

Earn Frontier (March 15, 2016)



**EAST ALLENTOWN RITTERSVILLE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION
P.O. BOX 1136, ALLENTOWN, PENNA. 18105**

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NEIGHBORHOOD PRESIDENT and EDITOR Dennis L. Pearson

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Welcome to the EARN Frontier

Please Note --- Regularly Scheduled Neighborhood Meetings (Caucus) are held on the Third Monday of the Month at 7:00 PM ... The Location for our meetings is the St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church located at 1933 Hanover Avenue...

- Next 2 Neighborhood Meetings
- Monday, March 21, 2016
- Monday, April 18, 2016
- St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church
- 1933 Hanover Avenue, Allentown PA 18109
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- **We are the Lookout for the Neighborhood**
- - **President - Dennis L. Pearson**
 - **Vice President - Robert R. Pandaleon**
 - **Secretary - David Schell**
 - **Treasury - Robert Jacoby**



The 32nd Annual Allentown Crime Watch Leonard Buck Banquet is coming up on Thursday, April 21, 2016 at the Fearless Fire Station on South Front Street in Allentown. The family Style /Country Style dinner starts at 6:45 PM. Doors open at 5:30 PM. The evening features Guest Speakers and awards and awards presented to Neighborhood Group Volunteers. Also there will be the presentation of the Leonard Buck Award as well as the presentation of the Ben Gress Distinguished Police Officer of the Year Award for 2015. The cost to attend the Banquet is \$28 and tickets can be purchased through a neighborhood group leader or by contacting, me, Dennis Pearson at (610) 434-1229 or (610) 751-0794. No tickets can be purchased at the door.

The East Allentown/ Rittersville Neighborhood Association ran its first holiday lighting program of certain community facilities in 1994-1995 and just finished our 22nd continuous run in 2015-2016...Like previous years, Project Haas was well appreciated by residents of the EARN neighborhood....As we begin planning for a possible 23rd run, our main concern would be whether our traditional flag pole decorations can be repeated due to the tilt in the pole that appeared this year.

More than 500 Allentown School District middle and high school students participated in the second annual District Science Fair on May 28 and 29 of 2015. Students, grades 6 – 12 (representing both ASD high schools and all four middle schools) conducted a controlled experiment to answer or solve a specific problem or questions; record and analyze their data; create a display board explaining their project; and finally present their findings to the judges.

With permission of the Allentown School District the East Allentown Rittersville Neighborhood Association in cooperation with the Lehigh Valley Space Frontier of the Lehigh Valley Council for Regional Livability offered the Kirk Shinsky Award to a High School Student and the Frederick Greenleaf Jr. Award to a Middle School Student and a special Space Frontier Award that honored Pete Conrad, a Pennsylvania who flew to the Moon on Apollo 12.

Each award has a \$100 monetary award associated with the award.

The East Allentown Rittersville Neighborhood Association will offer these awards again this year.

The impasse in the state legislature has its consequences...For education ...And for agriculture ... A speaker at the County Commissioners informed the Commissioners how the work of the Penn State Agricultural extension services has been impacted to the negative as well as 4H club activities for future farmers ... He also warned how farmland preservation and assessment assistance programs have also been compromised by a seemingly uncaring, divided and greedy state legislature.... The same speaker wants the Commissioners to express their concerns to the Governor and the legislature about the problem they jointly created by inaction// A suggestion to contact Schweyer, Schlossberg and McNeil is fine fundamentally but these districts are urban and I suspect these state legislators could care less about the state of Lehigh County farmlands as long as they get their products from farm wasting warehouses in western Lehigh County... If I was the representative for the 132nd district I would personally support farmland preservation, the services of the Penn State Agricultural services and the activities of the 4H clubs...I say this despite the fact that in Allentown the only agricultural area in the city is the Allentown fair And I say this

because due to family legal activity I once owned jointly a 45 acre farm temporarily during these legal activities. Maybe someday we could share the activity of warehousing with farm production by building vertical farms over these structures... And in addition build vertical farms in center city Allentown.

East Allentown Rittersville Neighborhood Association MINUTES --- January 18, 2016

President Dennis Pearson called the regular monthly meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. on January 18, 2016 at St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Present: Four officers (President Dennis Pearson, Vice President Robert Pandaleon, Treasurer Bob Jacoby, and Secretary Dave Schell) and six other neighbors were present at the meeting.

Secretary Dave Schell handed out copies of the minutes of the meeting of December 21, 2015. There were two changes noted—one clarification and one typographic error. To clarify, the water leaks in the area of E. Tilghman and N. Kiowa Street have already been repaired. The item about "The Closet" at St. John's Evangelical Congregational Church should have read "THERE is no charge..." not THE is no charge." It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes as corrected. The motion carried.

Treasurer Bob Jacoby gave his report. The balance is now \$527.03. It was moved and seconded to approve the report as read. The motion carried.

President Pearson noted that we have had two sad stories in the past month on the East Side. The most tragic is that on New Year's Eve an autistic child ran away from a home on E. Union Street. After several days his dead body was found in the Lehigh Canal. The group discussed the search.

The second item is that the corruption situation in the city now has involved two officials who live on the East Side, both of whom have pled guilty.

President Pearson noted that there will be some money shifted around in the city budget to get funds to repair the wall in the Lehigh Parkway the condition of which prevented Lights in the Parkway from taking place this season. He speculated on how this might affect other projects in the city, including some on the East Side.

A neighbor in the 1400 block of E. Pennsylvania Street noted that there is a business in the area that goes by the name of Forensic Treatment Services. It

has been operating at 1427 E. Pennsylvania Street for the past six months. Research has shown that his business rehabilitates sex offenders. The concern was that there had been no notice to the neighbors what business was going into the building, which had formerly been on Cedar Crest Boulevard. Additionally, it appears that zoning was not involved. This has been going on for some months. During the warmer weather people came out for “smoke breaks.” Since this is in a residential neighborhood, including the Congress Apartments, there are children in the area.

President Pearson will speak to zoning about the matter and insist that we have a visit from the police. The new chief has planned to come to our last several meetings, but has had to postpone his visit. Pearson also noted that when the abortion clinic came into this neighborhood the zoning notices were not available until after the business was already present. It was noted that if the area is zoned commercial, it is possible that they would not have had to get a variance for the facility.

It was also noted that the area where N. Nelson St. meets American Parkway is an extremely dangerous intersection. There are stop signs, but visibility is bad and there have been several close calls. Additionally, trash is dumped in the area in large quantities.

There are several other issues in this part of the neighborhood. It was noted that there have been several fires at Harry’s U-Pull-It junkyard, one of which was caused by a gas tank being hit on a junked vehicle. It is our understanding that gas tanks are supposed to be drained, cleaned, and removed from junked vehicles but apparently this has not been done at this location. This was also the area where a drunk driver hit a power transformer recently, causing a fire and power outage.

A neighbor noted that there is need for a traffic study and a left arrow light on Front Street southbound at the new American Parkway intersection. Persons attempting to make a left turn from southbound Front Street onto the American Parkway Bridge sometimes end up waiting five traffic light cycles to make it through the intersection.

Secretary Schell handed out copies of the city’s “Catch a young person doing something right” application. As the name suggests, this award is intended to reward individuals who have “demonstrated excellence” or “gone above and beyond the call of duty.” There are three categories depending on the person’s age (7-10, 11-14, and 15-18). This year’s nominations are due by February 3rd, and

can be found on the city website at

<http://www.allentownpa.gov/Government/Mayors-Office/Create-the-Good>.

Schell also read a copy of the thank you letter that he had sent to William Jesse, who had sent a donation for our Project Haas holiday light display in response to our request in the Morning Call's "Be An Angel" listing.

Last month a neighbor had mentioned the problem concerning heavy trucks on N. Kiowa and E. Tilghman Streets. Schell asked whether the group as a whole would like him to send a letter to the city about the matter. It was further noted that at one time N. Kiowa was posted forbidding this traffic between Union Boulevard and Hanover Avenue, but the signs were removed some years back. The group agreed that the letter should be sent to the appropriate city officials.

President Pearson noted the increase in illegal dumping in the area and requested that this dumping should be reported to the city. [Note: Illegal dumping in progress should be called in to 9-1-1. Report other dumping to Allentown recycling at 610-437-8729.]

Pearson spoke of the current corruption situation in the city, including an appropriate thought from Sophocles' *Antigone*: "All men make mistakes, but a good man yields when he knows his course is wrong, and repairs the evil. The only crime is pride."

It was noted that we have not seen police officers at our meetings for several months. Schell read some email communications from earlier the same day from the Midway Manor association and Officer Michael Beidelman. There have been solicitors going through the Midway Manor area claiming to be from PPL who are actually from Direct Energy, a company that is attempting to get people to switch their electric service provider. If these people (or others) are pestering you, you should call the police communications center at 610-437-7751. Ask if Badge 35 (Officer Beidelman) is working and, if so, give him a description of the solicitors and what direction they went in. He will attempt to find them and read them the riot act.

A neighbor showed a charitable solicitation that she had received (despite an incorrect address) under the name and title of former Governor and Homeland Security Director Tom Ridge and asked if others were getting the same thing. Several of those present confirmed that they had received them.

Finally, Schell noted that he had gotten two automated calls during the search for the autistic child and wondered if the city was able to call all numbers within a

certain geographic area in the event of an emergency. Apparently this ability exists, and a number of those present (but not all) had gotten the same calls.

There being no further business, adjournment was moved and seconded, and the meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully, *David A. Schell, Secretary*

East Allentown Rittersville Neighborhood Association MINUTES --- December 21, 2015

President Dennis Pearson called the regular monthly meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. on December 21, 2015 at St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Present: Four officers (President Dennis Pearson, Vice President Robert Pandaleon, Treasurer Bob Jacoby, and Secretary Dave Schell) and five other neighbors were present at the meeting, as was Kenneth Heffentrager of the Allentown Tenants' Association and the 10th Ward neighborhood group, and Ben Long, candidate for the 132nd District of the General Assembly.

Secretary Dave Schell handed out copies of the minutes of the meeting of November 16, 2015.

It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes as distributed. The motion carried.

President Pearson handed out a sheet with the dates of next year's EARN and Crime Watch presidents' meetings.

Treasurer Bob Jacoby gave his report. The balance is now \$527.03. We received donations of \$75. In addition, we earned \$38 in skate rentals and a \$3 donation when we ran the ice rink at Andre Reed Park on December 11th. It was moved and seconded to approve the report as read. The motion carried.

President Pearson announced that the investigative situation got messier in the city as several additional charges have been filed, the most recent one this morning when the city's former financial director was indicted.

Ben Long, candidate for next year's election in the 132nd District of the General Assembly, was introduced and spoke to the group. Mr. Long answered a number of questions about the current budget process, his belief that the two parties had to reach across the aisle and get work done, and about his background. He works

in his family water business and is currently finishing his degree in Political Science at De Sales University.

Pearson noted that the city has borrowed \$4.2 million from the solid waste to fund the general budget, planning for it to be paid back within seven years. Earned income tax will be going up. Rather than going to the taxpayers for approval of the amount above 0.5% for the city and school district the city utilized a state law applying to distressed cities. It will be 1.65% total, of which 0.5% to the school, 0.5% to the city for services, and 0.65% to the city for pension.

As of June 2016 the city will go to a “single stream” system of recycling collection rather than the “dual stream” as at present. Recyclables will still be separated from garbage, but the current green bucket (glass, plastic, metal) will be combined with the blue bucket (paper).

Secretary Schell noted that the city will be replacing the signage on Wahneta Street in the near future. This problem is a problem that we had discussed at a previous meeting with people going in the wrong direction.

Pearson passed around a copy of the Lehigh Valley Housing and Homeless Prevention Resources, which lists phone numbers and other contact information for various social services.

This information will be included in our next newsletter that is distributed throughout the east side.

Treasurer Jacoby noted that there have been some water leaks repair needed in the area of E. Tilghman Street and N. Kiowa Street, and also street surface deterioration, both possibly caused by truck traffic. He suggested that we again ask for a posting for no trucks on East Tilghman Street between N. Irving and N. Maxwell Streets, and N. Kiowa Street from Hanover Avenue to Union Boulevard.

Pearson reported on two items of interest before the zoning board. A martial arts studio that has opened on N. Quebec Street just north of Union Boulevard has requested a variance from the parking requirements. They currently have eighteen spaces and the city has asked for 65. They have noted that their business runs on a different schedule than neighboring businesses and they don't have a number of clients at the same time to justify such a need. Additionally, the P&G Auto Works in the 1000 block of E. Livingston Street has asked for a variance to expand their auto repair business.

Ken Heffentrager spoke to the group about the effort being mounted by the Allentown Tenant Association against illegal dumping in the city. The group is actively reporting illegal dump sites and is pushing the city to install roving cameras to catch the perpetrators. People who see illegal dumping in progress are asked to call 911, or dumping can be reported to Allentown Recycling at 610-

437-8729. The dumping can also be reported to the Tenant Association at 484-202-0742 or admin@allentowntenantassociation.org.

A neighbor reported that work is proceeding on the Old Mosser School on Carlisle Street. It appears that there may finally be electric service on the property since she no longer hears the generator that had previously provided power for tools.

President Pearson noted that St. John's Evangelical Congregational Church on Jerome Street has a program called "The Closet" which collects clothing for young people who are considered "voluntarily homeless" since they are living outdoors away from parents or foster parents. There is no charge for the clothing, and the church also provides spiritual counseling.

There being no further business, adjournment was moved and seconded, and the meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully, *David A. Schell, Secretary*

East Allentown Rittersville Neighborhood Association MINUTES --- November 16, 2015

President Dennis Pearson called the regular monthly meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. on November 16, 2015 at St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Present: Four officers (President Dennis Pearson, Vice President Robert Pandaleon, Treasurer Bob Jacoby, and Secretary Dave Schell) and seven other neighbors were present at the meeting, as were Captain Dorney and Officer Ruff of the Allentown Police Department and Phyllis Alexander, Allentown Neighborhood Coordinator.

Secretary Dave Schell handed out copies of the minutes of the meeting of October 19, 2015. It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes as distributed. The motion carried. Secretary Schell passed around the table the various flyers and information that he had received at the Great Allentown Summit on November 1st.

Treasurer Bob Jacoby gave his report. We received a donation of \$10 giving us a total balance of \$411.03. It was moved and seconded to approve the report as read. The motion carried.

President Pearson noted that we participated in the Dieruff HS pep rally by loaning our inflatable husky and Buffalo Bill holiday ornaments. He further noted that there was an incident at the pep rally in which a teacher was shoved down

the bleachers. This was just one of several fights and incidents at and near city high schools and middle schools.

Pearson also read several other articles from the Morning Call about accidents and incidents concerning the East Side. Additionally, he noted that a park in the 600 block of Chew Street was renamed in memory of the late Ernie Atiyeh.

Secretary Schell read an email from Phyllis Alexander about our concern that there is no traffic light on Hanover Avenue. As we knew, the project was held up when toxic substances were found in the area where New England Avenue was to be constructed. The city is aware of the situation and will try to expedite the traffic signal portion of the job once the legal matters concerning the cancelation of the project are finally concluded.

A resident noted that the alley next to Wahneta Street is one way but drivers are ignoring the one way signs and driving against traffic. Additionally there are overgrown bushes that are partially blocking the street. They have been several close calls both with other traffic and with pedestrians and fear that someone will be hurt or killed. Also people leaving Ray's Pizza are turning the wrong way. The neighbor brought in pictures of the street and the vegetation. Captain Dorney will look into the matter. It was noted that the apartments on Tacoma Street near Union Boulevard have a good bit of junk surrounding the property.

Captain Dorney spoke of recent crime statistics and what we expect in the near future. With the holidays coming, they usually see an uptick in armed robberies—both of stores and individuals. They have had multiple cases recently with a person who is either a juvenile or young adult hitting several of the dollar stores. Usually these are robbed from early evening to just before closing. Convenience stores are often hit late at night. For some reason Monday through Wednesday evenings are the big nights for store robberies. They have also seen some “opportunity robberies” where a person takes advantage of a situation such as a recent case where a cab driver that was counting his money openly was robbed of his cash. He urged people to continue to be vigilant in their neighborhoods about people wandering around scoping out targets, who generally avoid eye contact.

Over the past month they have not had (on the east side) any of the type of robberies in which people watch for FedEx or UPS deliveries and steal packages off of porches, but expect that this type of robbery may increase during the holiday delivery season. They continue to see situations where people put down their phone on the counter of convenience stores and forget them there. When they return the phones are gone.

As to recent statistics for the east side, year to date homicides are down 50%, rape is down 14%, robberies are up 22%, aggravated assault is down 28%, burglary is down 40%, auto theft is down 11%. Total crime on the east side is

down 18.26% compared with 19% in the city as a whole. While there are occasional cases of innocent bystanders being shot, most of the shootings involve those committing other crimes—either gangs or people who are buying or selling drugs.

As of today (with four new officers starting) the police are at 213 officers. The budget allows for 216 and with luck they will be up to full strength by the end of the year. Dennis Pearson noted that the new police chief was invited to our meeting tonight but was unable to attend as he had a budget hearing this evening. He should be with us at our next meeting.

In response to a question, Captain Dorney noted that there are normally three cars assigned to the each of the Police Service Areas, including the east side, at any given time. There are three shifts. Depending on sick leave or vacation there are up to six additional “floater” cars available throughout the city, so sometimes we have a fourth car on the east side. He noted also that they have revised their regulations as to what they respond to and how they need to write up reports on their contacts, in order to produce less paperwork time and more direct patrolling. He also noted that they are testing again in spring for additional hires, and handed out application forms. Anyone who knows someone who would like to apply for an officer’s position is invited to call the police department and inquire.

It was noted that the American Parkway Bridge will be opening on November 24th. This, and the construction of the riverfront developments directly across from the east side may bring additional traffic (and possibly additional crime into our part of the city.

Phyllis Alexander handed out forms that people can use to thank neighbors who are doing cleanup work. She noted that she has liked working with us, but that she is retiring at the end of this week.

President Pearson expressed some concern about losing businesses from this part of the city as some move into the Neighborhood Improvement Zone (NIZ) to take advantage of the tax breaks in that area. This is producing some empty buildings on the east side.

He also noted that while we have yet to see any work on the temporary skating rink that is to operate in Andre Reed (Irving) Park starting on November 28th, it has been moved from the tennis court area to the basketball court area. We have put in to work the area as a fundraiser for EARN on Friday and Saturday, December 10th and 11th, but do not yet know if our application has been successful. The flagpole decoration will be put up in the next week, and afterwards the Dieruff JROTC will be helping us with the other setup.

Election of officers: President Pearson noted that last month the current officers' names were put into nomination and asked if there were any other nominees. There were none, so it was moved, seconded, and approved to have the secretary cast a unanimous ballot for the current officers. Pearson noted that he and Treasurer Jacoby will have served forty years as officers at the end of this coming term.

There being no further business, adjournment was moved and seconded, and the meeting adjourned at 8:04 p.m.

**Respectfully,
David A. Schell, Secretary**

Project Lifesaver ---- As a result of an effort spearheaded by the Allentown Police Department, funds have been raised to purchase 39 bracelets to apply tracking technology for the search and rescue of children with Autism and other cognitive disorders.

At a morning news conference in City Council Chambers, Allentown Police Chief Keith Morris announced that the men and women of the department, the police union, local businesses, fraternal organizations and crime watch groups all contributed.

The donations come in the wake of the death of 5-year-old Jayliel Vega Batista who wandered away from a New Year's Eve party in east Allentown. His body was found two days later in the Lehigh Canal. The boy's disappearance sparked a massive search by authorities and members of the general public with many wondering what more can be done.

"In the wake of the search for Jayliel, the Allentown Police Department and its members wanted to take proactive steps to avoid such tragedies in the future' Chief Morris said. "We are excited to partner with both our community and local organizations to bring additional awareness to the Project Lifesaver program. I personally want to thank all of those that have generously donated to ensure that bracelets are available for those in need."

Chief Morris acknowledged donations for bracelets by the Knights of Columbus, Mountainville Crime Watch, Polish Water Ice, the Allentown Police Department and the Fraternal Order of Police. Lehigh Valley Health Network and Lehigh Valley Health Network Public Safety, Capital Blue Cross, the Dorothy Pool Health Care Trust, Air Products, Dunne Manning and City Center Development made donations to the Downtown Allentown Community Development Initiative Special Purpose Fund at Lehigh Valley Community Foundation for the purchase of bracelets.

"The Downtown Allentown Community Development Initiative (DACDI) is very pleased to have the opportunity to support the Allentown Police Department in this excellent initiative, said Executive Director Don Bernhard. "The leadership exhibited by APD in creating and implementing this program to help at risk members of the community is indicative of the dedication and passion they have for serving Allentown's citizens."

Lehigh Valley Health Network Director, Security Services Craig Finnerty said, "There is a persistent desire of Lehigh Valley Health Network to maintain partnerships to benefit the community. And when we learn of opportunities to help our partners we try to find ways to

assist. Helping the Allentown Police Department with their ongoing support of Project Lifesaver is one such example. We certainly recognize the Project's value as it contributes to the health and safety of community members. Lehigh Valley Health Network also will be assisting the City of Bethlehem Police Department, as well as Salisbury Township Police Department with their Project Lifesaver efforts."

Mayor Ed Pawlowski said, "These contributions will increase by five times the number of children and adults with cognitive disorders who will have an extra level of security by wearing the bracelet. "I want to offer my sincere thanks to the police officers, the members of the police union, the business and health care communities and our neighborhood organizations that have contributed to the cause."

The bracelets will be purchased by Project Lifesaver of the Lehigh Valley. Martha Lieberman of Project Lifesaver of the Lehigh Valley says the bracelet is a great use of technology to improve the safety of the cognitively impaired. "Project Lifesaver can mean never having to say, what if! What if I had gotten a bracelet, what if I had paid better attention, what if..."

Under the Project Lifesaver program, a person with a cognitive mental disorder, for example Autism or Alzheimer's, and is prone to wandering, is outfitted with a bracelet. The bracelet contains a "transmitter." The transmitter is specific to a certain FM frequency. The bracelet "transmits" a signal every one second over that frequency 24 hours a day. The client wears this bracelet at all times and no other action is taken or required.

If the client wanders away, the APD Project Lifesaver team is mobilized with what is referred to as the "receiver." The receiver can be input with the specific frequency of the client. A search begins near the last location of the client. The receiver searches for that signal the transmitter is putting out every second. The team then focuses on that signal which can and will pinpoint the exact location of the person.

Each bracelet costs \$350, which is only the cost of the bracelet transmitter. There are no monitoring fees or any other similar fees.

There are currently seven Allentown residents wearing bracelets. Five are children with Autism and two are adults with Alzheimer's.

Parents or guardians in Allentown interested in obtaining a tracking bracelet can contact Allentown Police Captain William Reinik, Project Lifesaver Coordinator for APD at 610-437-7713 or Martha Lieberman at 610-966-8511. Ms. Lieberman contacts all the families and discusses the program and obtains necessary information to make sure the program is right for them. Families later meet with APD to go over expectations.

Kiwanis is a global organization of volunteers dedicated to improving the world, one child and one community at a time. --- The Kiwanis Club of Allentown Northeast --- a local Kiwanis Chapter is holding a Pancake Breakfast fundraiser at Applebee Restaurant in Hanover Township from 8:00 Am to 10 AM on Saturday May 14, 2016 ... Cost of Breakfast is \$7.00 per adult ... Neighbors please support this worthy Kiwanis fundraising effort.



The EARN FRONTIER is printed courtesy of the City of Allentown on recycled paper