



# The Allentown Neighbor

September, October, November 2011  
Volume 46, Number 3

Published quarterly by the Allentown Association Inc., 14 Allen St., Buffalo, New York 14202  
(716) 881-1024. Email, allentown@bfm.org. Website, www.allentown.org

## National preservation visitors to tour Allentown

By *Richard Haynes*

Keep a friendly eye out for visitors when the National Trust for Historic Preservation's annual conference comes to town Oct. 19-22, because they'll be all over the community.

The city's largest historic preservation district, Allentown, will be heavily spotlighted during the 2011 National Preservation Conference based at the Buffalo Niagara Convention Center.

The Allentown Association on Oct. 20 is sponsoring a 4-hour tour of seven wonderfully restored sites that had been derelict and on the city's demolition list. Among them are the Granite Works on Main St.; Coit House, the city's oldest residence; the Allendale Theater; and the Birge Mansion -- all treasured structures that were nearly lost. At each site, an owner, architect or contractor will be present to discuss the challenges each project faced and explain how they were overcome. The tour, lead by former Association presidents Jonathan White and Christopher Brown, begins at 1 p.m., when participants will board a bus at the convention center.

There's also a cocktail party and tour of Coit House tentatively planned for 6-10 p.m. on Oct. 19.

The National Trust is encouraging visitors to come to

town early and stay past the close of the conference, because it realizes that there's much more to do and see in Buffalo Niagara than people can squeeze into four days. The Theodore Roosevelt Inaugural Historic Site is taking advantage of that by scheduling walking tours of Allentown in the days before the conference.

The TR site will lead general tours of the neighborhood beginning at 1 p.m. on two Saturday afternoons, Oct. 15 and 22. It will also offer a walking tour of Main and North Pearl Sts. at 1 p.m. Oct. 16; of the Delaware Ave. at 1 p.m. Oct. 17 and 18; and of Irving and Park streets at 4:30 p.m. Oct. 17 and 18. All tours start at the site, 614 Delaware Ave., and the fee for each is only \$10.

The TR site itself will be open every day for tours beginning at 9:30 a.m. weekdays and 12:30 p.m. Saturdays.

The site also has graciously agreed to distribute copies of the Association's booklet "The Streets of Allentown" at its booth in the convention center. That gives conference-goers an opportunity to read about Allentown, perhaps tempting some to visit on their own.

*Please turn to Page 5*

## Annual meeting is Oct. 11

You are invited!

Anyone interested in Allentown is encouraged to attend the Allentown Association's annual meeting. It will be held Tuesday, Oct. 11, at the Allendale Theater, 203 Allen St., beginning at 7 p.m. Light refreshments will be served.

The annual meeting is a terrific opportunity to meet the Association's directors, Allentown residents, business owners and enthusiasts. Presentation topics include the Association's progress in the past year,

plans for the future, and issues of interest or concern to the community.

Come and have your voice be heard! All dues paying members of the Allentown Association may participate in voting for the new slate of Association directors.

The winning ticket for a snow thrower will be drawn. See back page.

—*Lura Bechtel, Allentown Association president.*

### *Inside this issue*

<i>Redistricting</i>	<i>Pages 2, 3</i>
<i>Allen St. project</i>	<i>Page 4</i>
<i>School 36</i>	<i>Page 5</i>
<i>Almanac</i>	<i>Page 6</i>
<i>First Friday, Letters</i>	<i>Page 7</i>
<i>Business news</i>	<i>Page 8.</i>
<i>Calendar</i>	<i>Page 9</i>
<i>Preservation news</i>	<i>Page 11</i>



## First Church's 200th birthday concerts to help fund repairs

First Presbyterian Church has launched a year-long celebration of its 200th anniversary as Buffalo's first church.

The celebration will include a series of concerts, and comes as the church has just completed the first phase of repairs to its tower. Through free-will or suggested donations, the concerts will raise funds for the church's Building and Architecture Fund, including the second phase of tower repairs.

Also, the church has leased temporary space to the Elmwood Village Charter School. The school's sixth and seventh graders will occupy three rooms on the first floor of the church's parish house, Christina Trachtenberg, church business manager, reported.

Phase I repairs to the church's 187-foot tower have been completed. Affixing the exterior stones to the interior stone and brickwork was done using stainless steel anchors. Phase II will involve repointing the masonry. Funding sources for Phase II are currently being evaluated., she added.

The gala opening concert on Sept. 26 at 8 p.m. will feature the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, the church's Symphony Circle neighbor, in a program including a varied range of styles. The free-will offering will benefit the church's Building and Architecture Fund.

Other concerts include:

—Vocalis Chamber Choir, Oct. 23, at 7:30 p.m. For the first time, Buffalo's premier acapella chamber choir brings its exquisitely sculpted sound to the ambient acoustics or

First Church. The program will consist of a variety of selections of the acapella repertoire. Free-will donation at the door.

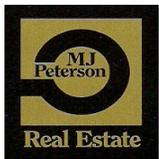
—Ars Nova Chamber Orchestra "Viva Vivaldi" Series Nov. 27 at 6:30 p.m. Maestra Marylouise Nanna brings the chamber orchestra "home" for a concert in its 33rd season which always includes a concert at First Church. Expect a concert of Vivaldi (of course) but also some vicarious visionaries and even a few surprises. Suggested donation at the door.

Prism, the Christmas Concert from Houghton College, Dec. 7, at 7:30 p.m. In this inaugural concert at First Church, Houghton College brings a chamber orchestra and several of its choirs to start the celebration of the Christmas season. Prism will offer a salmagundi of seasonal selections in what is planned to become an annual event. Suggested donation at the door.

Additional concerts are scheduled for Feb. 19, March 11 and a date to be set in May.

First Church was founded in 1812 and its first site was on Church St. The present church is the congregation's third sanctuary and was designed by the noted Buffalo architect E.B. Green. It is considered an excellent example of the Romanesque Revival style and has a contrasting Byzantine interior. It was completed in 1889 and the tower was finished in 1897.

Please turn to Page 11



**Susan Lenahan**  
CRS, CBR,  
Broker Associate  
Agent of the Year  
2007 through 2010

(716) 864-6757

431 Delaware Ave, Buffalo  
E-mail: susielenahan@gmail.com

Everything About Us is Fresh!



Home Cookin'  
and More...  
BREAKFAST  
LUNCH • DINNER  
SUNDAY BRUNCH

370 Virginia St. • 362-0633  
1 Block off Elmwood in Allentown

 Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus  
Knowledge works.

[www.bnmc.org](http://www.bnmc.org)

**The Decker Agency, Inc.**

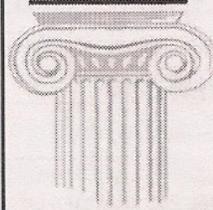
**DAI Insurance**  
Your Neighborhood  
Insurance Agency

37 Elmwood Ave., Buffalo

**883-1455**

**JO ANN DECKER**  
CPCU, CIC, AAI, CPIW, DAE  
All Forms of Insurance

**TOWNE**  
RESTAURANT



186 ALLEN  
STREET  
BUFFALO

884-5128



**Merrill Lynch**

**Matthew E. Ryan**  
Senior Financial Advisor  
Global Wealth Management

Key Tower  
50 Fountain Plaza, Suite 1100,  
Buffalo, New York

**716-849-2018**

[matthew\\_ryan@ml.com](mailto:matthew_ryan@ml.com)



## Most of Allentown is shifted to the Fillmore District

Most Allentown residents will vote in November for a Common Council member for the Fillmore District. At press time it seems uncertain if there will be a Democratic primary contest Sept. 13 for the Fillmore District seat.

Brian Gould, a member of the Allentown Association Board of Directors and the 2011 Citizens Advisory Commission on Reapportionment, explains how most of Allentown wound up in the Fillmore District although the commission recommended that it be kept in the Ellicott District.

Allentown is now divided between the Fillmore District and the Ellicott District. The Fillmore District includes all of Allentown south of North St. and east of Arlington Place, Wadsworth St. and Hudson St.

By *Brian Gould*

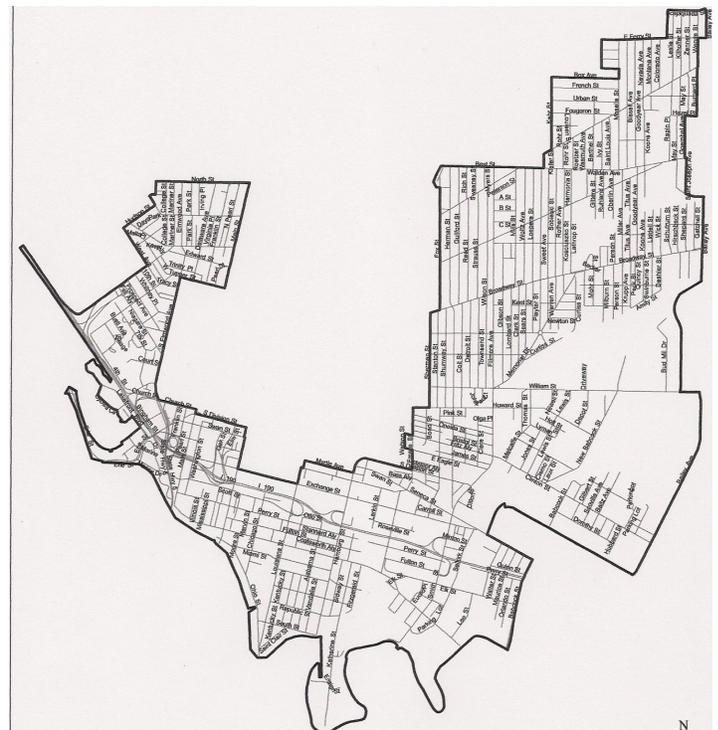
As part of the decennial census, the city must reapportion its elective districts for the Common Council. The Citizens Advisory Commission on Reapportionment is charged with this task of recommending the appropriate division of districts to the Common Council, which it conducted this past spring. The commission is made up of nine members, five appointed by the Council president and four appointed by the mayor.

According to the city charter, the population of each district shall be approximately equal; districts shall be compact and the variation between the length and width of a district shall be minimized; all sections of a district shall be contiguous or physically connected; identifiable communities of interest, including neighborhoods and communities with established social, racial, ethnic, or other ties shall be preserved.

Based on the new 2010 census, the commission established its target population for each district at 29,035 residents, based on the total population divided by nine councilmanic districts. It also allowed for a 5 percent variance above or below that figure.

After numerous meetings and work sessions that were open to the public and a formal public hearing on May 11, the commission recommended a final map named "Southern Boundaries Option" to the Common Council. Within the recommended map, Allentown was fully contained in the Ellicott District with the exception of Symphony Circle, which was included in the Niagara District.

The Common Council made several changes to the commission's recommended map, including moving Allentown into the Fillmore District, currently represented by Council President David Franczyk. With a total population of 21,301, the Fillmore District had lost the most residents since the 2000 census and needed to gain approximately 7,000 residents based on the criteria established by



**This map shows the new Fillmore District, shaped like a turkey gobbler, whose head (upper left) is most of Allentown minus Symphony Circle. The area between the head and the tail, including the Medical Campus and the Fruit Belt, is in the Ellicott District.**

the commission and outlined in the city charter. Following another public hearing held by the Common Council, the revised map was unanimously approved by the Council and recommended to the mayor, who accepted the map as complete following a third and final public hearing.

Common Council seats are up for election this fall and will now be for four-year terms.



# Allen St. Committee aims for a thorough improvement project

By Matt Moscati

After more than two years of work by the Allen St. Improvement Committee led by Adam Sokol, the effort to revitalize the infrastructure within the right-of-way continues to go forward.

While this committee's activity goes beyond this project, it has focused much of its effort on exploring the possibilities of what Allen St. could become. In studying the degrading conditions of the existing underground utilities, surveying the priorities of property owners and business operators from Main St. to Wadsworth St., researching possible models from across the world, and presenting the possibilities of what Allen Street could become, the committee has tried to widen the Allentown public's understanding of the possibilities of this type of capital-works project.

Much of this preliminary work was summarized in a booklet and a public presentation held last winter at the Allendale Theater to promote discussion of what Allen St. could and should become. Since then it was also reviewed with government planners, engineers, public works staff as well as elected officials at the local, state and federal levels to seek their support, technical comment and advice on how to navigate the political and economic landscape.

With a roadway and sidewalks in a state of dangerous disrepair, with underground water and sewer lines requir-

ing continual patching and combined storm and sanitary lines continuing to conflict with the Clean Water Act, hardly anyone disputes that Allen St. is in desperate need of repair. For only milling and repaving the street and rebuilding the sidewalks the cost is estimated at close to \$3-million. To include the rebuilding of the critical underground infrastructure, the total would be close to \$10 million.

Mill and repave projects are typically funded by the city. This would be a large amount for Buffalo to manage especially when the remaining life of the underground infrastructure is in question. Large scale infrastructure projects such as those recently completed on Main St. and Hertel Ave., are funded 85 percent by the federal government, 10 percent by the state and 5 percent by the city. The Allentown Association board voted in July to focus its energy on prioritizing this project on the 85/10/5 funding list.

To have this project gain a priority, a design proposal needs to have the city Department of Public Works approval, overwhelming community support, and the continued support of local, state and federal elected officials. This design needs to be schematically documented and detailed by a civil engineer and accompanied by a legitimate construction cost estimate.

To this end, a proposal was received from DiDonato Associates, a local civil engineering firm with recent similar experience on Main St. and Canalside in Buffalo as well as projects in the City of Niagara Falls.

The efforts of the Allen St. Improvement Committee are

currently focused on funding for this civil engineering work.

*Please turn to next page*



**MARK C. PAGANO**  
Broker/Owner

499 Franklin Street Buffalo, NY 14202  
Office: (716) 961-7629 · Cell: (716) 570-2369 Fax: (716) 881-1043  
E-mail: mpaganobroker@gmail.com · Website: www.nothnagle.com



**Hamlin House**  
432 Franklin Street  
885-8084

Open for Lunch Mon-Thurs 11:00-3:00  
Friday Fish Fry 11:00-9:00  
Sunday Breakfast 9:00-1:00

Banquets, Any Occasion  
Accommodates 225

[www.Hamlinhouserestaurant.com](http://www.Hamlinhouserestaurant.com)



Websites, content management  
and custom business solutions.

110 Elmwood Ave • 1-800-598-0869  
[www.comandsolutions.com](http://www.comandsolutions.com)

**ALLENTOWN LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN**

MAX STEPHAN, Owner  
Residential & Commercial  
Landscape Design & Installation

716.998.9459  
[www.allentownlandscape.com](http://www.allentownlandscape.com)  
[allentownlandscape@gmail.com](mailto:allentownlandscape@gmail.com)



## City sale of School 36 to Elmwood Village School moves closer

By *Julia Hall*

The Common Council unanimously recommended, for a second time, on July 12 that the former School 36 on Days Park should be sold to the Elmwood Village Charter School which had tried to purchase the building last year, but the proposed sale was halted by a successful lawsuit against the city by developer Sam Savarino, who claimed in the suit that the city had violated its own procedural rules when it agreed to sell the property to Elmwood Village School.

The city went back to the drawing board after losing the lawsuit and set to making the sale of School 36 airtight with respect to the procedure enshrined in the city charter. The city had the building appraised again and that appraisal came in at \$550,000. Elmwood Village school then offered \$550,000 for the building, which was accepted by the city's Office of Strategic Planning and the Common Council's Community Development Committee, both of which strongly endorsed the sale to Elmwood Village School. Savarino Development submitted a separate appraisal for the building after a deadline set by the city and

eventually offered a bid of \$800,000 for the property. The developer stated at a July 6 Community Development Committee meeting that he would proceed to sue the city if his higher bid was not accepted. This threat did not stop the full Common Council from unanimously endorsing the sale of the building to Elmwood Village School.

In rejecting the Savarino bid, the City appeared to take into consideration a range of factors other than price to justify accepting a lower purchase price from Elmwood Village School. These included the school's educational performance, its exemplary history as a good neighbor in Allentown and Days Park, sustained neighborhood and broader community support for Elmwood Village School which would be an owner-occupier, and the precarious status of the proposed charter school which would lease the building under the Savarino proposal.

The mayor's sign-off is needed before the proposed sale goes to the Control Board for review.

*Julia Hall is Allentown Association chairperson for School 36.*

### *National Trust shoots video here*

*Continued from Page 1*

There's been a lot of buzz about the young videographers the National Trust sent to town July 16-23 to film ordinary Buffalonians talking about what they love about their city, what they hope for its future, and what they think needs improving. It's all for "Buffalo Unscripted," a video that will be shown during the conference and posted on the National Trust's website, [www.preservationnation.org](http://www.preservationnation.org), and no doubt on YouTube.

The videographers -- Jason Clement, Julia Rocchi and Leigh Ivey -- shot two sessions in Allentown: one in Arlington Park and one in Nietzsche's. We can't wait to see

### More public comment to be sought

*Continued from preceding page*

When this funding is secured, additional community comment will be sought as the engineering firm works through its process. Please look for future articles in *The Neighbor* progress updates providing progress updates and opportunities for feedback and participation.

*Matt Moscati is Allentown Association treasurer and a member of its Allen St. Improvement Committee. He is an architect practicing in Allentown.*

which Allentowners made the cut to video fame.

*Dick Haynes, treasurer and a former president of the Allentown Association, is its chairman for the National Trust conference.*



**Buffalo State College student Eric Gersbacher tells videographer Jason Clement what he likes about Allentown during a taping in Arlington Park. Photo by Richard Haynes**



## An Allentown Almanac

The Allentown Association is planning the next **Secrets of Allentown** tour of homes for fall 2012, rather than this fall. Any homeowners interested in showcasing their homes on the 2012 tour should contact Andrew Eisenhardt, association executive director.

**Florence K. Hellwitz**, a longtime Allentown resident and volunteer with the Allentown Association and other community endeavors, has moved to Ithaca, N.Y., to be nearer to one of her three children. Her house at 9 Cottage St. was recently sold.

Allentowners remember her walking her dogs and volunteering with various neighborhood efforts. She was also a former president of the Buffalo League of Woman Voters and Housing Opportunities Made Equal. Friends and neighbors may drop her a card or note at 1229 Trumansburg Rd. Ithaca, NY 14850.

**Ed and Nicole Castine** of York St. announce the birth of **Olive Piper Castine** on May 27 weighing 9 lbs 10 oz. “She is all smiles and sleeps like a champ. We’re very lucky,” says the proud dad, an Allentown Association director.

“Nine Cats, Nine Lives in the Tall Narrow Brick House,” a book by the late **Elizabeth Deichman** continues to benefit the community, reports Veronica Hogle, who received rights to the book about Beth Deichman’s life with her nine cats on North Pearl St. Profits from sales and royalties made it possible to donate 100 books to the Buffalo Zoo. A copy is given to each child who has a birthday party at the zoo. Also, 50 books were donated to Books for Kids, a program that ensures every child has a new book of his or her own. The book is available at Talking Leaves book stores, Rust Belt Books and the Quaker Bonnet.

Bastille Day, July 14, was celebrated in Allentown with a well-attended concert of French popular songs in the **Allen Street Hardware Café** by singer **Claudine Couchet-Muchy** and the **Petit Bal** trio.



**Florence Hellwitz**

## Mary Tomaselli is remembered fondly

By Jonathan White

Allentown lost one of its brightest lights this year. Mary Tomaselli, who most recently operated the La Tee Da restaurant passed away on March 16. A memorial service, led by Hospice Chaplain and former Allentown Association president Robert Fink, was held March 27 in Asbury Hall, which was overfilled with friends who came to say goodbye.

I always said that Mary embodied the heart of our neighborhood: gracious, welcoming and seemingly unable to find the flaws in anyone she met. Her smile and her kindness made everyone who walked through her door feel exceptional. From the tributes of her friends who came from all corners of Western New York, it is clear that Mary embodied the heart of all of Buffalo. Walking into her business, whether one of her restau-



**Mary Tomaselli**

rants over the years or her dry cleaner shop, was being welcomed into her home and all were welcomed as family. Although she may have moved on, her spirit remains with all that she encountered. We miss Mary and we thank her for making all of our lives a little better.

*Jonathan White is a former Allentown Association president.*

## Peter Scouras, co-founder of the Towne Restaurant, dies

Peter Scouras, who with his brother George, operated the Towne Restaurant since it opened in 1972, making it Allentown’s best-known restaurant, died July 29 after a three-year struggle with cancer.

The brothers’ success story began with their immigration from Alexandria, Egypt, in 1951. Peter Scouras worked at Ted’s Hot Dog Stand near the Peace Bridge in the 1960s. The brothers opened the Towne with 20 seats.

“When they introduced souvlaki in 1976 there was a line out the door,” his nephew, Dino Scouras, recalls.

Peter Scouras, who had moved from Buffalo to Orchard Park, was a parishioner at Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church. The Allentown community extends condolences to the Scouras family, his wife, Sharon, and his daughters, Nicole and Andrea.



## First Friday gallery openings will have pink and architectural themes

The theme of Sept. 2 First Friday openings at Allentown art galleries will be “pink” in support of the Theater of Youth production of “Pinkalicious, the Musical,” which opens on Sept. 16, part of Curtain Up! (See Allentown Theater, Calendar, Page 9).

Cast members will present a short preview at galleries and businesses will join in the pink theme with window displays.

In support of the National Preservation Conference, two Allentown art galleries will mount exhibits featuring architectural themes. Studio Hart, 65 Allen St., plans a photography exhibition feature Buffalo archi-

ture. Photographers will include Biff Henrich and David A. Steele.

Indigo Gallery, 74 Allen St., will explore architectural themes through the works of local and regional artists including Dennis Nahabetian and Ellen Markel, a Park St. resident. Both exhibits open on the Oct. 7 First Friday, and run through October.

Participating Allentown galleries remain open for extended hours on the first Friday of each month. For further details, see [firstridaysallentown.com](http://firstridaysallentown.com).

—Barbara Hart

## Letters to The Neighbor

### Senior Center welcomes Allentowners

Are you 55 or older and looking for something to do? Come give the Richmond-Summer Senior Center a try. The center at 337 Summer St., at Richmond Ave., serves Allentown and nearby areas of the West Side and is open Monday to Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Daily programs include the Erie County lunch program, zumba (a dance exercise), tai chi, therapeutic

yoga, stretch and ongoing monthly activities. It's a great way to meet new people, stay fit and have some fun.

I am looking for volunteers to bring in their talents to share at the center for special events. Call 885-3290 or visit the center.

— Louise Fronczak, new site supervisor at Richmond-Summer Senior Center.

### Business owner misquoted on Allen St. one-way traffic

My name was mentioned in the front-page article in the spring issue, “Improving Allen St. sounds good, but where's the money?” I did attend this meeting but did not say a word. Your article claims that I would prefer

one-way traffic on Allen St. to increase pedestrian traffic. Nothing could be further from the truth. I am completely against the idea of one-way traffic on Allen St. In my opinion this whole project is a complete waste of time and energy.

John Shepard, Antique Man, 234 Allen St.

## The Allentown Neighbor

Editor, Pete Carroll, email [pbonjoura@gmail.com](mailto:pbonjoura@gmail.com)

Advertising: Andrew Eisenhardt, [allentown@bfm.org](mailto:allentown@bfm.org), (716) 881-1024

### Officers of the Allentown Association, Inc.

President: Lura Hess Bechtel  
Vice presidents: Gina Maramag,  
Ed Castine  
Treasurer: Matthew Moscati  
Secretary: Richard Haynes

Directors:  
Brian Gould  
Sarah Gilewicz Byer

Caitlin Crowell  
Melissa Dayton  
Julia Hall  
Barbara Hart  
Holly Holdaway  
Elizabeth Licata  
Mark McGovern  
Matthew Ryan  
Adam Sokol  
Brad Wales

Ex officio directors:  
Anthony Armstrong  
Robert Fink  
Gretchan Grobe  
Donald Kinsman  
Jonathan White

Executive director: Andrew Eisenhardt



## Casa de Arte gallery, Nadia's among new businesses

**Casa de Arte**, a new gallery, has opened at 141 Elmwood Ave., with an inaugural exhibition of art from Cuernavaca, Mexico.

Rick Williams, who operates the gallery with his wife Maria Odette Guerrero-Williams, said, "Casa de Arte will present artists from Mexico and we plan to begin a cultural exchange program. We are both artists." Casa de Arte has formed a partnership with a group of Cuernavaca artists and the University of

Morelos there. New exhibits are planned to begin with receptions

Sept. 16 and Oct. 14. Call for hours or appointment.

Phone, (716) 240-9248. Website, [www.buffalo-cuernavaca.com](http://www.buffalo-cuernavaca.com).

**Nadia's Taste of Soul**, 69 Allen St., is a new, family-operated restaurant serving old-fashioned Southern cooking as well as Caribbean specialties. Proprietress is Crystal Rodriguez-Lane, and her husband, Guy Lane is chief cook.

Nadia's is named for their 20-month-old daughter, only family member not working here. "Grandma makes the sweet-potato pie," says Crystal Rodriguez-Lane. It's an expansion of the catering business she started three-and-a-half years ago. The menu includes BBQ country ribs, fried chicken, roast pork with rice and beans, and daily

### *Business news*

specials, for eat-in or take-out. Catering is also available. Phone 884-0482. Open 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Open Tuesday through Saturday.

**Alliance Advisory Group**, a financial services firm is moving into its new main office at 600 Delaware Ave., in early September after rebuilding the façade of the previous home of Rural-Metro Ambulance. The firm, previously based in Amherst, expects to expand employment from 35 to 50.

**Patricia's** at 43-and-a-half Allen St. is celebrating 30 years in business selling second-hand clothing, furniture and lots more. It's a "wow" store, says owner Patricia Lukow. "People come in and say 'wow'." She opened on Franklin St. in 1981 and moved to the present location a few years ago.

New businesses in Allentown include:

—**Beyond Beauty**, a nail salon, at 68 Allen St. opened by Tamika Whetstone.

—**Elegant Nails & Spa** at 144 Allen St., operated by Nuris Garcia, a licensed cosmetologist, and Ramon Hilario, open daily except Sunday. Phone 884-4100.

—**K Fashions**, clothing store at 152 Allen St. operated Mercedes and Katherin Hughes, open daily except Sunday, 882-7222.

## *Fan praises Café Taza on 5th birthday*

By *Peter Smith*

This is a newsletter, and I am not, strictly speaking, reporting any news; but I asked the editor if we could use a few column inches to congratulate **Café Taza** on its fifth birthday, recently celebrated. And he agreed.

I have lived in Allentown for nearly nine years, and the last five have been enriched by the presence of this tiny, idiosyncratic and loveable institution – and institution is the right word! The fact that I have found really good coffee there, at reasonable cost, has been a key factor, and is the reason I asked for the chance to write about it; but I don't have much to say about the beverage itself – beyond urging all my readers to find their way to 100 Elmwood to sample the brews they will find there. The espresso-based drinks are recommended most of all.

But if I'm not a coffee expert, why do I want to celebrate Taza? Two reasons: it is now owned by one of Allentown's youngest entrepreneurs; and the people who show up there regularly constitute a unique community that I was happy to join. Recently, Brena Newell, the first-ever employee of Brian Willett, who opened the café in January 2006, began

a new adventure by buying the place. Adopted by an American family, she came to the U.S. from Korea when she was just a baby; 20 years later she joined her father when he came to Buffalo, and now – like so many of us – is devoted to making our city an even better place. And providing a funky gathering place in Allentown is her way of going about this important work. Her enthusiasm and style make her a striking presence. And she sure knows how to pick good baristas!

As for "the company I keep" it consists mainly of young people who hang out in this postage-stamp-size space, and, like their counterparts through the centuries in coffee shops all over the world, they solve the problems of the universe over a cup of java, day after day. For me personally these bright youngsters have provided a link to the present day which I value greatly; they help keep me young; most of them give me hope that our city's near-term future will be brighter than its near-term past.

As far as I am concerned, Café Taza is a precious community asset for our beloved neighborhood. It's next door to Sweet Tooth. Please check it out.

*Peter Smith is a Park St. resident.*



## Calendar of Events

**Allendale Theater**, 203 Allen St. Theater of Youth new season begins Sept. 16 At 8 p.m. with “Pinkalicious: the Musical,” a critically acclaimed literary and musical presentation about a girl who eats too many cupcakes and turns pink. Wear pink for Curtain Up! opening; pink champagne and lemonade served in pink-decorated lobby; performances continuing Saturdays at 2 and 5:30 p.m. and Sundays at 2 p.m., through Oct. 16. For information and tickets, call 884-4400, see [www.theatreofyouth.org](http://www.theatreofyouth.org).

**Allentown Association**, 14 Allen St. 2. Annual meeting Oct. 11, Allendale Theater, 203 Allen St. Board of Directors meets Sept. 13, and Nov. 15, 7 p.m. For information call 881-1024 or see [www.allentown.org](http://www.allentown.org).

**Art Dialogue Gallery**, 1 Linwood Ave., Tuesday to Friday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Trilogies XXIII, assemblage by Dianne Baker, abstract paintings by Eileen Pleasure O’Brien, photographs by James Sedwick, through Sept. 30. Regional Artists Exhibition, Oct. 7 to Nov. 11. Artful Gifts, Nov. 18 through Dec. 31. Water color classes offered. For information call 885-2251.

**Betty’s restaurant**, 370 Virginia St. at College St. Paintings by Patricia Schwimmer, to Sept. 18; paintings by Bruce Bitmead, Sept. 19 to Nov. 21; works on paper, Nov. 21 to Jan. 22.

**Buffalo Big Print gallery**, 78 Allen St. Recent paintings by John Berg, through Sept. 30; group show of Haitian artists, Oct. 7 through Nov. 30. For information call 884-1777.

**Casa de Arte**, 141 Elmwood Ave. Art from Cuernavaca, Mexico, through Sept. 8; “Viva Buffalo, Viva Mexico,” Sept. 16 to Oct. 7; a new exhibition from Oct. 14 to Nov. 3. For information and hours, call 240-9248, see [www.buffalo-cuernavaca.com](http://www.buffalo-cuernavaca.com).

**College Street Gallery**, 244 Allen St., Wednesday to Friday, 5 to 9 p.m. Saturday 4 to 8 p.m., Sunday by appointment. Works by 20 artists in co-op. 14th anniversary reception, Oct. 7, 6 to 10 p.m. For information call 856-2839.

**El Museo**, 91 Allen St. Tuesday through Saturday, noon to 5 p.m.. (Im)possible Interventions, sculpture and photography by Micaelo Vivero, Sept. 16 to Oct. 26, opening reception Sept. 16, 7 to 9 p.m.; Altars, a celebration of El Dia de los Muertos and exhibition of Altars, Oct 28 to Nov 25. For information call 578-3782.

**First Friday Gallery Tours**, Allentown galleries will have extended evening hours, some with new exhibits and receptions, Sept. 2, Oct. 7, Nov. 4. See Page 7. For further information see [www.firstfridaysallentown](http://www.firstfridaysallentown).

**First Presbyterian Church**, Symphony Circle, 200th anniversary concerts, Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, Sept. 26, 8 p.m.; Vocalis Chamber Choir, Oct. 23, 7:30 p.m. Ars Nova Chamber Orchestra, Nov. 27, 6:30 p.m.

**Indigo gallery**, 74 Allen St., Tuesday to Friday, noon to 5, Saturday, noon to 3. Opening Sept. 2, works by Ani Hooven and Felice Koenig; opening Oct. 7, sculpture by Dennis Nahabetian and assemblages by Ellen Markel; opening Nov. 4, “Far From the Madding Crowd,” a group exhibit. For information, call 984-9572.

**Karpeles Manuscript Library Museum**, 220 North St. Monday through Saturday, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. . “Russia,” manuscripts from Russian history until 1917. For information call 885-1986.

**Kleinhans Community Association**, monthly meetings Sept. 14, Oct. 12, Nov. 9, 6 p.m., D’Youville College Center, room 201.

**Kleinhans Music Hall**, Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, classical series, Carmina Burana, with Buffalo Philharmonic Chorus, Kodaly and Orff, Sept. 24, 8 p.m.; Rachmaninoff’s Third, Shostakovich, Stravinsky, Rachmaninoff, Oct. 22, 8 p.m. and Oct. 23, 2:30 p.m.; Tchaikovsky’s Fourth, Rautavaara, Prokofiev, Tchaikovsky, Nov. 19., 8 p.m. and Nov. 20, 2:30 p.m. Pops series, John Pizzarelli, Oct. 1, 8 p.m.; A Tribute to Paul McCartney, Oct. 15, 8 p.m.; Chris Botti, Oct. 29, 8 p.m.; Women of Motown, Nov. 12, 8 p.m. For tickets, call 885-5000 or [bpo.org](http://bpo.org). Buffalo Chamber Music Society concerts, free piano recital, Benjamin Moser, Sept. 25, 3 p.m.; American String Quartet, Oct. 4, 8 p.m.; free clarinet recital, Narek Arutyunian, Nov. 13, 3 p.m.; Johannes String Quartet, Nov. 15, 8 p.m. For tickets, call 462-4939 or see [www.bflochambermusic.org](http://www.bflochambermusic.org).

**Quaker Bonnet Eatery**, 175 Allen St., September, works by Wendy Moloney; October, works by Meghan Smaldino; November, Day of the Dead altars from El Museo.

**Nina Freudenheim Gallery**, Hotel Lenox, 140 North St. Tuesday through Friday 10 to 5, Saturday by appointment. For information call 882-5777.

**Rust Belt Books**, 202 Allen St. Artwork by Diane Meldrum, through Sept. 30, WARP Productions theater, Sept. 8, 9, 10, 15, 16, 17, 22, 23, 24, 7:30 p.m. Tangential Readings, open mic poetry, Sept. 29, Oct. 27, 6:30 p.m. Artwork by Scott Puccio, Oct. 1-31. Raisin Faced Varlet theater, Oct. 6, 7, 8, 13, 14, 15, 20, 21, 22, 8 p.m. Casey Mohammed, readings, Oct. 28, 8 p.m. Back Room art installation of printed material, opening Nov. 11, 7 p.m., through Nov. 30. For information call 885-9535.

**Studio Hart**, 65 Allen St. Tuesday through Saturday, 11 to 3. Collages by Molly Jarboe and Maria Pabico Larotonda, through Oct. 5. Photography of Buffalo architecture by Biff Henrich and David Steele, Oct. 7 to Nov. 2. Art exhibition curated by Gerald Mead, Nov. 4 to 30. For information call 536-8337.

**Sugar City**, 19 Wadsworth St., exhibitions and performances, see [www.buffalosugarcity.org](http://www.buffalosugarcity.org).

**Theodore Roosevelt Inaugural Site (Wilcox Mansion)**, 641 Delaware Ave. Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday, Sunday, noon to 5 p.m. Allentown parks walking tours, Sept. 2, 9 and 16, 10 a.m., Sept. 11, 1 p.m. Behind the scenes tours with TR Site curator, Sept. 10, 10:30 a.m., Nov. 14, 1:30 p.m. Anniversary and awards dinner Sept. 14, Buffalo Convention Center. Call for reservations for all events, 884-0095, or see [www.trsite.org](http://www.trsite.org).



# New block club creates Trinity-Tupper community garden

By H. M. Bateman

It was a perfect marriage of like-minded individuals whose efforts began to make a huge difference in one Allentown neighborhood. Jim Horn returned to his home on Trinity Place after a 16- year absence. Luis Clay bought a house on West Tupper St. and also bought two lots abutting Trinity Place. They combined forces with Trinity Place neighbors to apply for Grassroots Garden status, and a wonderful community garden was born.

"We love the garden," says Jim Horn. "Every day people are walking down our two streets, commenting on how wonderful the garden looks. Like most Grassroots Gardens, there has been absolutely no vandalism or theft. Neighbors just watch out for each others' gardens. Now it is actually a meeting spot for various block club committee events. We just "meet at the garden."

The community garden coincides with the birth of the VETTE Block Club (Virginia, Edward, Trinity, Tupper, Elmwood). Both are intertwined, with an overall mission to improve the safety, beauty and quality of life of the neighborhood. Erik Harnett, president of the VETTE Block Club, has been involved with every facet of the de-

velopment of the mission and structure of the VETTE Block Club.

He explains, "We wanted to develop a cohesive neighborhood, which involves our standing committees of neighborhood watch, outreach and beautification. Each committee contributes to the general improvement of the neighborhood. We are now taking ownership, not just of our individual homes, but of the overall community. We now know our neighbors. We now actively help each other out. And it's making a difference in everyday life."

*H. M. Bateman and her husband Jim are Trinity Place residents active in the VETTE Block Club.*



Photo of community garden by H.M. Bateman

## Allen West Fest is a big winner, earns \$17,800

The 13th annual Allen West Festival June 11 and 12 was highly successful, earning about \$17,800 for the Allentown Association, according to a preliminary report to the Board of Directors. Gretchan Grobe, general chairperson, paid tribute to the hardworking committee of volunteers, and especially Andrew Eisenhardt and Melissa Dayton, as well as the vendors, businesses on Allen and Wadsworth Sts.

and street musicians.

Sponsors for the festival were the Copy Store, 51 Court St., and the Ford Dealers of Western New York.

The painting of a 2012 Ford Fiesta by an artist while crowds watched at the corner of Allen and College Sts. was a highlight of the festival.. "We came up with a few ideas for next year and are looking forward to Number 14 in

a highlight of the festival..

"We came up with a few ideas for next year. We are looking forward to Number 14 in 2012, Gretchan Grobe said.

The Allen West Festival is the major fund-raiser supporting the Allentown Association's program to promote, preserve and beautify the Allentown com-

munity. It is held in conjunction with the Allentown Village Society's annual Allentown Art Festival.

The Association also operated it's long-running hot dog concession in the Allentown Art Festival again this year. Enthusiastic volunteers worked hard, making hundred dollars that will go toward general Association expenses.



**Seeing Green** —Mark Thomas, left, of the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus Green Team watering the planter at the corner of Allen Street and Main. The Green Team is a

partnership between Goodwill Industries and the BNMC for streetscape and building maintenance services, provides watering for two Allentown planters, at Allen and Main Sts.



## 918 Main St. façade being saved for new apartments, retail space

By Christopher Brown

After nearly five years of continual advocacy by the Allentown Association to preserve the long-abandoned four-story brick commercial row-building at 918 Main St., construction was scheduled to begin by early September.

The structure, designed by architect Cyrus Porter & Son in 1891 as the Bosche Brothers Carriage Repository, is prominently sited across the street from the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus. The Bosche Building is part of one of the last intact 19th-century blocks of three-to-four story row-type buildings that once characterized much of downtown Buffalo.

After being abandoned for over a decade, nearly all of the Bosche Building's roof and interior structure has collapsed. In 2007, the Allentown Association hired a structural engineer to study the feasibility of saving the façade to preserve the historic Main Street streetscape.

As a result of that early work, a public-private partnership was formed and the city (which owns the building as a result of a foreclosure auction), obtained a \$1.2 million Re-StoreNY grant to conduct an environmental study, retain a structural consultant and start the selective demolition and stabilization work.

The building's Main St. façade will be stabilized by shoring it on the interior, and interior demolition and rebuilding of the roof will commence. A lane of traffic on Main St. will be closed during the infrastructure-remediation phase

of renovating the structure.

Carmina Wood Morris, PC, is the project architect and Greenleaf & Co. is the developer. The plan is to combine 918 Main St. with its adjacent property next door to create 18-19 upper floor apartments and first floor commercial space with a planned completion in 2012.

The reconstruction will be featured during the National Trust for Historic Preservation's conference during a walking and bus tour of Allentown showing off preservation successes stories in October. The Bosche Building will also be added to the National Register of Historic Places as part of the Allentown Association's One Allentown initiative, which is expected to be approved at a New York State Historic Preservation Office meeting in Allentown on Oct. 19.

"It really took the combined efforts of the Allentown Association, the city (Brendan Mahaffey, strategic planning commissioner, and Jim Comerford, permits and inspections commissioner) and Greenleaf to save a building so complicated in terms of ownership, funding and deteriorated condition," said Steve Carmina, the project's principal architect.

"Our goal is to continue to make the eastern edge of Allentown among the finest sections of the famed historic district," he added.

*Chris Brown, a former Allentown Association president, writes frequently about preservation.*

## *Holly Holdaway, Daniel Culross, are married July 4*

Holly Holdaway, and Daniel Culross were married on July 4 at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church. The presiding pastor was the Rev. Neil Katterman. The 1 p.m. ceremony was accompanied by a full choir, chamber orchestra, harp, soloists, and was followed by a parade of horse drawn carriages that trotted around Allentown for about two hours following the

ceremony.

The couple continues to reside at 3 Saint John's Place where they work steadily on their home renovations and gardens. Holly Holdaway is a music teacher in Lackawanna public schools and an Allentown Association board member. Dan Culross is an architect and also active in the Allentown Association.

## First Church plans ongoing preservation program

*Continued from Page 2*

Erosion of mortar in the tower and resulting water damage were discovered when a stone fell in 2006, with concern expressed about the future of the historic structure, faced with expensive repairs. But the church commissioned an overall survey of the structure and began a restoration program.

Marvin Riegle, a member of the session, the church's governing body, said it's become clear that repairs must be an ongoing and continuous program to preserve the historic structure. The scaffolding has been removed around the eight-inch-thick stone tower and stainless steel anchor rods have been installed. Repairs to the roof will be done gradually, he said.



# Snow thrower to be raffled

The Allentown Association is raffling off a large gas-powered snow thrower. We realize that nobody wants to think about snow, but this is Buffalo and we will need a snow thrower eventually. Tickets are \$5 each and may be purchased at Quaker Bonnet Eatery, 175 Allen St.

The snow thrower is a 30-inch Troy-Bilt model Storm 3090 XP with a retail value of over \$1,100. It was generously donated by Elizabeth Licata,

The winning ticket will be drawn at the Oct. 11 annual meeting Oct. 11 in the Allendale Theater. The winner need not be present to win.

## ALLENTOWN ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Please select a membership level:

- Benefactor \$1,000
- Patron \$500
- Contributing \$250
- Sustaining \$100
- Business \$50
- Family \$40
- Individual \$35
- Student/Senior \$20
- A generous gift \$\_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

If business, name of manager \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to: Allentown Association, Inc.

Mail to: Allentown Association, 14 Allen St., Buffalo NY 14202

### OPTIONAL VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES (Please check the committee of interest to you):

- Allen West Festival
- Beautification
- Membership/PR
- Secrets of Allentown tour of homes
- Crime Reduction
- Fundraising
- Hot Dog Stand
- Volunteer Office Staff
- Board of Directors

*The purpose of the Allentown Association, Inc. is to serve its community. It does that through efforts to beautify the neighborhood; to encourage historic preservation and property maintenance; to promote appropriate business development; to fight crime and to protect and enhance Allentown's unique urban ambiance.*



**THE ALLENTOWN ASSOCIATION, INC.**  
14 Allen Street  
Buffalo, New York 14202  
Visit on the web: [www.allentown.org](http://www.allentown.org)

Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
BUFFALO, N.Y.  
PERMIT NO. 266