

Midday is unusually quiet now. School has started. The sound of children playing is limited to late afternoon and early evening. Family schedules have been revised to accommodate homework and after school events.

Backyard gardeners, like **Ben and Lori Grable** featured in our August issue, and yours truly, are elbow deep in canning jars and produce. Soon yard work will include raking leaves.

The sweltering heat of August gives way to warm and less humid days. Occasionally the scent of a burning wood stove wafts through the cooler evening air. Early morning walkers don sweaters and light jackets.

For those who dislike winter this is a bittersweet time. The cooler days and nights are harbingers of what's to come. We are not happy about that and choose to ignore the inevitable—for now.

Today we are going to sit on the porch and enjoy this warm, sunny September afternoon. We earned our rest having spent the morning cooking and freezing marinara sauce, green pepper soup, cabbage soup, stewed tomatoes, and—oh my goodness—there's another zucchini!

MICHAEL WHITLINGER DESIGNS



An exquisite array of jewelry greets the wise shopper who chooses to buy her gift at **Michael Whitlinger Designs**.

The earrings, pins, bracelets and necklaces rival anything available in the department stores. These unique pieces are created by Michael's mother **Susan Linkes**. "The drop earrings are so light," reports customer **Susan Cornell**. "Some

dangle earrings are so heavy they stretch the hole in your ear."

In addition to jewelry, there are bars of fancy soap with mouthwatering names like Cherry Oatmeal, Honey Almond and Crème Fraiche. Brightly colored hummingbird feeders dangle from the top of display cases. Small artificial succulents in two-inch square pots look so real they invite the touch test. In addition, Michael carries the Recycled line of greeting cards.

"I'm not just a flower shop," Michael says. "That's why the flower case is in the back. Customers are welcome to go back to see and to choose their flowers."

Michael can provide you with flowers, but he has so much more. Why not consider a gift basket with some flowers instead of the typical floral arrangement?

Michael, a twelve year Brookline resident, decided to open his shop on the Boulevard after considering Lawrenceville, Shadyside and Mount Lebanon. He will be ex-

800 Brookline Blvd.
Pittsburgh, PA 15226
412-343-3450

Hours: Mon-Fri 9AM to 5PM
Saturday: 9AM to 2PM
Sunday: Closed

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www.michaelwhitlingerdesigns.com

Far left: Viz Glass display at Michael's
Below: Michael Whitlinger



panding his inventory to include more home furnishing and lighting items.

If you saw the Chihuly Exhibit at Phipps Conservatory, you will appreciate Michael's new Viz Glass plates, vases and bowls. He introduced the vividly hued glass pieces on August 16 at a store gala. There are a variety of items and a range of prices. Any of the Viz Glass pieces would make a great gift for a friend or for you. You probably deserve a gift—right?

The Mayor held a news conference July 30, 2008 on Brookline Boulevard to introduce a new initiative called “Taking Care of Business Districts Program.”

The State funded program is designed to support small businesses, in several targeted commercial corridors and neighborhood business districts, by helping to improve their overall streetscapes. The idea is to help attract new customers and businesses by making improvement to the “eye appeal” of each district.

With the State funding the city will assign a team of city employees to focus on graffiti removal, line and curb painting, pothole patching, sidewalk repairs, enforcing code violations, performing vacant lot maintenance, addressing public safety issues and de-cluttering utilities poles, wires and news-racks.

In addition, a “Hokey Patrol” will be assigned to help clean and maintain specific neighborhoods. Brookline is one of those neighborhoods along with Carrick and Beechview. I asked **John Radcliffe** (Public Works Supervisor) about the duties of the Hokey Patrol, and his comments were “He will keep the parking spaces clean to the curb; the sidewalk is the responsibility of the business/building owners.”

The URA was represented at this news conference also and had a booth set up with information on its small business programs. As of August 6, 2008 “The Boulevard” is being kept clean and the “Hokey Patrol” was observed picking up litter even on the sidewalk, which is great!!

-Bob Beiler



Photo by Amy Fisher

Above: **Jason Nols** on Hokey Patrol



Photo by Amy Fisher



Photo by Mickey Underwood

Far left: **Mayor Ravenstahl** introducing “Taking Care of Business Districts Program”

Left: Mayor at the Brookline Breeze with DeWayne Adams

Brookline Block Watch

“We urge you to continue submitting tips and complaints to our office. It’s because of your efforts that we have been able to have success with those operations [drug house] that frequently fall between the cracks. And no matter the size of the operation, they are all causing devastation to our city neighborhoods. Complaints can be submitted via Silent Complaint Forms, Mayors 3-1-1 Response Line, Narcotics & Vice Office 412-323-7761. We will continue to work with our residents as we attempt to restore a meaningful quality of life to those who live in and visit the City of Pittsburgh.”

-Pittsburgh Bureau of Police Narcotics & Vice - Citizen’s Observer Alert dated July 30, 2008

Officer Christine Luffey, Zone 3 Station, reviewed the previous month’s crime report at the July meeting, and emphasized the need for residents to call 911 if they see a problem.

We all need to become nosy neighbors. Nosy neighbors are traditionally the butt of jokes unless their vigilance stops a criminal act. Maintaining Brookline as a safe neighborhood depends on us.

Call 911 when there is a problem. The 911 operator is trained to order calls based on their importance. It is not up to residents to triage 911 calls.

What else would improve police response in Brookline? More police cars on the road instead of in the shop!

Christmas Lighting Project

Last year the Brookline Chamber of Commerce heard from you and fellow merchants about the Christmas Lighting. We have decided that it is time to start Brightening the Boulevard, hopefully for the Christmas season of 2010. This is a major fundraising project that the Chamber along with South Pittsburgh Development will take on. We are looking at a cost of over \$40,000 for 75 to 80 displays and installation. So look for cans in some of the businesses and fundraising events in the next year or two. A mailer will be going out to all residents. The faster we raise the funds the sooner Brookline Boulevard will have a brighter Christmas. If you are ready now, donations can be made out to Brookline Chamber of Commerce, P.O. Box 9610, Pittsburgh, PA 15226. Please put Christmas Lighting on the envelope.

-Linda Boss

More Than A “Litter” Problem

“Litter is the most preventable and pervasive insult to a city's quality of life... litter is a signal of apathy, and apathy is a threat.”

- The Pittsburgh Post Gazette

I am often perplexed by those shamelessly tossing into the street garbage as if it were normal behavior. Indeed, litter is such a problem in Pittsburgh neighborhoods that the late Mayor O’Connor made the issue a centerpiece in his “Redd Up” campaign, which has continued in the Ravenstahl administration. This focus has brought about a heightened awareness about litter and attitudes toward community pride.

Brookline Boulevard and other entry points act as the face of our community. Litter sends an overtly negative image to visitors. Without a clean business district and neighborhood the prospect of enticing home buyers and quality businesses becomes more difficult. How can concerned residents turn the tide against the apathetic louts who litter our community?

What SPDC is doing

Litter is the most preventable community problem to solve. Fortunately, SPDC has organized ongoing volunteer cleanups. So far this year, SPDC volunteers have conducted three community litter sweeps, plus periodic pickups of the Boulevard. This year we have collected over 200 large bags of litter, junk, and recyclable materials from trouble spots. There are also two gentlemen, **Ken Stiger** and **Sam Riston** who perform weekly clean-ups in Brookline.



Photo by Keith Knecht

Ken Stiger with his handcrafted litter cart.

What you can do

Boris Weinstein developed an effective model based on frequent cleanup of small areas. Weinstein advises those who hate litter to go out and clean up for an hour or so, with volunteers or by themselves. Weinstein’s theory is that the cleaner an area is, the less likely people will be to litter. He does concede that “people have to buy into the concept that people who *can*, have to pick up for people who don’t care.” In his passion for litter he organized *Citizens Against Litter* which has greatly reduced litter in his neighborhood.

Councilman Doug Shields remarked that the grass-roots efforts are "fabulous," but they face a challenge in Pittsburgh: "The city I grew up in, and I'm 52, was about work, not aesthetics. It has never focused on the little things that add up to a better quality of life. The culture has to change."

We can change the culture, and you can help by caring and teaching our youth that litter is an unsightly problem that degrades our city. It can be easily solved through pride in self and community. If you are interested in helping us keep our business district and neighborhood clean, please contact me at 412-561-4482 or KEK33@verizon.net.

-Keith Knecht

The Pittsburgh Housing Authority has a hotline for concerns about Section 8 housing in the city. Call 412-456-5111 or email hotline@hacp.org. They pledge a response within 24 hours.

The Pittsburgh Housing Authority has an anonymous tip line 412-471-2275 for concerns about scattered site houses. There were 19 Housing Authority properties in Brookline at the beginning of the year.

Brookline Chamber of Commerce

The Brookline Chamber of Commerce has embarked on an exciting new program to welcome new home buyers to Brookline. There are about 200 real estate transfers in our area each year, Welcome to Brookline (WTB) will target these homebuyers. Special packets are being mailed containing a welcome letter, discount coupons from area merchants along with the Brookline Business & Community directory. New residents will be advised of area businesses, churches, schools, government offices and community service organizations. The first mailings have just gone out.

-Lee Herbermann

Playborhood Coming to Brookline

A brand new website is coming to town! Do you wish you could walk your children to school but can’t do it every day? Do you want your children to play outside with friends instead of hanging around the house playing video games? Let’s get together! This website aims to get like-minded parents together and in turn, their children, to play outside, explore, and have fun safely in the neighborhood. Less recess time at school means we have to encourage it more at home. The Brookline-specific website will be revealed soon. If you are interested in helping with this venture, please contact Amy Fisher at 412-344-2179 or amyfisher.spdc@verizon.net.

-Amy Fisher

THIS MONTH

September 8

Chamber of Commerce Meeting 6:00PM at Magistrate Charles McLaughlin's office 736 Brookline Blvd.

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South Pittsburgh Development Corp Meeting 7:00PM at Magistrate Charles McLaughlin's office 736 Brookline Blvd.

September 9

Brookline Block Watch Meeting 7:00PM at Magistrate Charles McLaughlin's office 736 Brookline Blvd.

September 19

Car Cruise at the Brookline Recreation Center showcasing classic vehicles complete with music, refreshments and the Peoples Choice Award. From 5:00PM to Dark.

September 29

Brookline Area Community Council Meeting - ACORN Program about mortgages 7:30PM St Mark's Church, Corner of Brookline Blvd. and Glenarm Ave.

ONGOING

JUNE 11—NOVEMBER 12

Seton Center Brookline Flea & Farmer's Market 1900 Pioneer Avenue Wednesdays 11:00AM to 6:00PM

The Brookline by Email

You will receive **The Brookline** in COLOR if you send us your email address! Remember to send email addresses for college bound members of the family or former residents of our community so they can keep up with what's happening "at home." Email mnp.grabowski@verizon.net. Put "The Brookline" in the subject line. We welcome your questions and comments. Remember your email address automatically enters you in our contest. If you are on the email list, consider forwarding this issue to a friend or neighbor. Spread the word about a great place to live!

If you don't have access to a computer, send your questions or comments to **The Brookline c/o SPDC, PO Box 9606, Pittsburgh, PA 15226**. You can pick up next month's copy of **The Brookline** at a Boulevard merchant displaying "The Brookline Available Here" sign in the window.

AUGUST'S WINNER : LOIS HALEY

If you didn't win, don't despair. You may be next month's winner!

\$\$\$\$ \$30 BROOKLINE BUCKS \$\$\$

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone#: _____

Email: _____

**FILL OUT THE ENTRY BLANK.
DROP IN CONTEST BOX AT TAKE TWO**

DEADLINE: SEPTEMBER 12, 2008



Left: Looks like **Mayor Ravenstahl** discovered **Mateo's** too! He's shown here with **Lou Guarino Sr.**, President of **WAE Records, International**. **Lou** is **Mateo** owner **Lisa Gualtieri's** uncle.

At right. Seated from left: **Qualyn Ramsey, Keyyana Woodson** and **Earlene Howze**. Standing: **Davon Soto**. **Keyyana Woodson** is **Mateo** co-owner **Larry Woodson's** sister, and **Earlene Howze** is **Larry's** mother.

"I came all the way from Atlanta for this meal," laughed **Qualyn Ramsey**. Now that's traveling for good food!



Photo by **Catia Alencar**



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