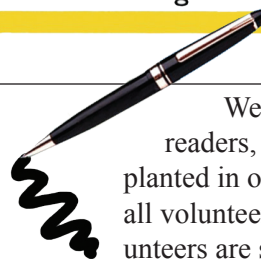


Letter from the Editor

The winter solstice has passed, and we celebrated. Why - you wonder - would anyone who dislikes winter as much as we do celebrate the first day? Simple. After the solstice, sunset comes precious seconds later every day. It is the small things that will get us through the next three months. Well, at least 2 and 1/2 months. We firmly believe that by St. Patrick's Day the worst is over. Snow after the middle of March doesn't hang around like snow in January. January snow just lays for days and days.

Purple crocus and yellow daffodils peek through March snow. The only thing peeking through January snow is more snow.

The new year brings Jessica Luffy to The Brookline. She heads our advertising department. Advertising will allow us to increase our circulation. Enough advertising will bring back our Shopper of the Month drawing! Jessica will work with area merchants who have expressed an interest in putting their ads in The Brookline.



We say "department," dear readers, with our tongues firmly planted in our cheeks. The Brookline's all volunteer staff is quite small. Volunteers are still welcome. Your help is especially needed with our new feature "Do You Remember?" What do you remember about Brookline that you can share with the younger generation or residents who have recently moved to Brookline?

We know it's cold outside, but don't forget the merchants on the boulevard. Bundle up, take a walk, and make shopping at a boulevard business your destination.



Mazza Shoe Store and Repair

Vince Mazza has been repairing and offering shoe advice on Brookline Boulevard for years. January marks

fifty the golden anniversary for Mazza Shoe Store & Repair. He learned his craft by apprenticing with his father. When Vince and his father worked the shop, they were open from 7:00 in the morning to 10:00 in the evening. That's when shoes were repairable, and there were four shoe repair shops on the boulevard. It's hard to imagine the boulevard being able to support four shoe repair shops. That was when people fixed shoes rather than replaced them. Times have changed. Shoes have changed, and shoe repair is fast becoming a lost art. Even the trade school for shoe repair in Pittsburgh is gone.

Vince has been president of the Kiwanis, St. Anthony Club #13 and the Chamber of Commerce. "When I was president of the Chamber back in the

mid seventies, we were talking about the revitalization of the boulevard, and we're still talking about it."

He stops to take a phone call from Nancy his wife of fifty-one years, who works at Chartiers Mental Health and Retardation.

The economy has people considering repairing rather than replacing shoes. Unfortunately, that's not always possible. "Today the shoes have molded soles, and they can't be replaced." Vince explains, "I just fixed 4 1/2 pairs of shoes for a woman. It costs her \$22.50. She said it made more sense for her to spend \$22.50 and have five pair she could wear rather than spend \$80 for one new pair of shoes." Spending big bucks for a better quality shoe isn't necessarily the answer either. Even \$300 Manolo Blahnik Pinoba black patent leather pumps with a leather sole will need new heels. If no one is learning the craft of shoe repair, where will you get a pair of \$300 shoes fixed?

"Send them back to the manufacturer." Vince says with a shrug.

By Pamela Grabowski

**618 Brookline Blvd.
Pittsburgh, PA 15226
412-341-7493**

**Hours: Mon. to Fri. 9:00 - 4:30
Sat. 9:00 - Noon**



Vince Mazza at work.

911 Call Center

By Mary Anne Miller

On November 15th a group of residents from Brookline and Beechview toured the Allegheny 911 Center. Mr. Harvey, Communications Manager, explained the daily operations and how priority calls are handled. The Center has 250 employees and is in operation 24 hours. Calls are handled in order of priority. He explained that when you call 911, a Call Taker is the first person you speak with. You will be asked location, what the emergency is, and to verify the address and telephone number. The Call Taker will then dispatch your call to the proper department



Mr. Harvey answering Brookline resident Dottie Grant's questions. Photo by Mary Anne Miller

receives a call for a burglary, the burglary takes priority. Mr. Harvey said

rude they will be reprimanded, suspended or face job termination.

Calls taking too long to be answered – Sometimes there is a back log of emergency calls – do not hang up - a Call Taker will be with you as soon as possible.

Call Takers asking too many questions regarding medical emergencies – this is necessary because the information is passed on to the EMS or paramedics to let them know the condition of the person needing their assistance.

It was a very informative tour. If your group or organization would like to take a tour please call Mr. Harvey to make arrangements at 412-473-3372.

– police, fire, EMS, or paramedic. If a call comes for the police regarding a parking situation and then the Center

there are three major complaints about the 911 center:

Rude Call Takers – If a Call Taker is

Pick up those shovels

By Dana Hackley

It's only January and we've had our fare share of winter blasts, but then again this is Pittsburgh so who are we kidding? But did you realize there is a city ordinance that says every time it snows you must clear the sidewalk in front of your home?

Title Four of the Pittsburgh Code of Ordinances states, "Every tenant, occupant or owner having the care or charge of any land or building fronting on any street in the city, where there is a sidewalk paved with concrete, brick, stone or other material shall, within 24 hours after the fall of any snow or sleet, or the accumulation of ice caused by freezing rainfall, cause the same to be removed from the sidewalk."

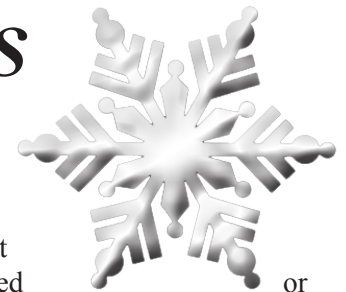
For Brookline businesses, clearing the sidewalks is nothing new. "The sidewalk is the business owner's responsibility. I have been clearing our sidewalk since 1962. I own the prop-

erty, therefore I am responsible," said George Dolan of the Partycake Shop.

But not all residents realize they share that responsibility. In fact, after a recent snowfall in Brookline many residential sidewalks were not cleared and created dangerous situations. State Senator Wayne Fontana's office who has a location in Brookline says it's important for all of us to pitch in, "Residents can be vigilant and helpful by being aware of their own property needs as well as those of elderly or infirm neighbors. Paying attention to the sidewalks in front of your home or business, even on weekends and holidays, is important. Senator Fontana and his staff frequently make weekend/holiday trips to the office in inclement weather to put the salt and shovel to good use in front of the Brookline Boulevard office."

There are a few things to keep in mind when doing your civic duty:

- Snow should not be shoveled or moved onto the road-way. When residents throw their snow onto an already plowed street, additional plowing is necessary and this takes away resources from the streets that have not been serviced.
- Snow should be shoveled onto lawn areas or close to the curb.
- In heavy snows, parking spaces should be sacrificed to pile snow. These efforts allow passage of emergency vehicles and other vehicular traffic.
- Requests for special plowing/salting can be made for emergency situations.



Brookline Area Community Council

By Annette Ferrieri

Brookline Area Community Council's Kick off the Holidays Party took place on Monday, November 24, 2008. There were cookies and drinks and prizes for everyone. Winners of the Christmas tree Coloring Contest were Emily Bruce – 15, Shane Wise – 8, Chloe Lestitian – 6, Ryan Lestitian – 4 and Brandon Switalski - 2.



The pictures are on display in Charlie McLaughlin's office window on Brookline Blvd. Santa Claus made a very special visit, and everyone got to tell him their Christmas wishes. Thank you to everyone who helped to make the party a good time and watch for BACC's Holiday Kickoff next year.



Mmmm. Kribel Bakery thumbprints with a couple of jimie sticks supporting a Steeler cookie. Photo by Michael Grabowski.

Brookline Block Watch

By Pamela Grabowski

Effective January 1, 2009 Brookline is now part of Zone 6 in the West End under Commander Scott E. Schubert. Officer Ken Stewing is the Crime Prevention Officer for Zone 6. The officers were at the December Brookline Block Watch meeting. Both officers are Brookline residents. Commander Schubert said he or Officer Stewing would try to attend the monthly block watch meeting.

Commander Schubert reiterated what we have been saying. If you see anything out of the ordinary, CALL 911. Maybe the strange man standing in your neighbor's driveway is a cousin from out of town, but he may

also be a robber casing your neighbor's home.

Often people feel that if they don't see the police respond immediately to their call, it was wasted effort on their part. Commander Schubert explained that he reviews the log of calls daily. So your report of the man in the blue parka walking around your neighbor's home may be one of three calls the police received about the same man. That would cause Commander Schubert to dispatch an extra patrol in your area.

We can be extra eyes and ears for the police. They can only do so much. They do need our help.

South Pittsburgh Development Corp.

By Pamela Grabowski

SPDC held a short meeting before joining the Chamber of Commerce Christmas Party. Lois McCafferty reported on the Christmas Lighting project. Including the Memory Tree donations, collections totaled \$2,060.

A mailing will be going out this month to remind members to renew. Send your annual membership fee in ASAP. After all it's only \$5.00!



For a subscription to The Brookline:

SPDC Members: \$15 a year (12 issues)

Non Members: \$30 a year (12 issues)

Make check or money order payable to "SPDC" to the following address:

**P.O. Box 9606
Pittsburgh, PA 15226**



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We want to hear from you. If you have questions about Brookline, maybe we can help you get answers. We welcome your comments. Send your questions or comments by email, phone or mail.

Email: mnp.grabowski@verizon.net

Telephone: 412-343-2859

Mail: The Brookline c/o SPDC, PO Box 9606, Pittsburgh, PA 15226.

Get The Brookline in COLOR! Send your email address to mnp.grabowski@verizon.net. Put "The Brookline" in the subject line.

Pick up The Brookline at a Boulevard merchant. Look for "The Brookline Available Here" sign in the window.

South Pittsburgh Development Corporation
P.O. Box 9606
Pittsburgh, PA 15226

Funding for newsletter by Pennsylvania Department of Community & Economic Development

Citizens Police Academy Begins

Info provided by Mary Anne Miller

The next Citizens Police Academy begins on February 2. Application for admission to the program is due by January 23. This program is offered twice a year by the Pittsburgh Bureau of Police to provide an opportunity for members of the community to become closely acquainted with the roles and responsibilities of the Police Bureau. The Pittsburgh Citizen's Police Academy (CPA) brings the police and the community close together in a setting that offers a sample of police training to each participant. Participants are taught the basics of criminal law, search and seizure, patrol tactics, firearms and many other subjects. They learn about the processing of a crime scene, conduct a ride-along with an officer, may experience a traffic stop, and see how police canines are used. CPA participants



meet and talk with many of the street officers as well as the command staff and training staff that serves them. This presents an excellent opportunity for you to become familiar with police procedures and to meet members of law enforcement who work throughout the city. For more information and an application go to: <http://www.city.pittsburgh.pa.us/police/html/citizenspolice.html>

LOW FIRE HYDRANT WATER PRESSURE

By Lee Herbermann

Recently the Brookline Chamber of Commerce sent a letter to City Councilman Jim Motznik outlining some Brookline business owner's and resident's concerns about low water pressure in area fire hydrants during a fire in August on the Boulevard. Councilman Motznik, as usual, responded to the Chambers' request and contacted PAWC to investigate the matter. Valves were repaired in two hydrants and several other area hydrants were checked and their proper operation was confirmed.

We would like to thank Councilman Motznik for his attention to this matter and also to the Pittsburgh Firefighters who did an excellent job considering the problems at hand.





Light 'Em Up!



Jan and Bob Beiler at Brookline Light-Up Night.



Chamber of Commerce President Ken Bucher and his wife Lisa.



Michael Whitlinger and Ken Bucher at Light-Up Night. Michael donated the tree.



Linda Boss and Beth McNeil at Brookline Light Up Night.



Judy and Lee Herbermann Bundled up and enjoying Brookline Light-Up Night

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READERS RESPOND

In our November issue Mary Hutchins asked about the revitalization of Brookline Boulevard, and Bob Beiler responded.

This project was to start in 1999 and was to be part of the EPA mandate to separate sewage from runoff water. The project also included new underground utilities (gas, electric, water), a new sidewalk configuration, new traffic signals, an updated and safer parking configuration, redesign

of "The Cannon" area including a new traffic pattern at that site and resurfacing of the entire boulevard.

Sadly, while it was federally funded, some of the money was siphoned off to other projects, i.e., The South Side Hot Metal Bridge bicycle path. With the change in political leaders both at the state and city level and new appointees in the city engineering department, the original intent has been lost. The project now seems to be leaning towards just a resurfacing project with new sidewalks thrown in to appease the public.

Do You Remember?

"We called catalpa trees Indian Toby trees - I feel sure this is no longer part of Americana. The cigarmaker Marsh in Wheeling WV made and sold a very skinny very black cigar they call a Stogie (contracted from "Conestoga" because it was favored by the conestoga wagon drivers passing through on the National Road) which were also called "Tobys." The long green seed pods of catalpa trees resembled Tobys. Boys would pull them from the tree and pretend to be smoking them - the legend was that the Indians actually did smoke them - I don't know where

that came from but none of us ever tried it. Yet we all knew where those trees were located in Brookline - I wonder if any are still there?

-Don Sayenga, Tucson, AZ

Do you have a catalpa tree in your yard? Do you have a picture we can print for Don?

What do you remember? Drop us a note, email us or call us.



With the shrinking funding base and the current state of the economy, it is difficult to say what the project will finally become. The latest information coming from the City is, they are waiting for a sign-off from PennDot, and then they will turn it over to the original engineering company (Baker Inc.) for yet another re-design etc., etc., etc.

It is my opinion, without a public outcry, this project (in any configuration) will never happen.

SNOW Continued from Page 2

So while the city according to Mayor Ravenstahl is working to herald in, "a new era in the City of Pittsburgh's Snow and Ice Control program" for roadways, residents are being asked to clear sidewalks in order to look out for each other.



PUT YOUR AD HERE!!!

We currently have over 900 readers, and that number doesn't include those who read **The Brookline at the website.** Contact Jessica Luffy at jess@jessicaluffy.com or call 412-343-8035 for more information.

YEAR:
SPDC Members \$280
Non Members \$400

SIX MONTHS:
SPDC Members \$160
Non Members \$225

THREE MONTHS:
SPDC Members \$100
Non Members \$125
Annual SPDC membership dues are \$5.00. Do the math!

THIS MONTH

January 12
Chamber of Commerce Meeting 6:00PM at Magistrate Charles McLaughlin's office 736 Brookline Blvd.

January 13
Brookline Block Watch Meeting 7:00PM at Magistrate Charles McLaughlin's office 736 Brookline Blvd.

January 20

BROOKLINE REC CENTER

Boys & Girls Indoor Soccer sign-ups \$15.00 Fee
Joe's Fitness Club Men & Women age 18 and over
Kinder Sports Free program of sports and crafts with Mickey and Milan. 11:00AM to Noon. Age 6 and under

South Pittsburgh Development Corp. Meeting
Location to be announced
Contact amyfisher@brookline-pgh.org for more information

January 26
Brookline Area Community Council "Taxes - what you need to know" at 7:30 PM St. Mark's Church Corner of Brookline Blvd. and Glenarm Ave.

Boxing Get ready for Golden Gloves. Mon. Tues. Wed. 6:00PM to 9:00PM. Ages 7 to 36.
Girls Fast Pitch Softball Sat. 2:00PM to 3:00 PM Free

