cost of \$73 million, the glass-and-white building has 371,000-square-feet of space for 24 classrooms, wet and dry labs, 12 meeting areas, seminar rooms, 392 parking spaces and a 125-seat auditorium. In all, the Center can accommodate 1,800 students.

In the Center, students will have access to the latest technologies, such as wireless Internet access, videoconferencing and a multi-media production facility. An open courtyard on the roof will be available for social gatherings.

The building connects to Strawberry Square's retail shops and restaurants, which

will serve as a sort of student center, with a food court. The eateries, in particular, anticipate brisk business as the student population, now at 350, continues to grow, said Brad Jones, vice president at Harristown Development Corp., the property manager.

"Our retailers, particularly our food vendors, are excited about a new audience and a growing audience," Jones said.

The National Center for Science and Civic Engagement also is headquartered in the building. It is affiliated with the university and works with the National Science Foundation to promote and encourage academic pursuits in science and math.

Harrisburg University is a unique institution, as its students focus on the core subjects of science, technology, engineering and math – called the STEM curriculum and geared toward 21<sup>st</sup> century jobs.

Now in its fourth year of enrolling and teaching students, the university is the first to be chartered in Pennsylvania in more than a century. Mayor Stephen Reed said it marks the city's "evolution as a center for education, a circumstance never before experienced since our founding as a borough in 1791."

"Its mission is to prepare the innovators and the workforce for the businesses and high-skill jobs that are fueling the 21<sup>st</sup> century economy," Reed said.

Workers finished the building in December. Staff and faculty moved in then and prepared the classrooms for the winter semester. The Academic Center's official dedication is scheduled for Feb. 25.

## Hall Pass



**Academic Center gets its final touches.**

## Learn about SciTech Hi

Harrisburg's SciTech High School will hold an open house on Saturday, Jan. 10, from 11 a.m. to noon.

Could SciTech be in the future of your high school student? Drop by and learn all about the school and how to apply.

## Holiday Concert Postponed

Due to scheduling conflicts, Harrisburg High School's annual holiday concert, originally scheduled for Dec. 9, has been postponed.

The concert now will take place on Tuesday, Jan. 13 at 7 p.m. at the John Harris Auditorium.

# Young Burgers



## A Day of Pampering

Cosmetology students from the Harrisburg school district's Career Technical Academy volunteered recently at the Heinz-Menaker Senior Center on N. 4th Street.



## Libraries Hold Storytime

Tell me a story! Enjoy favorite stories, old and new, at your library. DCLS's winter storytime cycle runs for five weeks from Jan. 12 through Feb. 13. Toddler times are for two-year-olds. Preschool times are for children ages 3-5. Registration is requested at all branches. Please call the branch where you plan to attend.

## Take a Dive: Pool Opens on Sundays for Students

Winter session for Sunday instructional swimming at the East Shore YMCA begins Jan. 11 and runs every Sunday through Feb. 22. Classes are free for Harrisburg public school students and are taught by a Red Cross certified instructor.

All students must pre-register by Jan. 6. The temperature of the water is 83 to 85 degrees. Give your children between 3 and 19 years a gift and a skill they can use for the rest of their lives.

The following times are the official class times: 11-11:30 a.m. (3 years old); 11:30-12:15 p.m. (4-5 years old); 12:15-1:00 p.m. (6-7 years old); 1:00-1:45 p.m. (8-12 years old); 1:45-2:30 p.m. (deep water test) Level 2 and above (6-12 years); 2:30-3:15 p.m. (all swim levels, 13-19 years old).

Make reservations via e-mail to the school district or call 717-703-0400, extension 18208. Leave names of the children, their ages and a contact phone number.

## Winter Reading Comes to Dauphin County Library

A healthy mind can lead to a healthy body. Get your 100 percent of recommended daily facts without the fats this winter at the Dauphin County Library System.

Readers of all ages can read their way to a prize by participating in the DCLS Winter Reading Club. Participants simply complete eight books, audio books or DVDs of their own choosing and record each item in a reading log to receive a prize.

Get your Winter Reading Club logs at any DCLS library. Completed reading logs can be turned in at any DCLS library beginning March 1 and no later than March 31st to receive a prize, while supplies last.

Supplemental reading logs are available at each library.



Say cheese! Kids ham it up on a beautiful day outside the Broad Street Market.



# Wags & Whiskers

## A Free Pet? There's No Such Thing

*Todd Rubey, DVM*

As a vet, I am asked many questions about everyday pet ownership and health.

The cost of pet ownership is one of the major issues that arise. Often, I get clients who come in with the "free" kitten their neighbor found or the "free" puppy that was being given away from a box on the corner, and they expect the care and upbringing of that pet to be the same. They are then unpleasantly surprised at the \$150 or so veterinarian bill at the end of the appointment. Invariably, they say, "But I thought it was free."

Well, I hate to be the bearer of bad news, but it is expensive to own a pet. An average vet bill runs between \$150 and \$200. It can get into the thousands of dollars for serious illnesses or accidents.

Veterinary services are just the tip of the iceberg. There are food costs (a huge expense), household maintenance (fences, dog and cat doors, new carpet, re-upholstering furniture, etc.), toys and entertainment, licensing (when applicable), daycare and boarding, flea and tick prevention, and a slew of other small, unexpected expenses. Even the free goldfish that your child wins at the school carnival will require either a bowl or a tank, gravel, food, filter, water changes and probably a friend because he'll be lonely. The next thing you know, the "free" goldfish costs \$100.

The time factor is another major issue that most people, especially new pet owners, forget. Your life changes when there is another life relying on you for its livelihood.

It's just like raising a child. Fido will require walks, playtime, taking him outdoors in the rain or snow. A pet owner can't just up and leave on a whim for a weekend to the Poconos or trip to Happy Valley for the game. There is planning involved that must include the pet's welfare, which may also be an added monetary expense.

I suggest that anybody who is considering a pet, or adding additional pets to the household, consider a few things. First, can I afford this? Second, is my time spread too thin as it is? Third, what expenses am I going to have after the pet arrives? If you can answer these questions positively, then pet ownership is for you.

There are also many pet options out there other than dogs and cats. Some of the "pocket pets" involve less cost. Gerbils, hamsters and mice are relatively inexpensive to start, and the time and maintenance costs are certainly less (but they are still a responsibility). Reptiles (snakes and lizards) are another less expensive choice. Rabbits and guinea pigs are another option, and they offer a little more potential for interaction into a family.

Finally, don't forget about emergencies. Pet insurance is increasing in its availability and decreasing in its cost. This is something that I recommend to help spread out the health costs for your pet. It helps with the routine expenses. The cost of the insurance just about equals the payback, and when an emergency does occur, it can be a lifesaver.

So please consider the substantial costs of pet ownership. Run some numbers, see if a pet fits into your budget and schedule. Only then should you take up that offer of a "free" pet.

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](mailto:pdurantine@theburgnews.com).

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



**Diane Martin and Cody on a stroll in Riverside.**

# Sports & Bodies

## The Family Doctor

### “Wash Your Hands!”

#### Simple Advice, Effective Measure for Battling Infection

*Dr. Deepa Sekhar*

Lately, there have been numerous alarming news reports on MRSA infections. Many families ask me whether their child may have been exposed to these new bacteria, and if their child is in danger. While MRSA is an important public health problem, some parent fears are misplaced – and there is a lot of misinformation. Therefore, I thought I would share with you some of the information I give to my own patients.

MRSA stands for methicillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*. Simply phrased, this means that a strain of the common *Staphylococcus bacteria* (*staph*) has become resistant to the antibiotic methicillin, as well as several related antibiotics, which we previously trusted to treat *staph* infections. Antibiotic resistance is the result of bacteria “learning” to survive by being repeatedly exposed to an antibiotic. This will happen more quickly when doctors and patients misuse and overuse antibiotics. Be aware that *staph* is only one of several important disease-causing bacteria that have become resistant to antibiotics in recent years.

Antibiotic resistance to new bacteria is now a major challenge in hospitals throughout the United States.

Antibiotic resistance is becoming a major problem in the community as well. Cases of community-acquired MRSA initially emerged in the 1990s in healthy individuals with no risks for infection (i.e. hospitalization, immune deficiencies). MRSA typically causes skin infections (cellulitis) and abscesses. In rare cases it may cause pneumonia and widespread infections. MRSA abscesses often require drainage of the accumulated pus in addition to antibiotics. I discourage parents from trying to drain or “pop” abscesses themselves, as conditions are not sterile and scarring and infection may result.

We can cure MRSA infections, but many patients remain “colonized” after treatment. Colonization means MRSA stays on skin surfaces and in the nasal passages. There are many harmless bacteria that normally live on our skin, in our noses, in our throats, and in our digestive tracts. Some like MRSA have the *potential* to make us sick; others (like the “good bacteria” in our digestive tracts) actually help keep us well. Some MRSA colonized individuals will have repeated staph infections, but others will never develop an illness.

It is important to understand that MRSA colonization or infection is not the result of poor hygiene or inadequate housecleaning. Especially if they never have an infection, many people are completely unaware that they are colonized. Individuals with MRSA do not require special handling or isolation. Obviously, you should avoid touching open abscesses or skin infections in



others. However, this is common sense which applies to any open infection in another person, not just MRSA.

MRSA can be an issue for individuals who are immune compromised (i.e. cancer patient). However, in this situation the individual would be avoiding MRSA in addition to many other infections as advised by their physician.

Call your doctor if you think you have a skin infection or abscess, especially if the area is red, warm, tender and growing in size. My best advice for preventing MRSA as well as many other infections remains what your grandmother told you to start with – “wash your hands.”

*Deepa Sekhar is a pediatrician at the Milton S. Hershey Medical Center.*



# The Great Outdoors

## Sports and Outdoor Show: Cure for the Wintertime Blues

Kermit Henning

Cabin fever got you down? You just can't wait for the weather to break so you can finally get outdoors? You get little consolation from countless and repeated outdoor shows, watching the experts take monster bucks and record fish? Well, I've got the ultimate cure.

Join tens-of-thousands of other sportsmen in the same boat at the upcoming 54<sup>th</sup> Annual Eastern Sports and Outdoor Show in Harrisburg, February 7 – 15, at the Farm Show Complex.

This show is the largest consumer event of its kind in North America, drawing outdoor enthusiasts from many surrounding states to check out the newest in hunting and fishing products, plan their outdoor adventures, shop for boats, campers, RVs, SUVs, motorcycles and ATVs.

Visitors also enjoy the wide range of contests and entertainment. There are calling contests for ducks, geese, elk, coyotes, turkeys, owl-hooting, and predators as well as decoy carving and painting contests.

A big part of each year's show is the many outdoor celebrities who put on seminars and programs. This year is no exception. Highlighting a long list of guest appearances is Michael Waddell, one of the biggest names in deer hunting. A member of Team Realtree, Waddell is the host of "Realtree Road Trips" and "Gander Mountain We Live Outdoors" television. He will be at the show from February 13 to 15.

Other top names include The Benoits, the country's premier deer hunting family; Matt Morrett and Rick White, Hunter's Specialties Pro Staffers; world champion turkey callers Eddie Salter and Alex Rutledge; elk-hunting guide Al Morris; Bobby Hart, long range shooter and custom rifle builder; Chuck Adams, the world's best known and most widely published bowhunter; and Chef Albert Wutsch, director of the Indiana University of Pennsylvania School of Culinary Arts, and an expert on the preparation of wild game.

And make sure you catch the Taste of the Outdoors event in the small arena. Students from the Culinary School

of Harrisburg Community College prepare various dishes from wild game and fish for spectators to sample and enjoy.

Whether you are looking for the newest rod and reel on the market or shopping for that trip of a lifetime, it's all here. Major manufacturers and merchants display a tantalizing display of fishing and hunting gear, and there is even a place where you can try it before you buy it. Take that new spinning rod and reel for a few test casts or shoot that new bow in the archery arena.

Hundreds of outfitters from Canada, the United States, Africa, Europe and Australia offer hunts and fishing trips to fit any budget and any interest. Talk one-on-one with the outfitter, get references and customize your trip to exactly what you are looking for.

The final day of the show, Sunday, February 15, features the Pennsylvania Outdoor Writers Association Sportsmen's Auction. Items ranging from hunting and fishing trips to Canada and the US, hunting and fishing supplies, clothing, wildlife art, game calls and much more will be sold to benefit the association's Education Fund. POWA has raised over \$300,000 to date

and every penny goes to support youth outdoor educational opportunities like field days, fishing derbies, conservation camps, shooting sports, outdoor-related school supplies, and many more.

Every square inch of space in the vast farm show complex is filled with exhibitors, making it almost impossible to see it all in one day. The show promoters are offering special discounts on 2-day and 3-day passes, as well as family passes and group tickets. These and all other tickets are available for purchase ahead of time online. Buying online not only you saves money and spares you from waiting in long lines to get in, but each purchase gets you a subscription to *Field & Stream* or *Outdoor Life* magazine.

With the large number of visitors, parking can sometimes be tricky. The large lot at the farm show fills up fast, but there is auxiliary parking at the State Hospital grounds with shuttle bus service to the complex. Or park for free at Bass Pro Shops at the Harrisburg Mall and ride the free shuttles to the show.

Get further information and check out the complete list of exhibitors and attractions on their website: [www.easternsportshow.com](http://www.easternsportshow.com).

If you just can't wait for this show in February, visit the Reading Sport Travel & Outdoor Show, January 15 – 18, 2009 at the Reading Expo Center.

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.



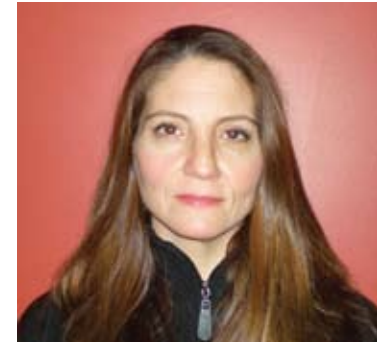
Vendors show off their wares at a past Eastern Sports and Outdoor Show.



## Happy New Year's Resolution!

### Joining a Gym this January? Here's How to Stay Sane as You Get Fit

Laura Spurgeon



**H**ealth clubs have a special place in their hearts for New Year's Day.

For on that day, and the days and weeks that follow, hundreds and hundreds of people will decide that they're going to join the gym and FINALLY lose that weight and get their rear ends in shape. No, really. THIS year.

Those of us in the fitness industry welcome these new faces, and we do so sincerely. We know that we can help these people achieve their goals, whether they involve losing weight, toning up or increasing flexibility. But we also know that too many of these folks will abandon their new fitness routines by St. Patrick's Day.

Trust me, I know whereof I speak. My college roommate used to badger me to do Denise Austin tapes in our dorm room until she gave up amid my peals of snorting laughter and four-letter words. I was a serial gym-joiner-and-quitter for years before I found the right facility (and the right motivation).

Fitness professionals know that, for many people, walking through the doors of a gym for the first time is a profoundly intimidating experience. Everyone else looks like they know what they're doing. Everyone else looks more in shape, more confident, more ... comfortable. As a personal trainer, it's my job to help new members conquer their fears, build confidence at the gym and overcome the obstacles to getting and staying in shape.

The first bit of advice?

Be realistic. Too many times, we vow to make drastic changes in our fitness and eating habits. "I'll go to the gym five — no, six! — days a week! That new fitness

contraption? I'm SO buying that! I'll stop eating carbs! No more beer with the football games!" And so on.

People can't live like this. And they won't, at least not for long.

Try to exercise three times a week. And modify your diet in little ways. Remember, it takes 3,500 calories to make up one pound. If you trim 500 calories a day, you can expect to lose a pound a week. If you burn an additional 600 calories a week (three relatively light workouts), all the better.

Secondly, find a fitness club where you feel at home. Is the staff friendly? Do they have the amenities you want? Do you really need certain things, like a pool or a racquetball court? Will you really use them? If you prefer fitness classes, make sure they are offered at times that fit your schedule. And be aware of extra charges.

I tell new members at our gym that it's important to us that everyone feels a sense of ownership at the club. We want people to know how to use our machines, feel accepted and respected in our classes and to know that they will have a positive experience every time they walk through the doors. It shouldn't be a chore to go to the gym. If a place feels right, it probably is.

Next, consider group fitness. You might not think of yourself as a "class-type" person, but keep in mind that fitness classes today are much different than during the Jane Fonda era. Most gyms today offer classes in weight training, circuit or sports conditioning, kickboxing, dancing and water workouts, in addition to the old standbys of step aerobics and cycling.

Men seem especially averse to taking fitness classes. And maybe urban dance is not your cup of joe. But, seriously guys, have

you taken a spinning class lately? They've intensified. The men in our classes will tell you they get just as tough a workout as the women.

Lastly, think about hiring a personal trainer. I know, I know, shameless plug. But honestly, PT is not only for movie stars and athletes, and it's not cookie-cutter. Sometimes people want to meet with a trainer two or three times a week until they reach their goals, then schedule follow-up sessions. Others want a trainer to devise a workout routine for them by meeting once a week for a month or two, then they'll revisit the trainer for periodic adjustments in their regimen. Still others just want someone to provide the accountability and motivation to work out regularly.

It might seem like a luxury to hire someone to help you get in shape, but people think nothing of buying that extra large latte or bottle of soda. Add up those costs, and most people who can afford to join a gym can probably afford some sessions with a trainer.

Four years after I joined my gym, I can't imagine going back to my life of inactivity. I've made the best friends of my life, gotten into shape and discovered that working out makes me feel amazing. I'm now a fitness instructor and a personal trainer and an unabashed ambassador for an active lifestyle.

My college roommate is still in shock.

*Laura Spurgeon is a Les Mills fitness instructor and is certified as a personal trainer through the American College of Sports Medicine. She can be reached at 717-599-8091 or [lsurgeon@aol.com](mailto:lsurgeon@aol.com).*

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