

Cedar Park Neighbors Newsletter



CPN President's Message: **Taking Action on Many Fronts**

It has been an extremely active spring in Cedar Park. In April, we held our annual membership meeting, touching upon homeowner and renter concerns, and held our annual Gary Bronson Scholarship fundraiser at Dock Street. During May, Cedar Park Neighbors (CPN) and other community organizations co-hosted a Town Hall event with the 18th Police District regarding the 2014 shooting of Philippe Holland, we met with Hickman Temple AME Church regarding recent building issues, and we held a community event with multiple Cedar Park Houses of Worship. During June, we kicked off the Friday Jazz series and held a community meeting with the Philadelphia Water Department about projects coming to West Philly.

Regarding the police town hall event, more than 50 neighbors joined CPN, Cobbs Creek Neighbors (CCN), Garden Court Civic Association (GCCA), and Walnut Hill Civic Association (WHCA) for a meeting on Monday, May 15th, with representatives from the 18th Police District to discuss the 2014 shooting of Philippe Holland. CPN, CCN, GCCA, and WHCA collaboratively issued a letter on April 28th concerning the officers' return to our neighborhood streets. In response to the letter, the PPD transferred the officers to the 3rd Police District in South Philadelphia and the 8th Police District in Northeast Philadelphia. The PPD believes that any further changes to the officers' work assignments could be interpreted *continued on page 2*



David Hincer
CPN President

Successful Fundraiser: Scholarship Committee Supports Neighborhood Students

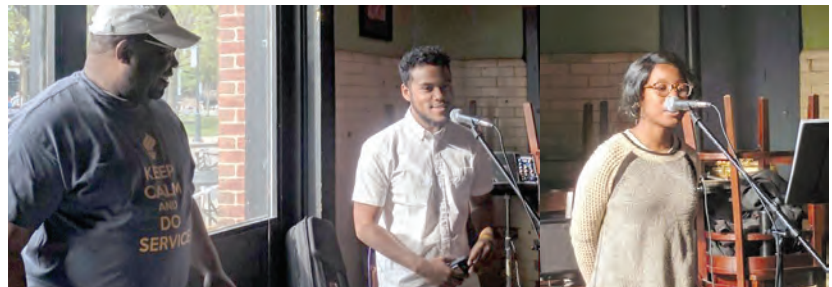
Suzanne B. Anderson,
Chair, CPN Scholarship Committee

This is a busy time of year for the scholarship committee. We had a very successful fundraiser on April 23rd at Dock Street Brewery, where we raised over \$10,000 through the generosity of Cedar Park friends and neighbors! To those who have given, thank you!

While impressive, we are still collecting funds for our scholars. If you would like to contribute \$10, \$25, \$100, \$1,000 or more, please visit cedarparkneighbors.org to make a contribution.

We've received nine applications from students seeking funding for next school year, including two new applicants. The members of the application review sub-committee are currently reviewing the applications. **Winners will be announced at the intermission during the CPN Jazz in the Park performance on Friday, July 14th!**

Please come out to the presentation and wish our young scholars well!



Darryl Bundridge looks on as Andrew, Drexel University student, and Mable, Temple University student, both 2016 scholarship recipients, speak to donors at the scholarship fundraiser held at Dock Street Brewery.



Thanks to all of the donors who attended the scholarship fundraiser and contributed more than \$10,000 to be awarded to neighborhood scholars.

as additional punishment and may trigger more union grievances. We appreciate that so many neighbors took time out to attend and have their voices heard on this issue. We also thank Deputy Police Commissioner Robin Wimberly, 18th District Captain Gregory Riley, and 18th District Community Relations Officer Mike Davis for their attendance and for answering of neighbors' questions. More information on this event can be found on page 5.

At our April 17th annual membership meeting, we held our board elections and welcomed six new at-large board members: Joe DeVitis, Angela DiBattiste, Chris Flounders, Catherine Hofmann, Whitney Martinko, and Matthew Schwartz. The following are returning at-large board members: Alon Abramson, Robert Arters, Michael Froehlich, and JJ Tiziou. Our 2017 executive board is Reverend Eric Goode (newly elected 1st Vice President), Renee McBride Williams (2nd Vice President), Amara Rocker (Treasurer), Tori Bourret (Secretary), and myself as President. Board member Michael Froehlich spoke about homeowner property tax relief programs, and David Wengert, along with a representative from the Tenant Union Representative Network presented scenarios addressing renter's rights and interests. We hope to host another homeowner and renter resources event in the future.

The Gary Bronson Scholarship Fundraiser returned to Dock Street this year and was organized by Suzanne Banning Anderson (our new scholarship committee chair), Fred Wolfe (Gary's widower), and Darryl Bundridge (long-time committee member). We had live music provided pro bono by the West Philly Foot Tappers, which includes former board member and stand-up bass player Sean Dorn.

The 2017 Friday evening jazz series in Cedar Park was kicked off on June 9th with Bobby Zankel & the Warriors of the Wonderful Sound Six. Last season's series was an enormous success. Hundreds of neighbors attended every Friday evening, which had Cedar Park bursting at the seams. We greatly appreciate the financial support of the Fairmount Park Conservancy, Holly Mack-Ward & Co., Philadelphia Federal Credit Union, Philadelphia Parks and Recreation, Spak Group, Dock Street Brewery, VIX Emporium, University City Review, and Baltimore Avenue Business Association which makes the series possible. Thank you to CPN Jazz committee chair Renee McBride Williams, and committee members Monica Allison and Jo Ann Fishburn. We look forward to seeing everyone on Friday.

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Cedar Park Jazz is Here!

Renee McBride Williams

The summer fun has officially arrived. #Hashtags to these summer flings are sun, fun, dance, music and a variety of synonyms that indicate an expectation of guilty pleasures and self-indulgence. I say Bravo and Enjoy.

Now, tag this for the summer solstice, The Cedar Park “Live” Jazz Friday Series. Located in the lovely and historical West Philadelphia, Cedar Park is cozy and conveniently placed between 49th & 50th Street at Catharine and Baltimore Avenue.

Just in case you missed the first shows, there will be more of them every Friday until July 28th.

Our remaining guest artists are:



July 14 Firestorm
July 21 Garfield Fleming & Friends
July 28 Philadelphia Clef Club/
Chappy Washington Band & Friends

You're invited! Bring your friends and family or just bring yourself. This is the place to enjoy music, have fun and mingle with the neighbors.



Cedar Park Jazz Spotlight on Guy and Michelle Scott

Amara Rockar

You can find Guy Scott and his wife, Michelle, in the front row of Cedar Park Jazz any Friday in June and July. Using a cane as his tablet's tripod, Guy records each performance in high definition and uploads it to his YouTube channel, Cedar Park Sessions.

Neighbors on the 800 block of South 49th Street, the two have been coming to the Jazz series for the last eight years. Back when Guy was still working as a night security guard in the UPenn student dorms (“Taking care of the future of America,” as he puts it), he would have to miss a show here or there. Following a stroke four years ago, he left work to recuperate, but describes being able to make it to Jazz every Friday as a blessing.

Guy was born in Germantown and reared in Abington, but he loves our neighborhood, in particular for its eclectic people and friendly spirit. In a prior career, he bartended at Morgan's Jazz



Michelle and Guy Scott

Night Club in Germantown, getting to see everyone from Wynton Marsalis to Dizzy Gillespie come through. While he won't pick a favorite Cedar Park Jazz performer, his recordings are clearly a labor of love.

Stop by and say “Hi” to Michelle and Scott at the next performance, and be sure to check out the Cedar Park Sessions YouTube channel with new video playlists on the following Monday.
tinyurl.com/cedarparksessions

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Community Meets the Sacred

Rev. Eric Goode

Various religious traditions are woven into the fabric of our daily life and provide the basis for its strength. Houses of worship serve as the conscience of the community. They provide moral and spiritual direction and are responsible for leading the way to social justice. So it is with the different houses of worship here in Cedar Park.

Last month, on the evening of Thursday, May 25th, CPN and The People's Baptist Church convened a panel of representatives of several of Cedar Park's houses of worship at The People's Baptist Church at 50th and Baltimore for a get-to-know-you session.

During this conversation, each representative sought to provide insight into the mission and purpose of their organization. In addition, each panelist spoke about how he or she sought to affect the community meaningfully. Then questions were taken from those in attendance.

One of the concerns that emerged from this time of sharing was the idea to continue finding ways to get to know each other. It was suggested that each congregation take



Rabbi Ari Lev Fornari, Kol Tzedek Synagogue; Pastor Lorie Hershey, West Philadelphia Mennonite Fellowship; Pastor Dwight Yoo, Renewal Presbyterian Church; Michael Froehlich, facilitator; Reverend Goode, The People's Baptist Church; Pastor John Pritchard, Calvary United Methodist Church; Trustee Baldwin, Hickman Temple A.M.E. Church.

some time and visit each other in order to get a sense of the culture and tradition of each other in the community. The evening concluded with a commitment that each house of worship will seek creative ways to work together on a common issue.

Many thanks to Michael Froehlich, CPN Board Member, for helping to convene and facilitate the conversation. Because of this meeting, our communities became united in love and respect for our different cultures. A special thank you is also extended to David Hinchey for allowing this event to take place under his administration.

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Amara Rockar

On Monday, May 15th, more than 50 neighbors joined Cedar Park Neighbors, Cobbs Creek Neighbors, Garden Court Community Association, and Walnut Hill Community Association for a town hall meeting with representatives from the 18th Police District to discuss the 2014 shooting of Philippe Holland. We appreciate that so many neighbors took time out to attend and have their voices heard on this issue. We thank Deputy Police Commissioner Robin Wimberly, 18th District Captain Gregory Riley, and 18th District Community Relations Mike Davis for their attendance and answering of neighbors' questions.

Key Findings

- The District Attorney's office declined to charge officers Mitchell Farrell and Kevin Hanvey criminally. It is the city office solely responsible for making such determinations.
- The Philadelphia Police Department (PPD)'s internal Use of Force Review Board (UFRB) concluded that the officers violated department policy but did not specify a punishment for the violation.
- The PPD's internal Police Board of Inquiry (PBI) found the officers did not violate the policy prohibiting officers from shooting at moving vehicles. Police Commissioner Richard Ross overruled the PBI's finding and suspended them for 25 days without pay.
- In 2015, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) issued a report on the PPD's use of force. This report cited exactly this type of internal conflict between the UFRB and the PBI. While the PPD has implemented 61 of the DOJ's 92 recommendations, it has yet to take action on the DOJ's recommendations that the dual boards be dismantled and their duties integrated into one board.
- The police union, the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP), has indicated that it intends to file grievances to overturn the officers' punishments and recoup their lost wages.
- The officers received counseling, and were retrained and evaluated by the PPD before returning to street duty.
- In response to the April 28th letter from CPN, CCN, GCCA and WHCA, the PPD



Town Hall Meeting

transferred the officers to the 3rd Police District in South Philadelphia, and the 8th Police District in Northeast Philadelphia. The PPD believes that any further changes to the officers' work assignments could be interpreted as additional punishment and may trigger additional union grievances.

- Information on Officer Involved Shootings is posted to the PPD's website and available to the public at www.phillypolice.com/ois/
- Body cameras are in beta testing in the 22nd Police District and are being expanded into the 25th Police District.

Next Steps For Our Organizations

- Contact Councilman Curtis Jones, chairman of City Council's Public Safety Committee, regarding the city's current civil service arbitration negotiations for the union contract with the Fraternal Order of Police. The new union contract is to be negotiated in arbitration in July.
- Contact District Attorney's office for more information as to why criminal charges were declined.
- Contact the Police Advisory Commission for more information on the implementation of the DOJ's remaining recommendations.

Police Advisory Commission Meetings

The Police Advisory Commission (PAC) is overseeing the implementation of the remaining DOJ recommendations and will issue a report updating on that progress. PAC meetings are open to the public and held on the third Monday of each month at its office (990 Spring Garden Street, 7th Floor), or at community centers, churches and other locations throughout the city. Check for details at www.phila.gov/pac/Pages/default.aspx.

Earth Day Art Installation: Trees Get Some Respect and More

Maureen Tate

Spring was a particularly busy and ambitious season for the CPN Park Committee. As reported previously, we had undertaken a new Tree Care Project in the park. In addition to protective tree surrounds, the Park Committee entered into a collaboration with St. Francis de Sales School to involve children in educating the community about trees to encourage care and respect. We are grateful to St. Francis de Sales staff, teachers, and children for embarking on this journey with us.

The Tree Care Project has many facets. It included a pilot Junior Tree Keepers Club with 10 De Sales students from grades five and seven. The club met in Cedar Park on Thursday afternoons from 3 to 4:15 p.m. The children learned about tree biology, tree care and how to prune trees, under the instruction of Angie Coghlan, one of our local “tree tenders” and founder, with Johanna Fine, of the Cross Baltimore Tree Tenders. Unfortunately, we had lots of spring rain, but used the opportunity for in-school learning that included experiments, developing skits to educate peers about trees, and a presentation on watersheds with Ms. Tarsha Scovens of Let’s Go Outdoors. The club took a field trip to the Woodlands, home to many old and distinctive trees, and enjoyed a presentation and scavenger hunt with Director Jessica Baumert, also a Park Committee member.

Over nine weeks, the Tree Keepers conducted a Tree Inventory. Did you know there are 43 trees in Cedar Park? We had no idea! The inventory included field notes by the children on the condition of each tree, trunk measurements that help guess tree age, and tree identification. We benefited from the expertise and on-site visits

from Lori Hayes, Director of Urban Forestry for the City of Philadelphia, and Erica Fichman Smith, Tree Philly Program Manager and a committee member, and her Tree Philly staff. We noted a few trees that are dead, diseased, or struggling, and will be addressing those issues in the future as part of our long-term strategy.

Six Junior Tree Keepers received Certificates of Completion at a school closing assembly on June 16th: Louvan Williams, Ariana Williams, Shenglan Qui, Jade Njie, and Olivia Bioteau. We appreciate the assistance of their teacher and club moderator, Alex Cherry, also of Cedar Park, and look forward to building on this program in the future.

In celebration of Earth Day, De Sales students, grades 4-7, created works of art on the theme of tree care and appreciation. They were displayed around the Cedar Park playground from April 21st through May 13th, the kick off to Love Your Park Week. A serious storm threatened the morning of the installation, but committee volunteers Chris Flounders, Rob Arters, Helene Brennan, Jessica Baumert, and volunteers from Greensgrow West, braved the rain to hang the display. Miraculously, clouds cleared just before the celebration, so all proceeded according to plan.

Approximately 50 children, whose art was selected for display, and Tree Keepers attended the event with their teachers. Speaking at the event were Director of Philadelphia Parks and Recreation, our very own Cedar Park resident, Kathryn Ott Lovell; David Miller, Certified Arborist with Bartlett Tree Experts; and Maureen Tate of CPN. Mr. Miller directed our Junior Tree Keepers in planting a new tree and student, Jade Njie, read an Earth





Art Installation Drawings

Day poem. Everyone enjoyed what turned out to be a beautiful spring morning in the park as well as delicious refreshments, compliments of donors, the Avenue Deli, Flounders Reality Group and Whole Foods Market. We are especially grateful to Bartlett Tree Experts for their major sponsorship of the Tree Care Project that funded the art display and equipment and supplies for the Junior Tree Keepers.

Cedar Park residents always comment that they love the neighborhood because it is green and lush. We were grateful to be involved in this project with local children to rediscover the blessing of our trees and to learn along with them how to protect

the trees for the health of our community and the planet. We hope that park visitors will appreciate these efforts and assist us in showing care and respect for all trees so they will be here to provide beauty, shade, and clean air for future generations.

We were fortunate to have so many resources and expertise right here in Cedar Park to help make the project a success. You can see that members of the Park Committee mean business and are always stretching to learn and develop strategies that will help improve Cedar Park for all to enjoy. Join us! You too can be a part of the fun. You can reach the Park Committee at: tatemch@aol.com

Update on Fence at Hickman Temple AME Church

David Hincer, CPN President

On May 5th, neighbors posted concerns on Facebook about Hickman Temple AME Church façade along 50th Street. The following Saturday morning, Monica Allison, former CPN President, and I met with Reverend Green and Trustee Ron Baldwin.

Hickman has been undergoing re-roofing in phases for the past year. During a storm a few months ago, flashing on the wall and roof was blown off of the area in question. L&I came out earlier in May to inspect the wall and roof and determined some stabilizing fixes are needed before the congregation can return to their worship space. L&I is the one that installed the temporary security barrier

in early May. Hickman Temple is working with a structural engineer to determine what needs to be done both short and long term, and the engineer was on site a few days later. Hickman, CPN, and other community members worked to get a permanent fence installed while this issue is addressed. We met with Hickman Temple representatives several more times since early May to determine how else we can assist them going forward and also what the financial needs will be.

During this time, Hickman Temple's preschool continues to safely operate. Their congregation has temporarily relocated elsewhere, and their Thursday community kitchen is suspended until the facade issue is resolved.

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As the 34 trolley emerges from the West Philly portal at 40th street, the bright sunlight shines. The mechanical hums, and 'stop requested' dings accompany commuters as they step down, pause, and disappear through the bifold doors onto Baltimore Avenue's streetscape, speckled with corner café's, bars, restaurants, bookstores, barber shops, hair salons, nail salons, pharmacies, and grocery stores. Through the graffiti-scratched tinted glass of the trolley gliding and rocking along, signs of a yoga studio, karate shop, theater, music stores, clothing exchange, antique store, bank, childcare centers and an urban garden supply store stoke the curiosity of the passers-by.

If the heart of this West Philly community is its people, then the spine, where the critical impulses travel, would have to be Baltimore Avenue's diverse business corridor. The business community that reaches from 40th to 52nd Street and one block north and south, calls itself BABA — the Baltimore Avenue Business Association — and its merchants provide goods and services to Cedar Park, Spruce Hill, Squirrel Hill, Garden Court, and beyond.

Franchon Pryor of Hair Vyce Studios, on the 4800 block, is the president of BABA. Her focus is on connecting and deepening the connections between businesses and their neighbors, to more fully satisfy the mutual benefit to each. This is a part of the BABA mission: to foster a positive relationship between the business and local community. BABA has over 60 participating member businesses. Acting together, the business owners share ideas and information, and create concepts to bring more people to the corridor.



For instance, in June, BABA had two major events. The Dollar Stroll was organized in collaboration with the University City District, and the Dog Wash was produced in partnership with the Philadelphia Animal Welfare Society, PAWS. The Dollar Stroll draws thousands of attendees who stroll along Baltimore Avenue in search of \$1 samples from businesses, vendors, and food trucks with live entertainment sprinkled throughout. It is a major event that many neighbors appreciate and enjoy. The next Dollar Stroll is scheduled for September 7th. The Dog Wash pampered and primped over 40 pups for a very good cause. Events and activities like this are ways BABA seeks to act as a contributory local citizen.

Besides monthly member meetings, BABA also hosts quarterly Happy Hour Meet & Greets, which are open to all, at local taverns, encouraging residents and business owners to mingle and become acquainted socially. **The next BABA Happy Hour will be held on Wednesday, September 13th from 5 to 7 p.m. at Dock Street Brewery.** For more information about BABA or BABA events check out babawestphilly.org, @babawestphilly, or #babawestphilly.



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- ☐ **New Member**
- ☐ **Renewal**
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- ☐ Yes, I would like to receive an email notice with a link to the current newsletter on the CPN website (and do not deliver a paper copy to my home).
- Email membership@cedarparkneighbors.org
- Website www.cedarparkneighbors.org
- Phone 267-BALT-AVE or 267-225-8283

Check your areas of interest for potential participation:

- ☐ **Board of Directors:** CPN leadership and decision-making body.
- ☐ **Zoning Committee:** Monitor & communicate issues to residents; represent Cedar Park before Zoning Board of Adjustment.
- ☐ **Scholarship Committee:** Raise funds, promote program, and select awardees.
- ☐ **Membership/Communications:** Promote membership to residents and businesses, write, publish and distribute newsletter, maintain website.
- ☐ **Jazz:** Promote program, raise funds, organize events, choose musicians.
- ☐ **Cedar Park Garden Tenders:** Plant and maintain gardens at Cedar Park.
- ☐ **Holiday Baskets:** Coordinate and assist distribution to needy Cedar Park families.
- ☐ **Development Impact Task Force:** Monitor, evaluate, and influence commercial and residential development.
- ☐ **Block Organizing:** Maintain list of Block Leaders, organize forums, Review block grant applications and help awardees implement projects etc.
- ☐ **Fundraising:** Special events, grant writing.

Cedar Park Neighbors is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization. All contributions are fully tax-deductible for federal income tax purposes.

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CPN Mission Statement:
Cedar Park Neighbors is an association of diverse households and businesses based in the Cedar Park neighborhood of West Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The purpose of the association shall be to foster collaboration among all persons living and working in the Cedar Park neighborhood, to promote community development, to provide a forum for communication and community education, to respond to neighborhood concerns and to advocate for and promote the general welfare of the Cedar Park community.

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To Contact Cedar Park Neighbors
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Water Department Releases **Plans for Stormwater Collection Improvement**

Michael Froehlich

The Philadelphia Water Department will be building rain gardens, stormwater tree trenches, and stormwater bumpouts along Cedar Park streets in the coming months in order to reduce stormwater run-off and sewer overflows. At CPN's June board meeting, the Water Department came to explain what to expect.

Much of Philadelphia has a combined sewer system where a single pipe collects both sewage and stormwater run-off. Most days, this works just fine. But during a storm, the stormwater often floods the system, causing sewage to run out into our rivers. Philadelphia's solution is to collect this stormwater and slow its release into the sewer system. Between 2011 and 2016, the Water Department has successfully diverted 1.5 billion gallons of polluted water out of our rivers.

For more information, including specific locations of the planned improvements,

please contact Dan Schupsky, the Water Department's West Philadelphia Outreach Specialist at 215-683-3405 or daniel.schupsky@phila.gov.



Stormwater tree trenches collect rainwater which is used to nourish trees and evaporates through tree leaves back into the air. Stormwater is also released into the sewer system slowly, to help prevent sewage from overflowing into our rivers.

CPN Board

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