

SWISSVALE NEWS

JULY–AUGUST 2011

SWISSVALE COMMUNITY DAYS CELEBRATION IS JULY 1 AND 2

By Frank Berry

The highlight of summertime in Swissvale begins Friday, July 1...

...when the gates of Dickson Field, Schoyer Avenue, open for the beginning of the annual two-day Swissvale Community Days festival.

Here's the schedule:

FRIDAY

- 6 p.m. Bike Night features local motorcycle enthusiasts who roll up for giveaways and photos
- 6:30 p.m. hypnotist Dan Winwood takes the stage
- 8 to 10 p.m. entertainment by the Fabulous Bisceglia Brothers Band



Fabulous Bisceglia Brothers Band



KILLROOM

SATURDAY

- 4 p.m. Living Spirit Ministry performs storytelling and music
- 4:45 p.m. dance exhibitions
- 5:30 p.m. performance by Gina's Dance Studio
- 6:30 p.m. entertainment by KILLROOM
- 8 to 10 p.m. entertainment by Miss Freddye and Blue Faze
- 10 p.m. fireworks conclude the festivities

On both days, children's tents will feature face painting, sand art, games and inflatables. DJs Ralph Cecere and Dink McCann will provide tunes in between stage performances.

Games for all ages, food vendors of all kinds, a Swissvale Police K-9 demonstration and the Swissvale Volunteer Fire Department dunking booth fundraiser will round out the celebration.

SWISSVALE NEWS IS YOUR COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER.

Let us hear from you.

Swissvale residents, businesses and organizations wishing to publish information about community news and events in the Swissvale News, or to place advertising, should contact:

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ANTI-CRIME CAMERAS BEING DEPLOYED

By William McCloskey



Police Chief Greg Geppert

Swissvale Police Chief Greg Geppert reports that video cameras are being installed during July and August along the South Braddock Avenue corridor as a deterrent to wrongdoers and an investigative tool for local officers and detectives.

Geppert isn't saying—for obvious reasons—just where the cameras will be located, what specific areas they'll cover, and exactly how they'll be used.

However, in many jurisdictions such cameras are not big-brother eye-in-the-sky type systems with operators watching the comings and goings of residents.

Rather, they can be activated when a criminal, lost-person or other public safety incident occurs. Also, time-stamped tapes from the cameras can be played back as an aid to investigation.

Eyewitness testimony is notoriously unreliable and a witness might, for example, tell officers that the bad guys got away in a white Pontiac. Tape review might show that it really was a silver Ford—a small but important difference for probable cause.

Impetus for the camera system—supported by grant money—resulted from a series of assault and robbery incidents during 2009 and 2010 throughout the East End that had people watching their step in Regent Square, staying home more often and avoiding Frick Park.

Geppert and Edgewood Chief Robert Payne have been working closely with other area police departments as well as Allegheny County District Attorney Stephen A. Zappala to more closely coordinate patrol and investigative activities.

LIGHTS AND LOCKS

In other business, Geppert said a traffic flow study may be required to see if the increase of traffic resulting from the opening of the new UCP/CLASS facility at 1400 South Braddock Ave. (former Foodland site) warrants installation of a traffic light. More than 100 workers will be occupying the renovated space during the summer and many of them will have in-and-out driving needs to visit clients during the day.

Finally, the chief admonished residents to be careful to lock their homes and cars, especially during the summer months when doors or windows might be left open for ventilation.

Geppert said: "I hate to sound like somebody's schoolmarm, always scolding about this, but it really makes sense to lock up your house and your car to prevent intrusion, theft or worse. Break-in reports take up a lot of time for our officers for response and investigation. These occurrences can be easily prevented by taking a few seconds to secure what's yours."

KATE GRANNEMANN STEERS SWISSVALE LIBRARY TOWARD ITS SECOND CENTURY

By William McCloskey

You could make a persuasive argument that the Swissvale Library is the most important building in town. Kate Grannemann would not disagree.

Grannemann, a PhD-prepared library professional and interim director of the 94-year-old facility, reports that the Carnegie Free Library of Swissvale serves more than 50,000 people every year.

The director is a scholar-administrator, having received a BA History from Duquesne University, and Master of Library Science, MEd and PhD Counselor Education degrees from the University of Pittsburgh. She has more than 25 years of library and non-profit experience, most recently as executive director of Homestead Library.

At Swissvale, the lovely old library facility has the distinction of being the final public library building constructed personally by Andrew Carnegie, Pittsburgh's fabled robber baron-philanthropist. The first-ever Carnegie Library was erected in nearby Braddock in 1889 and still is functioning. But it's no longer the Gilded Age in Swissvale or in Braddock; economic times are tough.

Carnegie might have built and donated the library buildings, but he did not endow them with operating funds. He felt it was up to communities to operate and sustain their libraries. They'd get out of them what they put in.

There are 63 free public libraries in Allegheny County, 19 of them—including the Main Branch in Oakland—operated by Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh.

Much more than a borrowing repository for books and films, a contemporary library like Swissvale's has social, educational, fitness and artistic dimensions.

Especially in difficult economic times, public access to specialized publications and free computers are a tremendous help in researching and applying for jobs, scholarships, grants and other life-changing personal campaigns.

Coupled with the Swissvale Senior Center, downstairs of the library itself, the building does a lot of good for a lot of people who may not have the wherewithal or mobility to pursue such opportunities elsewhere.

Grannemann, a library scholar newly arrived last September, speaks of the library as being the borough's ideal "Third Place." She cites the work of social scientist Ray Oldenburg who refers to a person's "First Place" as the home and the people one lives with.

The "Second Place" is the workplace, where many people may actually spend most of their time. A "Third Place" is an anchor of community life that promotes ease and creative interaction with unrelated other people.

But just as life isn't always fair, so too are all libraries not created equal. And in the century that most of them have been operating, libraries have prospered or declined along with their home communities.

Of the 63 public libraries in Allegheny County today, some are stunning (Squirrel Hill), some are elegant (C.C. Mellor in Edgewood) and some, like Swissvale, are modest and humble.

Over time, the local library system has grown into an arcane tangle of regulations, school districts, funding streams, politics, demographics, legislative mandates and other administrative folderol that would be worthy of Port Authority Transit.

Nowadays, the Swissvale Library is operated by the Woodland Hills School District



Kate Grannemann

JULYFEST AT SWISSVALE LIBRARY JULY 2

Carnegie Free Library of Swissvale will host "JulyFest at the Library" on Saturday, July 2, in conjunction with Swissvale Community Days. The event will be held downstairs in the library building at the Senior Citizen Center.

Features will include:

- Arts and crafts sales tables by several vendors
- Bake sale
- Hot dog and soda sales
- Several raffle baskets, including a wine basket, a pasta basket and a "lady's pampering basket." You can see them now at the library.

JulyFest events will take place from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Friends of the Library, the volunteer support organization, says "This is a new adventure for the group and we are excited about having the event during Swissvale Community Days. Although we are trying to make some extra money, we also think it will be a fun get-together for our group."

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(Continued on page 4)

MADONNA DEL CASTELLO ANNUAL FESTIVAL BEGINS JULY 28

By Joanne Winwood

Madonna Del Castello will hold its Annual Festival for three days beginning Thursday, July 28. Each night the kitchen-dining area will open at 4 p.m., featuring meatballs, hot sausage, stuffed peppers, egg plant parmigiana and egg plant rotatini.

The festival also will feature a special meal each night—Thursday will be cavatelli, Friday will be linguini with either red or white clam sauce, and Saturday's special will be manicotti.

The main fair grounds will open at 7 p.m. each night, offering hot dogs, pizza, nachos, fried dough and baked goods.

Food, food and more delicious food. Is there nothing but food? You bet. Each evening will include games of chance, bingo and a DJ.

Highlights of the festival will include live performances by local groups:

- **Pittsburgh Letter Carriers Band**
July 28 at 6 p.m.
- **Lorraine Busch Dance Studio**
July 29 at 7 p.m.
- **Fox Trot Dance Studio**
July 30 at 7 p.m.

WORD OF GOD ANNUAL SUMMER FESTIVAL OPENS AUGUST 11

Word of God Parish will hold its Annual Summer Festival for three days beginning Thursday, August 11, from 7 to 11 p.m. each night.

This long-time, traditional parish event is being redesigned for 2011 and will be held outdoors. Volunteers are needed now to help get ready. Those willing to participate should contact Ron at the rectory, 412-241-1372.

Details are not yet final, but the festival will feature games of chance, a flea market, a bake sale, nightly entertainment and more on the grounds of Word of God Elementary School, 7336 McClure Avenue.

KATE GRANNEMANN

(Continued from page 3)

and often gets the short end of the financial wand. For example, it has no accessible ramp for wheelchairs or people using walkers. Nor is there an elevator inside the building to connect the library with the senior center. Some would say that's inexcusable in 2011 and in a location just a few feet from a senior citizen high-rise residence.

Fortunately for patrons, there are experts like Grannemann operating behind the scenes to keep most of those administrative and financial complications away from the open stacks and keyboards.

A dedicated, very modestly paid staff does what's needed to keep things running on a dependable basis. Financial and logistical support comes from an unusually active "Friends of the Library" volunteer support group that hosts events to bring in cash, books, DVDs and other needed commodities.

Patrons are urged to use the library's website, www.swissvalelibrary.org, to learn the full extent of available programs and activities.

Among the most popular are:

- *Wise Walk*, a library-based walking-for-fitness program
- *PALS Book Club*, which will meet July 21, August 18, September 22, October 20, November 17 and December 22. PALS stands for "People Able to Lend Support"
- An ongoing *One World, Many Stories* summer reading program which began June 13 and will conclude August 6

If major renovations or upgrades are coming to the Swissvale Library, they'll have to wait for a more favorable financial climate. For now, Grannemann and the staff are working with the school district to do small, inexpensive handyman-type things that can make a difference for appearance, comfort and efficiency—a little painting, repositioning furniture, modifying lighting fixtures.

The good news for patrons is, despite the financial inequities across the library system, it's all the same books and the same internet.

Carnegie Free Library of Swissvale, 1800 Monongahela Avenue, 412-731-2300, www.swissvalelibrary.org

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DAY TRIPS HIGHLIGHT SUMMER EVENTS AT SWISSVALE SENIOR CENTER

By Joanne Winwood

The Swissvale Senior Center has several special events planned for July and August, beginning with a trip to the South Side Works mall, Wednesday, July 6, 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. OPT tickets are required, please sign up by June 29.

- **Friday, July 15, 2 p.m.—Ice Cream Social**
Event will be held at the center, sign up by July 8.
- **Monday, July 18, 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.—Day Trip to the Strip District**
OPT tickets required, sign up by July 11.
- **Wednesday, July 20—National Lollipop Day.**
- **Thursday, July 21, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.—Book Club meeting**
Discuss Lisa See's *Shanghai Girls*.
- **Friday, July 22, 1-3 p.m.—Red, White and Blue Picnic**
Featuring entertainment, at the center. Cost is \$8, sign up by July 15.
- **Wednesday, July 27, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. —Trip to Rivers Casino**
OPT ticket required. Please enroll by July 20.
- **Wednesday, August 3—National Watermelon Day.**
- **Monday, August 8, 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Trip to Station Square**
OPT ticket required, sign up by August 1.
- **Thursday, August 18, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.—Book Club meeting**
Discuss Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest*.
- **Monday, August 22, 11:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.—Card Party**
Cost is \$5 and includes lunch. Details to be announced.
- **Wednesday, August 31, 9 a.m.—Breakfast Bingo**
Omelets for breakfast followed by Five Cent Bingo.
Cost \$4, sign up by August 24.

Regular weekly events at the center:

- Mondays Wii Bowling, 10 a.m.
 Exercise Class at 12:30 p.m.
- Tuesdays Blood Pressures, 10 a.m. to noon.
 Bingo starts at 12:45 p.m. for \$2/card and
 separate jackpots
- Wednesdays Wii Bowling at 10 a.m.
 Nickel Bingo at 1 p.m. for 5 cents/card
- Thursdays Line Dancing for the Soul, 10 a.m.
 500 Bid Cards at 12:30 p.m.
- Fridays Exercise Class, 9:30 a.m.
 Bingo at 12:45 p.m.

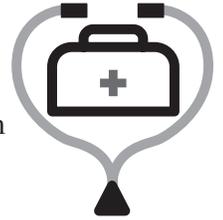
Swissvale Senior Center, 7350 McClure Avenue, (lower level of library building),
Jodi Trovato, manager, hours 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., Monday through Friday,
412-731-6125.

LIVING SPIRIT MINISTRY TO HOST HEALTH SCREENING

Living Spirit Ministry-Swissvale United Methodist Church is hosting a comprehensive community health screening Friday, August 19.

“Life Line Screening” will offer five safe, painless, non-invasive preventive health tests that typically are not part of a routine physical exam. These will include:

- Carotid artery blockage
- Atrial fibrillation
- Abdominal aortic aneurysm
- Peripheral arterial disease
- Osteoporosis



There is a fee for this service, which varies based on the number of tests requested, however the church is providing the space for the event at no charge. Pre-registration is required. For additional information or to schedule an appointment, call 1-888-653-6441.

Living Spirit Ministry also is continuing its free piano keyboard lessons for kids and adults Saturday mornings at 10:30 and 11:30. Call 412-351-1802 for information.

Living Spirit Ministry—Swissvale United Methodist Church is located at 7415 Irvine St. (behind CVS pharmacy). For more information about ministry programs, call the church office at 412-351-1802 or visit their website at www.swissvaleumc.org.

Living Spirit
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CHILDCARE COOPERATIVE COMING TO WILKINS SCHOOL CENTER

By Heidi McDonald



Katy Rank Lev

The Pittsburgh Childcare Cooperative will operate out of the Wilkins School Community Center this fall, using a classroom for the working parents and the center's Play-Space facilities for the children.

Member parents divide their day between two shifts, doing their own work and caring for the children.

The Pittsburgh Childcare Cooperative is an innovative new childcare solution for work-at-home parents. A unique service in the Pittsburgh region, it differs from a traditional daycare because the parents remain on-site.

Parents get a peaceful place to work, close enough to interact with their children. Members share both childcare duties and the desire to foster creative, positive and inspired experiences for the children.

For information, contact Katy Rank Lev at 412-444-5289, katy@katyranklev.com. Wilkins School Community Center is located at 7604 Charleston Avenue, Regent Square, www.wscppgh.org, 412-244-8458.



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EIGHTH GRADERS PROMOTED TO WOODLAND HILLS HIGH SCHOOL

By Heidi McDonald

Eighth graders from Woodland Hills Junior High School screamed with excitement as they officially were promoted to the district's High School on June 6. After a mini-concert by the Junior High orchestra, the Eighth Grade Chorus sang the National Anthem.

Honor student Justin McCord sang a gospel rendition of Simon & Garfunkel's "Bridge Over Troubled Water," which caused three rounds of spontaneous applause during the song and a standing ovation following.

Students heard speeches from District Superintendent Dr. Walter Calinger, class president Tiara Martin, and Woodland Hills alumnus Wes Lyons, who graduated in 2005 and just signed a two-year contract with the Pittsburgh Steelers.

"You are in charge of your own future," said Calinger, who recited a poem from the wall of Mother Teresa's Calcutta Clinic.

Though students had been cautioned to be quiet, the shouts were deafening as certain students crossed the stage, many of whom danced or waved with enthusiasm as they made their way. Each student received a certificate and was personally congratulated by Lyons, Calinger and both outgoing and incoming principals.

"I was once sitting in the same chairs you are right now," noted the 6-foot-9 Lyons, who recently completed his college degree at West Virginia University with a 3.0 average. "It's time for all of you to focus up and dig in to your studies if you want to be successful."

Simon Jasiewicz, the artist who designed a polar bear shirt that was used as a fundraising project this past school year, said he's looking forward to attending the high school. "All my friends will be there. The high school does a lot with art, and I can't wait to do art for one of Thomas Crone's musicals."

LIVING SPIRIT MINISTRY CHILDREN'S SUMMER CAMP BEGINS JULY 11

By Cynthia Elm

Living Spirit Ministry is offering an evening summer camp program for children entering grades four through six. The camp will be held at the church building, 7415 Irvine Street, Monday, July 11, through Friday, July 15. Hours are 5:30 to 8 p.m.

This is the first year the ministry has offered the camp, and confirmed activities for the week-long event include music, chemistry and environmental study. Organizers also would like to offer art and community service activities, but currently have no leaders for those subjects. Those interested in volunteering to lead either subject should contact Kim Schneider.

Participation is free. There is no registration fee and materials will be provided for each activity area. The children will be given a nutritious snack each evening.

Because of the nature of the activities, clothing may become stained or dirty, so older clothing is recommended for the participants.

Parents are welcome to stay during the activities, but it's not required.

Class size will be limited to 15 students per activity area. To register, or to volunteer as an activity leader, contact Schneider at 412-414-0552 between 8 a.m. and 9 p.m. Evenings are best, but feel free to call during the day and leave a message.

REGENT SQUARE “WORKS” BECAUSE PEOPLE WORK AT IT

You can't have a model community without having a strong sense of community. And that doesn't just happen fortuitously—people have to work hard to build and maintain it.

Regent Square is such a place, widely regarded as one of the best places to live in the Pittsburgh area. And that's the case, in large part, because of the efforts of the Regent Square Civic Association (RSCA), working to foster community spirit and inclusion in every aspect of the neighborhood.

No single local government deserves credit for Regent Square's stability and attractiveness because Regent Square isn't a town, it's a place name. It's actually composed of four distinct political subdivisions—parts each of Swissvale, Edgewood, Pittsburgh and Wilkinsburg.

According to RSCA, Regent Square was a collection of farm properties in the late 18th Century that began to emerge as a community in 1832, when Judge William Wilkins purchased 650 acres in the area. At the time, Pittsburgh had only recently been incorporated in 1816. Swissvale, Wilkinsburg and Edgewood didn't yet officially exist, having been founded in 1898, 1871 and 1888 respectively.

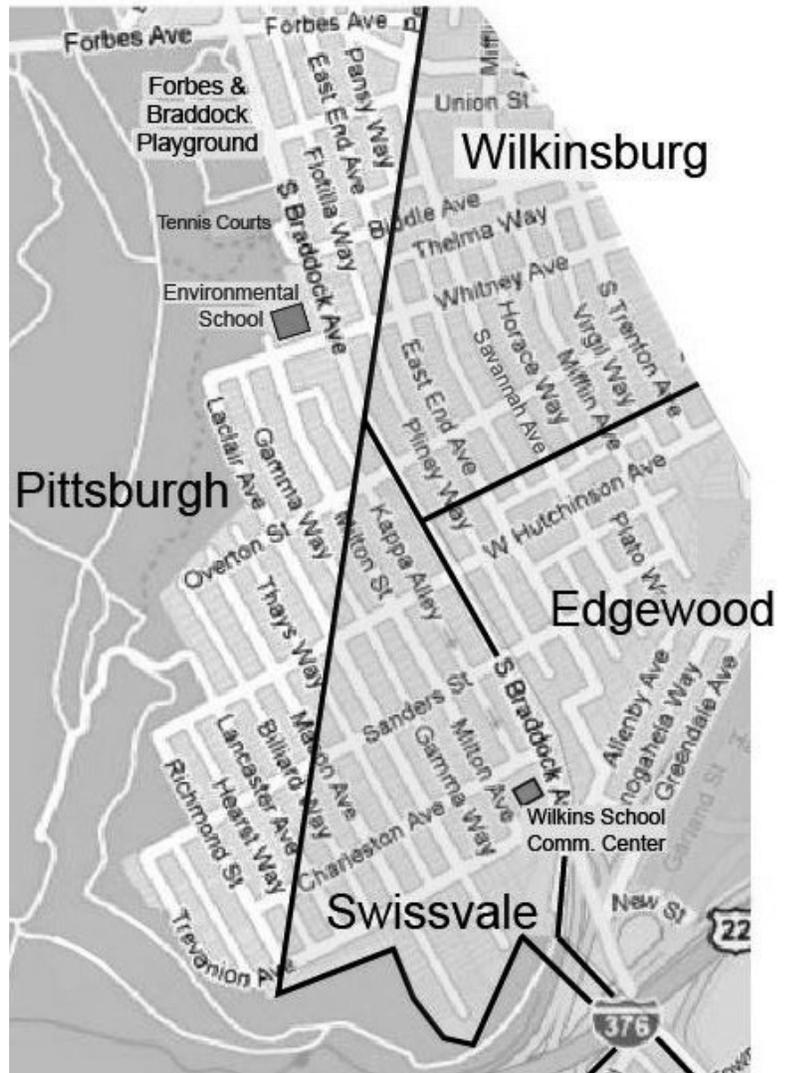
After Wilkins' death, his estate hired an engineer to draw up plans for a subdivision. The Devon Plan, as it was called, was registered in 1872. By today's geographical markers, it was bounded by Hutchinson, Forbes, Richmond and Trenton avenues.

In a further expansion, Harmon Realty purchased a southern portion of land which included Trevanion Avenue, and by 1919 had acquired The Devon Plan, renaming it Regent Place, and later changing it to Regent Square. Harmon sold off the property to developers.

Today, tree-lined streets, solid housing stock and neighborhood events continue to contribute to the neighborhood's appeal. The Run Around the Square, Easter Egg Hunt, Halloween House Decoration Contest, Regent Square Neighborhood Yard Sale, plus civic and social events and seminars all are part of the fabric of life.

Many of the events are sponsored by RSCA, and the all-volunteer group also produces a bi-monthly newsletter, maintains a website and originates grants for community improvements and initiatives.

Currently, Alina Keebler is president of RSCA, having been elected in January by the group's board. An architectural designer at a firm in Polish Hill, Keebler has been associated with RSCA since 2001 and has lived in Regent Square since 1978.



If you're game for some heavy reading, there's an exhaustive, authoritative 53-page account of

Regent Square's history available at

<http://www.regentsquare-rsca.org/history/Cover.htm>

RSCA serves all residents, businesses and property owners in Regent Square. It is a not-for-profit all-volunteer community association with a membership-elected board of directors. RSCA can be contacted at 7604 Charleston Avenue, Pittsburgh 15218, website www.regentsquare-rsca.org.

THE DIRECTORY

JULY-AUGUST 2011

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Council meeting
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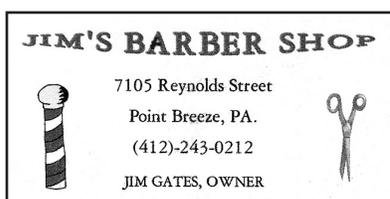
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