

**EARN FRONTIER (July 11, 2009)
EAST ALLENTOWN RITTERSVILLE NEIGHBORHOOD
ASSOCIATION**

**P.O. Box 1136, Allentown PA 18105
Telephone # -- (610) 434-1229 E-Mail ---
dpearson@enter.net
Web Site --- www.eastlehighearn.com**



**Next Neighborhood Meetings --- Monday, July 19, 2010
Monday, August 16, 2010
7:00 PM. St. Peter's Evan. Lutheran Church, Hanover Avenue**

**THE EARN FRONTIER --- WE ARE EAST OF Lehigh
River...The Public Voice For The 14th & 15th Wards**

ADIEU TO GARY BECKER, FUTURE OF ASD PLANETARIUM IN DOUBT

The ASD Planetarium at Dieruff High was constructed in the mid 60's with Robert Brown as its first director and has operated continuously since then.

Gary Becker, who succeeded Brown as Planetarium Director in the late 1970's, has elected to retire at the conclusion of the 2009-2010 school year. Unfortunately, the position currently remains unfilled due to an Allentown School District hiring freeze for 2010-2011 imposed by a very tight budget. Gary Becker's enthusiasm for Astronomy had enthralled students both at Allen and Dieruff High Schools for years as well as other

countless students and adults who visited the planetarium at Dieruff High from within the school district and outside the district .

Gary Becker's longtime reign as Planetarium Director was not without problems. During a similar budgetary crisis in the early 90's the Allentown School Board attempted to save funds by taking funds for maintenance and operation of the Planetarium at Dieruff School from the Budget ... This would have meant closure of the Planetarium but not the loss of Becker's job in the school district as he could have taken another position in the Science Department. Becker pointed this out to the School Board as a plan was being developed by Becker and others to save the planetarium ... At the time even the East Allentown Rittersville Neighborhood Association got into battle developing a plan of its own to support the continuous operation of the planetarium.

As it happened enough public support was generated to allow the continued operation of the planetarium at Dieruff High School... But Becker whose salary was still in the school district budget had to raise his own funds for the maintenance and operation of the facility ... So Becker created a Committee, group or organization responsible for soliciting needed funds from individuals, groups and corporations ... With this change in funding the Dieruff High School Planetarium was renamed the Allentown School District and with the Academy system adopted in the Allentown School District students from Allen High School could attend classes in the Planetarium as well. Becker also made his Planetarium services available by appointment to all Allentown City Schools and other Lehigh Valley schools and a public for a fee.

Since 1994 the East Allentown Rittersville Neighborhood Association through Project Haas has placed Christmas decorations in Irving Park adjacent to Dieruff High School . The project was meant to assist and promote the ASD Planetarium through a financial contribution whether it be directly from EARN or Dennis Pearson personally.

For countless years the EARN neighborhood gave as much assistance to the planetarium as it could and Dennis Pearson the President of EARN personally made his own financial contribution to the maintenance and operation of the planetarium yearlyHe did so this year and would have been accepted by Becker had the Allentown School District been actively searching for a successor to his position ... But apparently the school district has not because the district has imposed a hiring freeze on teaching positions.

We trust that the people of East Allentown would agree to the principle that the Allentown School District would not move to dismantle the planetarium ... That the reopening and use of the Planetarium be an option for the future ...

If the maintenance and operation of the planetarium remains outside the Budget this year or next why couldn't the School District move to encourage an outside contractor to operate the Planetarium providing their own funds to maintain and operate the facility

for public use and meeting the wage needs, if any, of those qualified to operate the facility.

We understand that the moral support and financial support provided by the neighborhood, Dennis Pearson and others helped keep the stars shining for tens of thousands of Allentown School District students as well as other kids and organizations located in the Greater Lehigh Valley. And we think that is wonderful

As for Dennis Pearson, he plans for the time being to re-direct these funds to the Lehigh Valley Amateur Astronomical Society ... The LVAAS operates two meeting/observing sites. The main headquarters are located on South Mountain, near where Rt. 78 and Rt. 309 meet. The society also has a dark sky observing location near Hamburg, about 25 miles west of Allentown. Both locations house a number of society scopes.

Dennis Pearson, President of the East Allentown Rittersville Neighborhood Association who was awarded the Allentown Crime Watch's President's Council Leonard Buck award for Community Service in April also serves the City as Vice President of the President's Council of the Allentown Crime ... He serves the region as Chair of the Steelworkers Archives Membership and Historical Intake Committee...And finally, serves the nation as Chair of the National Space Society's National Chapters Assembly --- His function there being ... He will Chair meetings of the NSS Chapters' Assembly, and provide an independent pathway for chapters to share information and voice concerns.

Getting back to the future of Gary Becker ... He will continue to be active enjoying his interest in Astronomy ... In the Lehigh Valley, we may see him frequently or time to time taking his scope to the LVAAS facilities ... And he will be there for the next total or partial lunar eclipse or solar eclipse when that happens.

We wish Gary Becker Adieu to his former endeavor and a hello to his next phase in life.



Gary Becker in ASD Planetarium beside of equipment which brings life to the dome



Dennis Pearson in the ASD Planetarium in a picture taken by Gary Becker

ALLENTOWN PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR RICHARD YOUNG REPEATS PLANS FOR HANOVER AVENUE AT MEETING AT OUR LADY HELP OF CHRISTIAN ON JUNE 23

The desire of the East Allentown Rittersville Neighborhood Association is that the motorist-Pedestrian problems related to the Hanover Avenue- E. Hamilton Street Corridor be solved ... Therefore we approve any effort that effectively accomplishes that objective...Allentown Public Works Director Richard Young's meeting at Our Lady Help of Christian June 23rd cleared the air with a crowd of at least forty people that mostly consisted of parishionersTheresa Trieber whose parents were killed a number of years ago after the meeting expressed disappointment that more people did not attend. But in our book the meeting attracted a good crowd ... Yes you always want more to attend but no one should be bummed out by this turn out... Richard Young presented the same presentation concerning plans for Hanover Avenue that he presented to City Council in May ... And these plans were essentially the same concepts and ideas that he brought to the East Allentown Rittersville Neighborhood Association January 18, 2010 . At our meeting he said the Hanover Avenue Corridor between Irving and the Hamilton Street Bridge which handles 27,000 vehicles per day on the average would be handled different then the Irving Street - Club Avenue corridor which handle 17,000 vehicles per day.

On June 14, 2010 using U.S. government Stimulus funds the Public Works Department has commenced construction activities on the Hanover Avenue-Hamilton Street corridor from Irving Street to the Bridge designed to add turning lanes where needed and alleviate congestion on the road.

The City will also make changes to traffic patterns to alleviate congestion and improve safety on the road for pedestrians as money becomes available to the area between Irving Street and Club Avenue with the area between Irving Street and Maxwell Street being a priority in that corridor ... EARN already received this commitment January 18 from Young and City Council members D'Amore and Donovan at that meeting a few weeks after the death of Mrs. Venditto at nearly the same spot that the Rice's were killed.

In front of Our Lady Help of Christian two well signed pedestrian crossing will be constructed on Hanover Avenue--- one at the intersection of N. Jasper and one at the intersection of Irving Street ... In between these pedestrian crossing will be a planter like media strip which discourages pedestrians to cross the road between the pedestrian crossings and will prevent motorist traveling east to make a left hand turn on N. Jasper Street.

EARN MINI_SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

The East Allentown- Rittersville Neighborhood Association Inc. is pleased to announce the following recipients of its annual EARN Mini Grants for the 2009 - 2010 school year...We congratulate

1) Marie Crespe of 212 S. Jerome Street
and 2) Samantha Egizio, of 1137 Wahneta Street

for being recipients of our mini- scholarship awards for 2010. Their record at Dieruff High School was most impressive, both academically and otherwise. Their \$200 individual cash award was presented at a school awards dinner.

David Schell of N. Irving Street, Allentown was the Project Academia Coordinator for 2005-2006, 2006-2007, 2007-2008, 2008-2009 and 2009-2010... Before that the Project Academia Coordinator was Dennis Pearson.

Applicants must present documentation that indicates that they are a graduating senior residing in the 14th and 15th wards of Allentown who plan to continue their formal education beyond high school at institutions of higher learning dedicated to the advancement of technical, business, liberal arts or literary skills; and the residency stipulation is strictly enforced. In 2009-2010 Mini-Scholarship Recipients received \$200 apiece payable to the recipient. The award is intended to be used to defray some tuition or book costs.

Important note --- Continuation of Project Academia for 2010-2011 depends on an influx of funds to build of the neighborhood Treasury ...

NSS-NASA SPACE SETTLEMENT DESIGN CONTEST

The National Space Society (NSS) - National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Space Settlement Design Contest, Co-sponsored by NASA Ames and NSS, gives students from all over the world the opportunity to share their conceptions of living and working in space. The competition is, in effect, a request for contractors to propose the design, development, construction, and operations planning of a safe and pleasant space settlement community. Each spring students send their designs for homes in space for judging by NASA engineers and scientists. The contest has inspired thousands of students and has helped hundreds of teachers bring the excitement of space settlement to youth worldwide ...

The East Allentown Rittersville Neighborhood encourages students from the Allentown City School District and other Lehigh Valley Area School District to use their imagination to consider participating in the NSS-NASA Space Settlement Design Contest...

Contest categories are individual 6-9 grade , small group 6-9 grade, large group 6-9 grade, individual 10-12 grade, small group 10-12 grade and large group 10-12 grade...A category based on artistic and literary merit is also included in the contest. For 2010, in addition to the Grand Prize winner, a new scholarship has been introduced, the Bruce M. Clark Jr. Award. This \$2,000 scholarship goes to the highest-ranking first place winner in the "individual" category.

In 2010, 434 submissions from 1,042 students sponsored by 113 teachers. Entries came from 15 countries: Bulgaria, Canada, China, India, Ireland, Japan, Poland, Singapore , Romania, Singapore, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, the United States and Uruguay.... United States entries were received from 10 states: California, Colorado, Florida, Illinois, Missouri, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, Oregon and Washington ... Come on Lehigh Valley students use your imagination enter this Space Settlement Design Contest.

Yes, the competition is tough ... The foreign students who enter are clean cut, disciplined, well-behaved and raring to learn ... They are eager to learn what is out there and take it all in ... And are not afraid to ask questions to clarify what they took in ... One NASA observer said if American students do not respond in kind, the world will begin to outpace us in the future in all technological development.

But in 2010 the Americans prevailed for the moment ... The Grand Prize winning submissions for the 2010 Space Settlement Contest came from a large group of 14 students (9-12 grade) from Durango High School in Colorado. The name of the group was Durango Aerospace Design Team. These students were instructed by Mr. Daniel Garner.

The Inaugural Bruce M. Clark Jr. Award, a prize of \$2,00, went to the top individual entry. The was Prateeksha Das from Ispat English Medium School in Odisha, India. The name of the project was "Paradise Reclaimed."

The winners of the NSS-NASA Student Space Settlement Design of the Year Award attended the NSS 29th Annual Internal Space Development Conference in Chicago, May 27-31 to receive the award and give an acceptance speech. One of these students received a special surprise as Charles Bolden, the new NASA Administrator, appointed by Barrack Obama, and authorized to do so by the Durango Colorado School Board, gave one of these students a High School Diploma. That student had to miss his High School's graduating ceremonies to attend ISDC 2010.

Dennis Pearson, President of EARN and Chair of NSS's National Chapter Assembly will provide any interested student and sponsoring teacher information to facilitate possible entry in the 2011 NSS-NASA Space Settlement Design Contest.

ISDC 2011 will be located at the Von Braun Center. Huntsville. Alabama and be held May 18-22, 2011.

Established in 1976, EARN has seen a recent drop-off in membership and wants your input and ideas. If you live, operate a business, or simply have a vested interest in Allentown's East Side, please come!

- ✓ **Know what is happening in your neighborhood and be a part of the flow of information – have your voice heard.**
- ✓ **Have a direct communication link with local government officials and other influential groups.**
- ✓ **Help to preserve and improve East Allentown.**
- ✓ **Plan social activities for your neighborhood.**

Let's get together, share our ideas, thoughts, and feelings and work cooperatively to make Allentown's east side a better place to live.

All neighborhood residents and guests are welcome ... This is your neighborhood ... Help it be a strong one ... Get Involved ... Be part of the adventure ... Be a Frontiersman for the neighborhood.

At our May Membership and Board meeting the East Allentown Rittersville Neighborhood Association remains committed to carrying on our Annual Christmas tradition of putting up lights at Irving Park.

East Allentown Rittersville Project Haas Report ...

From the standpoint of community reaction to Project Haas it was well received ... People enjoyed what they did see ... But financially the project did not receive community generated revenue to make up for expenses ... Which is a bit deceiving because we did not take anything out of our treasury for the event Indeed many items were added to the project but the costs for these items were willfully absorbed for the most part by Dennis Pearson and Bob Jacoby... Which has been the case many years... But in previous years any revenue received assisted Project Academia our Scholarship program ... This may not happen this year.

Now except for wanting some money for Project Haas and Project Academia EARN does not do much fund raising ... The reasons for the drop in receipts 1) Maybe the economy 2) Deaths of former contributors 3) Failure to get reminders out due to lack of time and uncertainty over what we can publish or not and 4) Media lack of good will hits ...

The fact is... we were busy with many things at one time ... The Christmas Display ... Allentown State Hospital ... Hanover Avenue ... Keck Park ... East Side Fire Station ... And unfair media hits ... But there has been a small revival of people coming to our meetings...

In regard to Project Academia ... It will be done again this year ... 2 seniors from Dieruff High School will receive a small stipend in May or June ... This will be paid out of the treasury ... This fall ... We may attempt Project Haas again but stand pat with what we have unless it is an emergency and unless we receive enough funds to do both a Scholarship reward and that.

The Alliance Hall, East Side Youth Center and East Side Memorial will receive their annual grant paid by Dennis Pearson with his own funds in the name of EARN , as well as Allentown School District Planetarium or its successor (see article above) ... So the purposes of the event are being carried out despite the fact we are not professionals in raising money for the event ...

Bob Jacoby should be thanked for doing much of the physical work of Project Haas along with me .. Jim Bartley should be thanked for volunteering his service with the PPL High Lift Truck David Schell should be thanked for administering Project Academia which is safe for at least this year.

REMEMBER --- Next Neighborhood Meeting --- Monday, July 19 , 2010 and after that August 16, 2010 ---7:00 PM. St. Peter's Evan. Lutheran Church, Hanover AvenuePlease come --- We need you there

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