

REGENT SQUARE

CIVIC ASSOCIATION
NEWSLETTER

The voice of the Regent Square Civic Association (RSCA),
serving Regent Square's diverse residential and business community.

May 2006, Volume 26 Number 4

Join us in June at
the RSCA Community Meeting,
7PM, Monday, June 5, 2006, at the
Wilkins School Community Center,
located at the corner of Milton and
Charleston Avenues.

Please Note:
There will not be a RSCA community
meeting or Board Meeting in July.

Neighborhood Yard Sale

Crossing Our Fingers for Sunshine — Saturday, May 20, 8AM–1PM

It's not too late to participate in the 7th annual Regent Square Yard Sale! The sale is scheduled for May 20 from 8AM–1PM. Send in your registration form (included in this newsletter) right away to be included on the list of participants and the map. The list and map will be distributed to all who visit the information booth, so be sure to register!

Stop by the Wilkins School Community Center for the café, book and herb sale, too.

Please Volunteer! Volunteers are still needed to help execute the sale. Don't assume that someone else will help — we need you! Please consider assisting as a block captain, hanging up or taking down posters, etc. Contact the Yard Sale Committee for information: Carrie Webber at 412-371-2895 or clwebber8@verizon.net.

Don't forget to tell your friends, family, and co-workers about the sale. Happy selling! ■

Easter Bunny Thrills Kids

Neither Rain nor Chilly Weather Could Scare Off These Intrepid Egg Finders!

A little damp cold weather could not keep the Easter Bunny away from the Regent Square Easter Egg Hunt. More than 40 children were there to enjoy the games, prizes, and face painting, along with finding Easter eggs of course. Regent Square's own Sweetie Sweetie donated delicious cookies for all to enjoy! Thank you to Balloonatics in Squirrel Hill for generously bringing the Easter Bunny AND handing out balloons.

The day would not have been such a success without the help of many volunteers. Thank you to Mary and Bruce Travers, Kristan Abeshouse, Kathy Clevenger of Neighborhood Realty Services, and the Turano, Fischer, LoBello, Abeshouse, and Griffin families. RSCA board member Glennen Greer was on hand to help and showed a true talent for face painting! ■

The Regent Square Gateway Project

Building a Better Frick Park Entrance

Imagine the transformation of dilapidated parking lots, chain link fencing, and a decaying outfall culvert for the Nine Mile Run stream. Nine Mile Run Watershed Association's (NMRWA) Regent Square Gateway Project (RSGP) is bringing together non-profits, municipalities, businesses, and community members to make this happen. We envision a community space that cleans rain water, beautifies the Frick Park entrance, and provides a welcoming space for visitors to the park and the many nearby businesses and non-profits.

NMRWA hired Cahill Associates to head up a veritable dream team of engineering, artistic, and design talent. They have enlisted the help of two outstanding firms for the project: Atelier Dreiseitl, a German design firm founded by an artist, designed the spectacular Potsdamer Platz in Berlin, and Rolf Sauer & Partners, a landscape architecture firm that has worked on ecological restoration and site planning around the country.

More than 120 people attended the information session given by the design team on Friday, December 2, 2005, at the Center for Creative Play. The next day more than 150 people joined NMRWA for the public design session, during which the participants were led through artistic exercises by Herbert Dreiseitl, given a tour of the RSGP site, and then

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Swissvale to Count Street Trees

Goal: A Watershed-Wide Inventory

Street trees in Swissvale are standing up and being counted! Come on out to help on Saturday, June 3, when the Nine Mile Run Watershed Association and Swissvale Borough will conduct an inventory of street trees, which follows the inventory conducted last year in Edgewood. This will bring the goal of a watershed-wide inventory of street trees one step closer.

This watershed-wide inventory will show the importance of our green spaces for stormwater management, air quality, property values, and quality of life. It will also establish the basis for future planning and management of one of our most valuable community resources — trees!

You'll learn from local experts how important trees are to our urban communities, how to identify trees, and then collect data that will contribute to the health and beauty of your neighborhood and the watershed. Everyone had a fantastic time during the Edgewood Tree Blitz last fall — be a part of this next phase of the inventory.

Breakfast and lunch will be provided. No experience is necessary. For info, or to register, please contact Jeff Bergman at 412-371-8779 or at jeff@ninemilerun.org. ■

WSCC Used Book and Herb Sale

May 20, 2006; Book Sale Only May 21, 2006

The Wilkins School Community Center is having a Used Book and Herb Sale on May 20, 2006 from 9AM–2PM. On Sunday, May 21, 2006 the Used Book Sale **only** will be operating from Noon–3PM — you can get a bag of books for \$3.00. If you will be canvassing the neighborhood looking for treasures, consider stopping at the WSCC to rest, relax, and grab a light bite to eat. Coffee, soda, water, muffins, and sandwiches will be available for purchase. ■

Playground Building & Ribbon Cutting

Installation: May 6 and May 13; Grand Opening: June 3, 2006

The Wilkins School Community Center is installing a new ADA-compliant playground on the community center's grounds. Thank you to all who lent their support by attending the WSCC's fundraisers and giving their generous support. Call 412-244-8458 or e-mail wscpcgh@yahoo.com to help in the community build and spreading of the playground surface mulch that will take place May 6, 2006 (rain date May 13, 2006). You will get a list of tools that might be needed to complete the task. Or, bring what you have and we'll make do. *Make sure that you label your tools so that you can easily locate the tools that you brought.*

WSCC will hold a ribbon cutting party on June 3, 2006, to celebrate the installation of the new playground. There will be food fun and festivities. Visit www.wscpcgh.org for news about these and other Community Center events. ■

Contributions: This edition was edited by Ann Hornak Gaul. Thanks goes to contributing writers from the community or those who provided information for the newsletter. This includes:

- Carrie Webber – Yard Sale
- Molly Thayer – Egg Hunt
- Jeff Bergman – Gateway Update
- Darrell Rapp – Tree Counting
- MaryLouise Turano – WSCC
- Lee Hicks – Neighborhood School
- Karen Litzinger – Free Program
- Melita Osborne – Cub Scouts

Articles may be submitted for publication via post or e-mail. Please visit the web site www.regentsquare-RSCA.org and see "Newsletter submission guidelines" under the "Newsletter" menu item for complete submission guidelines, or contact the editor to receive a hard-copy or e-mail of the guidelines. Please see the last page for complete contact information regarding the Newsletter editor, e-mail or post office address.

May Events Calendar

1-May-2006 | 7PM

RSCA Community Meeting

Regular monthly meeting
Wilkins School Community Center, between South Braddock and Milton at Charleston.

Info: To request an agenda item, call 412-371-2010 or president@regentsquare-RSCA.org

1-May-2006 | 7PM

June/July Newsletter Submissions Due

E-mail articles and information to
newsletter@regentsquare-RSCA.org

6-May-2006 | 9AM–12PM

Food Drive

Non-perishable food donations collected for the Wilksburg Food Pantry. Drop off items at church. Food collection first Saturday of every month.

*Mifflin Avenue United Methodist Church
905 Mifflin Ave., corner of Mifflin & Whitney*

Info: 412-731-2511 or www.mifflinave.org

19-May-2006 | 5:30PM–6:30PM

RSCA Business Network Meeting

Business owners and non-profits working together for a better Regent Square business district

Meeting location to be announced.

Info: Call 412-371-2010 or send an e-mail to info@regentsquare-RSCA.org

20-May-2006 | 8AM–1PM

RSCA Neighborhood Yard Sale

Information booth at Regent Square Theater

Info: Carrie Webber at 412-371-2895 or clwebber8@verizon.net

20-May-2006 | 8AM–1PM

Rummage Sale / Bake Sale

*Mifflin Avenue United Methodist Church
905 Mifflin Ave., corner of Mifflin & Whitney
Entrance at Whitney Street*

Info: 412-731-2511 or www.mifflinave.org

3-June-2006 | 5:30–7PM

Strawberry Festival

*Mifflin Avenue United Methodist Church
905 Mifflin Ave., corner of Mifflin & Whitney*

Info: 412-731-2511 or www.mifflinave.org

3-June-2006 | 9AM–12PM

Food Drive

See information above under April 1

5-June-2006 | 7PM

RSCA Community Meeting

Regular monthly meeting
Wilkins School Community Center, between South Braddock and Milton at Charleston.

Info: To request an agenda item, call 412-371-2010 or president@regentsquare-RSCA.org

Regent Square Gateway Project

(Continued from p1.)

split into groups to explore design ideas. Last January NMRWA Executive Director Marijke Hecht and board members Bob Bingham and Jim Taylor, joined the RSGP design team for a three-day design workshop in Uberlingen, Germany. The session at the Atelier Dreiseitl studio was very productive and inspiring. After reviewing all of the ideas from the public design session last December, the team developed a basic design concept for the Regent Square Gateway site.

The Dreiseitl team will develop these ideas further and will work with engineers and landscape architects from Cahill Associates and Rolf Sauer & Partners to create the two designs for the site. These will be presented to the public for feedback on June 10, 2006, at the Center for Creative Play. Call 412-371-8779 or write to info@ninemilerun.org to register for this event. Please visit www.ninemilerun.org for more information about the Regent Square Gateway Project and the NMRWA's many other initiatives.

The Regent Square Gateway Project is made possible with funding from the Babcock Charitable Trust, the Canaan Valley Institute, the Garden Club of Allegheny County, the Heinz Endowments, the Henry J. Simonds Foundation, the Laurel Foundation, and the Western PA Watershed Program. ■

Regent Square Neighborhood School

School Building Sold to Charter School

Regent Square may have an elementary school again – and this time it will be for the whole Square. Children from Edgewood, Pittsburgh, Swissvale, and Wilksburg will be free to attend — and it will be free. The K–8 school could start as early as September 2007, with K–3 or K–5 classes the first year; it will be open to children in the entire Pittsburgh area.

On April 4, 2006, the Pittsburgh Board of Education (PBE) voted 6-3, after an hour of heated debate, to sell the Regent Square School to Schoolhouse Finance L.L.C., the financial arm of Imagine Schools, for \$3 million. Imagine Schools is a charter school company based in Arlington, VA. Superintendent Mark Roosevelt endorsed the sale.

At a local community meeting on March 16, 57 people heard the Imagine Schools story; 49 of those present signed petitions endorsing the sale of the building to Schoolhouse Finance. At a PBE Public Hearing on March 29, nine individuals spoke in favor of the sale; just one spoke against. The RSCA Board voted on April 3 to endorse the sale to Schoolhouse Finance.

Now that the building has been purchased, Imagine Schools, with the assistance of Regent Square residents and environmental groups, will develop an application for the Regent Square environmental charter school, to be submitted to the Pittsburgh Board of Education in the Fall of 2006. The school must meet Pennsylvania education standards.

The Regent Square (Environmental) School will be governed by a Board selected by local interested persons and individuals from Imagine Schools.

Imagine Schools intends to lease the property to the board of the charter school. Many local environmental groups are interested in helping the school develop its curriculum; more than a dozen environmental groups heard the Imagine Schools story on March 30, and many expressed an interest in a possible partnership with the school.

Charter Schools are public schools, funded by the school districts from which the students come. School districts reimburse the charter school based on a per-student formula; the State partially reimburses the school districts. For example: it costs PBE about \$12,500 per year to educate a student; 80% of that (\$10,000) would go to the charter school; the State would then reimburse the PBE \$3,000 (30% of what they pay the charter school). The actual cost to the PBE = \$7,000 per student.

Because it often costs more to get a school underway, Imagine Schools will underwrite the start-up costs and deficits until the school is self supporting. ■

RSCA in Favor of Local School

Testifies in Support of Charter School

The RSCA supports the proposal presented by Imagine Schools to establish an environmentally themed charter school in the building formerly known as Regent Square School and supported the sale of the building to Imagine Schools.

Arch Pelley, president of the RSCA, attended the March 16, 2006, community meeting, where Imagine Schools presented its proposal, as well as the Pittsburgh School Board meeting on March 27. “There was generally very positive feedback from the community at both meetings,” states Mr. Pelley.

In addition to the reuse of the school building and the environmental curriculum proposed, the Imagine Schools charter school would be available to any resident in the Regent Square Community, regardless of municipal boundaries. “We feel that this will promote the bonding of the various municipalities into an even more cohesive neighborhood, along with maintaining the asset of a local school,” Mr. Pelley says.

“Keeping the Regent Square School a community school meets the RSCA’s mission, which states that ‘Our goal is to maintain a sense of community and continually improve the quality of life in our neighborhoods,’” says Mr. Pelley. After hearing Mr. Pelley’s report at the April 3, 2006, RSCA community meeting, a majority vote by board members approved a motion to support the sale of the Regent Square School to Imagine Schools by the Pittsburgh School Board. A letter of support was e-mailed to the School Board prior to their vote the following day. ■

Become a 2006 Member of the RSCA!

Support the efforts of the RSCA through your dues and/or a donation of your choice. Please send in this form with your check (*payable to RSCA*) to: RSCA Membership, 7604 Charleston Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15218

Resident(s) (# adults per household) @ \$10 each	1 Business @ \$25 ea.	Donation
Name _____	Business Name _____	_____
Name _____	Business Owner _____	_____
Name _____	Alternate Rep. _____	_____
	Business Website _____	_____

Address _____
Municipality, State, Zip _____
E-mail _____
Phone _____

Contact me to discuss or volunteer for: _____

- Contact information is not shared with other organizations
- Membership year runs Jan. 1st - Dec. 31st — dues received after Oct. 1st will be attributed to the following year
- Membership dues are not tax-deductible as a charitable contribution; however, they may be deductible as an expense incurred in connection with a trade or business
- For membership info: 412-371-2010 or membership@regent-square.org

Cub Scouts

Local Pack Welcomes New Members

Cub Scout Pack 23, which meets in the First Presbyterian Church of Edgewood, will be holding a spring round-up at the church on Sunday, May 21, starting at 1PM. This is an opportunity for boys who will be entering first through fifth grades in the Fall of 2006 who are interested in joining Cub Scouts. There will be a cook-out and the annual Cub Scout Gutter Regatta, in which scouts race homemade boats down a rain gutter. Family members are welcome, and boys will be able to register to join Cub Scouts at this event. There are activities throughout the Summer for scouts, so there is no need to wait until fall. Questions? Call Melita Carter 412-731-6097. ■

Free Career Counseling Program

Convincing Cover Letters — Friday, June 2nd, 11AM-Noon

After agonizing over your resume, make sure to give equal attention to your cover letter! This session, to be held at PA Team Career Link, 425 6th Avenue, Regional Enterprise Tower, Downtown, will review the content and format for convincing cover letters and will also go over leads of where to send your cover letters to expand your job search strategy. The session will include a critique of good and bad letters using a Convincing Cover Letters Checklist. The program will also include other job search correspondence including networking, thank you, and offer letters. For information, contact Karen Litzinger at 412-242-5342 or Litzingerkaren@aol.com.

Along with Career Counseling programs, Karen also offers programs on Dining Etiquette, Power Mingling, and Business Etiquette for a modest fee. ■

Braddock Avenue Zoning

RSCA Testifies on Proposal

At the March 21, 2006, City of Pittsburgh Planning Commission Hearing, Arch Pelley, 2006 RSCA President, presented a letter from the RSCA Board in opposition to the rezoning of three lots on 100 blocks of S. Braddock and East End Avenues from Residential to Commercial. The RSCA does not object to Walgreen's developing the already existing commercial property abutting these lots and facing Penn Avenue. The group is, however, against the zoning change of the residential lots without a comprehensive neighborhood plan or the support of the Park Place community where the properties sit.

The Commission subsequently voted to recommend that Pittsburgh City Council approve the rezoning. Before making a decision, City Council will hold a public hearing where any Pittsburgh resident can present testimony for or against the rezoning. To learn more about this issue or to find out how you can be heard, visit the Greater Park Place Neighborhood Association (GPPNA) website: www.parkplaceblog.com/. ■



To contact the RSCA Newsletter:

Newsletter Committee
Regent Square Civic Association
7604 Charleston Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15218-1265
412-371-2010 E-mail: newsletter@regentsquare-RSCA.org
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RSCA Neighborhood Yard Sale — Registration Form**Saturday, May 20, 8AM-1PM**Register before the May 1st deadline to be listed on the 2006 Yard Sale Map.

Name:		Phone Number	
Address		E-mail	
		RSCA Member (Y/N)	
3 Hot Items	1		
	2		
	3		
For mapping purposes, will your sale be in the front or back of your home? _____			
Can you be a Block Captain? _____		Already Registered by Phone/ E-mail? _____	
Payment enclosed:	\$7 RSCA non-member _____ \$5 RSCA '06 Member _____ (make checks payable to RSCA)	Please mail form with registration fee to: Carrie Webber RSCA Yard Sale Registration 1305 Lancaster Avenue Pittsburgh, PA 15218	

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