Old Town Neighborhood Watch

Our Neighborhood News

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Nov/Dec, 2009 **OTNW.tripod.com**

OTNW Meetings

We meet the last Wednesday of every month at 7PM Location: TBA

November Meeting:

11/25/2009 @ 7 PM

No meeting in December . Have a Merry Christmas!

Nosotros tenemos un reunion el final miercoles del todos los meses.

Reunion en Nov:

11/25/2009 @ 7 PM

No reunion en Diciembre.

Feliz Navidad!!

Se habla ingles.

Weed & Seed Expands! By Anne Crothers

OTNW has had a small sliver in Weed & Seed from the very beginning. The blocks from 8th Street to Hall Street have been part of the project fro many years. Those residents have had access to funding streams and community groups connected with Weed & Seed.

In fact, some of the "Weed" portions of the program, which focus on weeding out crime have taken place in our neighborhood, outside the traditional Weed & Seed boundaries.

Now, our entire neighborhood may become part of Weed & Seed.

An application has been made to expand the boundaries of Weed & Seed both West and North to encompass several neighborhoods including ours. This brings more police operations and special programs. If accepted, the program would begin operation in October, 2010.

Weed & Seed's director, Phyllis Alexander, feels that the program has been a success for Allentown and hopes to find energy and support in our neighborhood.

A public meeting was held on Tuesday, October 27 at St. Paul's Church at 8th and Walnut Streets. More are planned, but the date had not been chosen when this went to print. The website to watch is: www.allentownweedandseed.org.

Many volunteers will be needed, many voices will be wanted.

Our Crisis, Looking for a Home! By Anne Crothers

Since losing our home at St. Michaels, I have been courting two other churches in the neighborhood as potential meeting spaces. One has simply not responded, and one cannot work with our current meeting schedule, as the church is full for prayer meetings on a Wednesday night. I am continuing to approach other churches and potential meeting spaces.

I can always use some help. If you attend church in our neighborhood or live near one, please get me the contact information for the priest/pastor. You can email me the information at healingworks@enter.net.

I sincerely hope that by the new year we will have a new home. Thanks to all who have helped to date—you rock!

My thanks also to the 4 Cs neighborhood group on 7th Street who kindly took us in when we had nowhere to go. We appreciate their friendship!

Changes in Parking From Tamara Weller, Allentown Parking Authority

Allentown at night—lots of cars that need a space!

For those who missed our joint meeting with the 4 C's in September, our speaker was Tamara Weller from the Parking Authority.

I had asked her to discuss the possible removal of meters happening on 9th Street. To her knowledge, this is the first time Allentown has ever removed revenue/meters. We appreciate it! Neighbors on 9th Street will have the same parking opportunities as the rest of us.

She also discussed the success she has seen with the boot and gave us an overview of how things are going. She stated that the Parking Authority was able to donate monies to the Allentown Police Department.

Apparently, the parking authority had money they were not using, an felt it should go to the APD. Good decision Tamara.

She promised to return whenever we have parking concerns and to keep the lines of communication open. Any parking issues can be reported at OTNW meetings and they will be forwarded to her.

"We are tomorrow's past."

Mary Webb

Walking on South Mountain

On October 18, The Lehigh Valley Group of the Sierra Club sponsored a

fall walk among autumn foliage through the rustic trees of Allentown's South Mountain Reservoir Park.

South Mountain (really a high hill!) is often called the most valuable environmental resource in the Lehigh Valley. Popular naturalist Bill Sweeney led groups through easy trails to see what's different as the growing season comes to an end and nature prepares for winter.

South Mountain was originally settled sparsely by the Lenni-Lenape Indians. The first white settlers came in the early 1700s.

South Mountain was cleared of many of it's original trees and mined for iron ore in it's history and was the center of at least one serious land dispute.

Currently, it's protection seems tenuous at times. Let's remember to enjoy this special and historical place.

AT&T: A Lehigh Valley Christmas at Symphony Hall, 11/29

Featuring the crème de la crème of the Lehigh Valley performing holiday classics in a variety of musical genres!

Come experience the return of this spectacular Lehigh Valley Holiday tradition and make your 2009 holiday season Merry and Bright!

Performances by: Zen For Primates, Hector Rosado and Ensemble Siete Latin Jazz, Blackwater Celtic Music, Jake Kaligis and The New Constitution, Two Part Invention, Don Cunningham and The Cabinet, Dave Fry, The James Supra Band, Large Flowerheads, the debut of The Lehigh Valley Community Choir, and many more musicians- plus, an All-Star Finale. Don't miss this year's festivities - get your ticket today and join the celebration! $35 General Admission tickets.

Visit www.allentownsymphony.org or call the box office at 610.432.6715. The AT&T - A Lehigh Valley Christmas In Concert Sunday, November 29, 2009 at 7:00 PM

50 Years on Fountain Street, reprinted by Bill Hicks, RIP

It's been over 50 years that I've lived in the 300 block of N. Fountain Street. I have so many different memories of my neighborhood. Imagine coming here and buying a property that had a coal furnace for heat and fenced in yard that abutted an alley called Egge Street where there still were wooden structures that had horses on the first floor and hay/straw out for food upstairs. There were back yard shops and sheds. A stone structure once so used is now a garage at Monroe and Egge Streets. Now all but one of those homes uses the backyards for parking spaces, which may be my fault. I was the first to take down my fence because I had gotten a ticket out front.

For 30 years I shoveled coal and ashes to keep warm. I used the ashes to fill potholes and mud holes as most small streets in the neighborhood were not blacktopped or paved. In winter time lots of ash was in car trunks and yard barrels as our streets were never cleared of snow. Cooperative neighbors shoveled sidewalks and kept our streets drivable during storms. We all owned where we lived and looked out for one another and respected the boundaries and property.

The changes have been many. A grocery store on the NE corner of 9th and Chew streets was a drug store/ soda fountain. On Chew Street was a butcher shop and at 9th & Gordon there used to be a store and there was a Plastic Mart a few doors down on 9th Street. All have been replaced. The Laundromat at 9th & Chew had various businesses before. One was a TV shop and in those days rooftop antennas were a necessity to get good reception. I installed them as favors for lots of neighbors.

The schools, both Cleveland and Central were where my children attended. They had good playgrounds with metal bar swings and a basketball court with metal poles. They were treated like one treats belongings of their own. There were no knives or guns there in those days. If children misbehaved and you informed the parents you were thanked for really looking out for the children.

People don't stay if they can move out now. But when I came here, people owned and were proud to be in the neighborhood so they stayed out. We wanted to be known as Allentonians!

There is much more of this amazing article. Contact me for the full copy. ***—Anne***

Bill Hicks, a true gentleman, fire fighter and veteran...and a great neighbor

"Everything in life that we really accept undergoes a change"

Katherine Mansfield

Christmas Caroling Tips from HowToDoThings.com

Follow these easy steps to make a caroling trip to remember.

1. Pick a nicely lit place to carol. This is not only a safety precaution, but this also means that the people residing in this neighborhood have Christmas spirit. You don't have be a door-to-door caroler. You can also sing in a park as people pass by.

2. Take your family with you. Choose traditional carols. People mostly want to hear the old time favorite Christmas songs like "O Holy Night" or "O Come All Ye Faithful". This takes people back to the original meaning of Christmas.

3. Go at a reasonable hour, usually after dinner but not too late. Bundle up, it could be cold out there!

No carolers have come to my door yet...

OTNW Community Contact List

Emergencies Call 911		Neighbor Disputes	610-437-7773
Abandoned Vehicles	610-437-7751	Noise Complaints	610-437-7679
Animal Control	610-437-7535	OTNW	610-432-9537
Building Inspections	610-437-7592	Parking Authority	610-437-3366
Code Enforcement	610-437-7661	Police Non-emergency	610-437-7751
Child Abuse	610-437-7798	Police desk	610-437-7753
City Council	610-437-7556	Police Quality of Life patrol	610-437-7611
Disruptive Tenant	610-437-7616	Recycling	610-437-8729
Fire Code Violations	610-437-7758	Snow Removal (Sidewalks)	610-437-7596
Garbage Complaints	610-437-8729	Street Cleaning	610-437-7636
Graffiti	610-437-8729	SWEEP Program	610-437-8729
Historic Architectural Review Board	610-437-7613	Traffic Signs & Signals	610-437-7735
Housing Inspections	610-437-7697	Vacant Property Issues	610-437-7604
Juvenile Bureau	610-437-7741	Vice/Narcotics	610-437-7726
Liquor Control Enforcement	717-783-8250	Weeds/Grass Overgrowth	610-437-7604
Mayor Ed Pawlowski	610-437-7546	Zoning	610-437-7630

One of Our Own Gets Recognized by Anne Crothers

I nominated my friend and neighbor, Sharon Smith for the Allentown Human Relations Awards. I asked several others to back up my recommendation with letters, which they did. I was delighted to learn that the nomination was accepted and she was receiving an award. To my chagrin, I learned immediately that Sharon would be away in China and Tibet and would not be able to receive the award. That left me to accept for her.

She wrote me a quick speech and on Tuesday, October 20th, I was at the ceremony in her place. I've attended this dinner a few other times in the past. It usually amazes me to learn about the incredible work so many individuals do in our community for all of us. There are special people that you may never hear of, working hard every day to make things better with paid or volunteer work. Sharon was honored among them.

Sharon has been involved in every organization or committee that has worked to make the neighborhood a better place. She has been on the board of Old Allentown and has been on the house tour, on the progressive dinner or opened her home to many events. She has been on the board of Neighborhood Housing Services. It was with her/their help that we scraped together the money for the first block party. She was part of Elm Street, and was the only president Old Town Neighborhood Watch has ever had.

At our block party, she is in charge in a major way. She does the bulk of the work to prepare for the party. She lets us store all of the donations in her home, all of the tables and chairs are delivered to her garage. She gives electricity to the Smoke House and opens her home to all of us. That day, she is on the walkie talkie finding space for people and handling problems. This event brings together EVERYONE from our neighborhood in a way our meetings never do.

I was proud to stand in for Sharon and I'm glad that she lives in our neighborhood. Go Sharon!