



Milestones™

A publication of Philadelphia Corporation for Aging

News and Possibilities for Seniors

May 2016 • Free

Special Arts Issue

Celebrate Arts & Aging:
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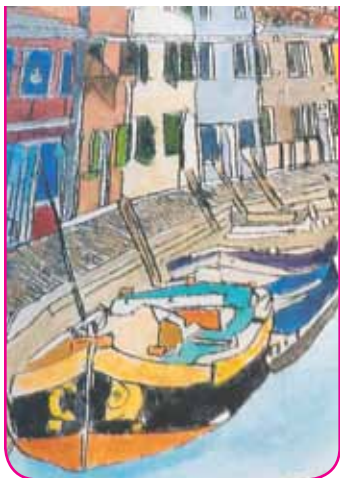


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Making and selling one-of-a-kind pieces



Charles Todd's woodworking led him to open a shop where he sells his own work, and pieces by other craftspeople and artists in ceramic, wood and fiber arts, among others.

By Constance Garcia-Barrio

The stunning desk that could have come from Downton Abbey charmed me. I nearly swooned at the sight of a red maple dining table, spare and magnificent. The vast workroom's earthy scent of oak, cherry, pine, sycamore and mahogany, was more intoxicating than any Parisian perfume could be.

One enters 'Tis a Gift, 7054 Germantown Ave., at the risk of falling head over heels for the handcrafted art of woodworkers, printmakers, ceramists and other artists.

Charles Todd, 67, has dedicated a lifetime to shaping wood into beautiful, custom-built furniture and inlaid marquetry panels that decorate the furniture, or stand alone, as wall art. His Mount

Airy shop and gallery features both his work and that of other local artists.

"I've always liked to make things," said Todd, who was raised on a farm in southern Illinois. "My dad always had a project on Saturdays. We repaired roads and built fences. Most farmers are pretty good carpenters. You can't call in someone every time something breaks."

Todd met his wife of 46 years at Washington University in St. Louis. The family moved to Philadelphia so that his wife could teach history at the University of Pennsylvania.

Among those whose work is displayed in 'Tis a Gift's gallery is wood carver Katharan Siegel, 70, whose work has been exhibited at the Woodmere Art Museum and the Smithsonian's Renwick Gallery.

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Celebrate Arts & Aging

Exhibits of senior art, receptions, discounts

By Marcia Z. Siegal

Philadelphia Corporation for Aging (PCA) presents a visual feast this month with five displays of senior artwork on exhibit for the 14th annual "Celebrate Arts and Aging." Showcasing older adults' talent and creativity, the works span a range of media – paintings, drawings, ceramics, jewelry, fabric art, mixed media and photography. Participants run the gamut too, from those new to art to longtime amateur and professional artists.

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"Summer Strawberries," a watercolor by Ellen Baer, is the signature artwork for Philadelphia Corporation for Aging's 14th annual "Celebrate Arts and Aging" festivities.

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Health Brief

Good habits and regular checkups can still protect your skin — and your life

As the sunny days of summer come our way, and thoughts turn to beaches, boating, bike rides and other outdoor pursuits, be sure your plans include using sunblock and taking other preventive measures to protect your skin.

According to the Skin Cancer Foundation, skin cancer is the most common cancer in the United States; one in five Americans will develop it during their lifetime. In 2016, it is estimated that 144,860 new cases of melanoma, the most deadly form of skin cancer, will be diagnosed in the United States. And while fair-skinned people are at the greatest risk, anyone can develop skin cancer.

The best defense against skin cancer is a two-pronged approach: prevention and detection.

Facts to know

According to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, the SPF, or Sun Protection Factor, of a sunblock, is not a measure of how much time you can spend in the sun without getting burned. Rather, it indicates the intensity of the solar energy which would result in a sunburn; and this varies by time of day, location and the weather conditions. For example, an hour of sun exposure at 9 a.m. may produce the same amount of exposure as 15 minutes at 1 p.m. Exposure is less on a cloudy day, but greater in a location which is highly reflective, for instance on a beach or on a boat.

The eyelids are among the most common locations for non-melanoma skin cancers; this can lead to serious complications, including blindness, if not caught in time. So even if the glare doesn't bother you, it's important to protect your eyelids by using sunblock and wearing sunglasses that wrap around your face and that block UV rays.

You are not fully protected from the sun's rays in the car, even if you don't hang your arm out the window. Glass generally blocks only UVB rays, and al-

though car windshields are treated to partially filter out UVA, the side and rear windows and the sunroof are not.

The Skin Cancer Foundation offers these tips for prevention:

- Seek the shade, especially between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- Avoid tanning and UV tanning beds.
- Cover up with clothing, including a broad-brimmed hat and UV-blocking sunglasses.
- Use a broad spectrum (UVA/UVB) sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher every day. For extended outdoor activity, use a water-resistant, broad spectrum (UVA/UVB) sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher.
- Apply sunscreen to your entire body 30 minutes before going outside. Re-apply every two hours or immediately after swimming or excessive sweating.
- Keep newborns out of the sun. Sunscreens should be used on babies over the age of six months.

Spotting problems

Skin cancer can present in a wide variety of ways. If you notice something that is not healing, or looks unusual, even if it does not match the standard descriptions below, it is best to have a doctor check it. The Skin Cancer Foundation recommends monthly self-examination and an annual checkup with a doctor. Following are guidelines provided by the Skin Cancer Foundation regarding what to look for when doing a self-examination:

- A skin growth that increases in size and appears pearly, translucent, tan, brown, black or multicolored
- A mole, birthmark, beauty mark or any brown spot that changes color; increases in size or thickness; changes in texture; is irregular in outline; or is bigger than 6mm or 1/4", the size of a pencil eraser
- A spot or sore that continues to itch, hurt, crust, scab, erode or bleed
- An open sore that does not heal within three weeks

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Celebrate Arts & Aging

Late-blooming author now has 13 books

By Sally Friedman

The first thing Alice Wootson remembers writing was a poem in the fifth grade. "I loved language – we had to study Latin in those days – and I also loved reading," she says.

as a major crime."

But the 1950s were not an idyllic time for Wootson, even in tiny Rankin. "There were no black majorettes or cheerleaders in our high school back in 1955. The excuse was that there were not enough uniforms to go around," she says. Yes, that stung; and yes, she felt resentment. She recognized injustice when she saw it. She still does.

Her life path led to her first job as a nurse's aide, then to college at Cheyney University and to a teaching degree. In 1960, she married her husband, Isaiah; they settled in the Philadelphia area and had three sons. Tragically, they lost their middle son to leukemia.

Like so many women, Wootson became an expert juggler, balancing family life and teaching elementary school children. She loved fourth and fifth graders who would pose amazingly intriguing questions about the world. And after a total of 31 years of teaching, she heard profound ones she delights in remembering. "Wouldn't life be better if money didn't exist?" one lad asked her. His insight took her breath away.

Wootson also sat on the school board in Sharon Hill, where she lived, and didn't mind at all being called a "rabble-rouser" because her causes were issues like guard rails and traffic lights to protect children.

Now a retired teacher, Wootson is a recognized writer and member of the Author's Guild, who serves on the board of the Philadelphia's Writers Conference, and has broken a barrier recently as the only black writer to be published by the Prism Book Group.

"Writing gets into the blood and the marrow," she says.

Case in point: "Sometimes, I try to walk away from a writing project, but a character starts calling me back. I know it sounds weird, but that's what happens," the writer insists. "And if I promised that character that I'll pick up where I left off, I keep that promise. It's the least I can do!"

Sally Friedman can be reached at pinegander@aol.com

Photo by Paola Nogueiras



Alice Wootson's published works include both poetry and romance novels.

Now 78, she has won prizes for her poetry from the Pennsylvania Poetry Society. She also is part of the wryly-named Mad Poets Society. She has also written 13 published novels, with four more not yet published. Inspiration can come from news stories, snippets of publicized scandals and feuds, or her own imagination. Her "Escape to Love," for example, was inspired by the story of reputed Philadelphia mobster, Joey Merlino. Another sprang to life on the notion of being misidentified as someone and wrongly placed on the Homeland Security risk list.

Wootson grew up in a tiny town outside of Pittsburgh. Rankin, Pa. was just one mile long and six streets wide. Life was contained; snug; and, at least most of the time, predictable. Her father, a widower, worked in a steel mill, and Alice was the oldest of seven children.

"It was such an innocent, simple time. We went to the movies on Saturdays and church on Sundays," this prolific poet/writer remembers.

There were 53 students in Wootson's high school graduating class; and all these years later, she insists that she can't remember any one of them who ever got in serious trouble. "Cutting school was regarded

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Celebrate Arts & Aging

Women of many backgrounds, cultures and beliefs find common ground in music

Photo courtesy of Anna Crusis Women's Choir



Members of the Anna Crusis Women's Choir perform a wide range of music, from many different ethnic and cultural traditions

By Constance Garcia-Barrio

Music may have charms to soothe a savage beast, as a 17th century English playwright once wrote. Miriam Davidson, director of Anna Crusis Women's Choir, would add that it can also open hearts and minds. Anna Crusis, which celebrated its 40th anniversary last year, is known for regaling audiences with spirited melodies and thoughtful messages. "We don't hit audiences over the head," said Davidson, 60, of Northwest Philadelphia. "We're pretty grassroots. We have something for everyone."

Anna Crusis, which takes its name from the term for an upbeat entrance to a musical phrase, grew from founder Catherine Roma's desire to carve out a place for women in the 1976 Bicentennial celebration. "Catherine wanted to present a program that embodied women's contributions to America's past," Davidson said, "something that would take them from the shadows to center stage. Catherine was a Quaker, and her passion for social justice wove through her work."

Singing sanctuary

Anna Crusis quickly gained momentum. "Catherine unearthed music by women composers and pulled them out of obscurity," Davidson said. Something else happened too. The choir became a haven of safety and connection for women of dif-

ferent races, religions, social classes and generations. Members range in age from 20s to well into their 70s. Anna Crusis, which includes gay and straight women, is a charter member of the Gay and Lesbian Association of Choruses (GALA), the world's only association devoted to the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) choral movement.

The choir is inclusive in another way. Its repertoire represents women from Eastern Europe, Africa and other parts of the world. "Sometimes that means learning other languages, but it's good to mix it up," Davidson said.

Chance first led Davidson to Anna Crusis. "Some friends of mine knew that more voices were needed to give the chorus a richer sound, and they persuaded me to attend a rehearsal," said Davidson. It was a natural fit. Davidson, originally from Long Island, had grown up steeped in music. Her father was a cantor and a composer of Jewish liturgical music, and her mother was a pianist, singer and music teacher.

Hooked by the rehearsal, Davidson sang with Anna Crusis for two years. She took a hiatus and teamed up with a friend to form a two-woman traveling ensemble. "We toured the country for 15 years," said Davidson, who plays the accordion, guitar, banjo, piano and drums. "I blossomed as a musician during that time, and I learned how to plan a tour, choose venues and other skills

that I use every day with Anna Crusis."

Under Davidson's direction since 2012, the choir has grown from 30 to 60 members. "We are always looking for new singers as well as maintaining a good balance of returning and new

members," Davidson said. She's considering adding visuals during some concerts. "When we performed at International House at Penn last year, short films created by one of our singers and images from local artists were projected in the background while we sang," she said. "It went well."

The visual dimension may become part of the choir's program, but the aim of Anna Crusis remains the same. "If the audience leaves educated, empowered and inspired, we've done our job," Davidson said.

Anna Crusis will hold auditions in August. The choir's next concert is Friday, June 3 and Saturday, June 4, 7:30 p.m., at Trinity Center for Urban Life, 22nd and Spruce Streets. Tickets can be purchased online. For more information about the choir, go to www.annacrusis.org or call 267-825-SING (7464).

Constance Garcia-Barrio is a freelance writer and author of a novel based on African-American history in Philadelphia.

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Celebrate Arts & Aging

Collaboration brings seniors, young artists together in jewelry-making classes

Photo by Alicia M. Colombo



Allen Dorsey, member of Juniata Park Older Adult Center, receives guidance on wire-wrapping a stone necklace from Moore College of Art & Design student Nicholi Matheny.

By Alicia M. Colombo

This spring, more than two dozen seniors travelled from all over the city, some as far away as the Northeast, for weekly jewelry-making classes at South Philadel-

phia Older Adult Center. Students from Moore College of Art & Design brought their skills and supplies to teach the seniors a variety of techniques, including wire-wrapping and beadwork.

Elaine Zeaman, age 76, was inspired

to tackle jewelry-making for the first time. "I thought it would be something new and different," she said. "We started off easy – stringing beads on wire for a bracelet. Then, we moved on to more difficult metal work. It's challenging, but I'm enjoying it," said Zeaman.

Zeaman is a member of Northeast Older Adult Center, one of the six City of Philadelphia Parks & Recreation Senior Centers which collaborated with Moore to present this, and other classes, over the past year.

"This semester's curriculum is very diverse and open-ended enough so that both the novice and expert jewelry maker will be trying something for the first time," said Amanda Newman-Godfrey, assistant professor of Art Education at Moore College of Art & Design, who oversees the class.

"When choosing the mediums and art forms for the class, I sit down with folks from Philadelphia Corporation for Aging (PCA) and Philadelphia Parks & Recreation to discuss the skills that seniors are interested in acquiring and what courses may not be available at all of the centers," Newman-Godfrey said. "The students design the activity stations for the course based on their own interests and skill set."

Jewelry-making stations included letter and beaded bracelets; recycled material jewelry, such as cuff bracelets and pins; text-based jewelry made of woven, rolled newspaper strips; and wire-wrapping stones for necklaces and rings.

"The students are there to help you create," said Sylvia Bey, a member of both Juniata Park Older Adult Center and Philadelphia Senior Center – Avenue of The Arts. "They're more engaged in the creative process and less concerned about mechanics or specific steps. You get one-on-one instruction, which you don't usually get at a senior center art class," said Bey.

Participants ranged from amateur to experienced artisans, like 75-year-old Allen Dorsey. "I get semiprecious stones and other natural materials, like wood, bone and amethyst, from overseas," said Dorsey, a member of the Juniata Park Older Adult Center. "I took this class because I wanted to see what I could do with these materials. I'm always looking for new ideas. I met a

vendor from India who piqued my interest. I was able to buy some of his wares to set myself up. I would like to blend the items that I acquired in class with some of my own. I did sell some things when I was actively creating, and would like to get back into it," he said.

Mutual benefit

"At first, I was concerned how my students would react to this generation, which is two generations in age away from them," said Newman-Godfrey. "Some of my students are freshman. They haven't had experience teaching. At first, the students were nervous. But after the first session, the nerves went away. The students couldn't believe how excited the seniors were to learn something new. They thought the seniors would be tough on them because they're so young and think that they didn't have anything to teach them. The students and teachers are both learners, so it levels the playing field. They absolutely adore the seniors," she said.

The art classes were held in the late afternoon so the seniors wouldn't miss out on what's going on at their own centers earlier in the day. "This program is an extension of some of the things that each of the centers are doing," said Barbara Gillette, acting director of Older Adult Services for Philadelphia Parks & Recreation. "For example, West Oak Lane Senior Center is really strong in jewelry making," she said.

This is the third consecutive semester of art classes provided through the collaboration between Moore and the city's senior centers under the umbrella of "Engaging Students in Community Arts." The first course was digital photography and bookmaking, offered last spring at South Philadelphia Older Adult Center. In the fall, three-dimensional sculpture classes were held at Juniata Park Older Adult Center. Planning for additional courses is already underway. For information, call Barbara Gillette at 215-685-2715.

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Companions who can speak their language provide essential connections

By Marcia Z. Siegal

Nilda Oppenheimer's desire to volunteer grew out of her own experience of vulnerability. Three years ago, Oppenheimer experienced hairline fractures on both ankles and required surgery. When she came home, she needed help until she was fully recovered and able to do things for herself. Upon recovery, while looking for a way to help others in her age group, she discovered the Senior Companion Program (SCP), which pairs adults age 55 and older with homebound, isolated elders to provide a social connection and help with household tasks.

Now Oppenheimer, 71, dedicates four hours a day, four days a week, to visiting Pedro Alvarez,* a homebound elderly man, providing help with small tasks and companionship. Alvarez and Oppenheimer have something impor-



Photo by Paola Nogueres

Senior Companions like Melida Blackwell make friendly visits and help with light meal preparation and other small tasks

tant besides age in common – both are natives of Puerto Rico, and both speak Spanish. SCP administrators say bilingual companions like Oppenheimer are much needed, to serve non-English-speaking seniors like Alvarez.

The Senior Companion Program is administered by Philadelphia Corporation for Aging (PCA). Duties typically include conversation and reading; light meal preparation; accompaniment to medical appointments; errands and light shopping; and respite for caregivers. Senior Companions receive a stipend and other benefits.

Oppenheimer and Alvarez were matched by North City Congress (NCC), a multi-service organization serving North and North Central Philadelphia, which has a large Latino population. Alvarez is served by PCA's In-Home Support Program (IHSP), which NCC manages in that part of the city.

On Oppenheimer's first visit, Alvarez, excited that she was coming, had dressed formally in a suit to greet her. "You don't have to do this for me," she told him. "I am coming to help you."

Oppenheimer and Alvarez enjoy watching Spanish-language television shows and playing games – Parcheesi is a favorite. She helps run errands for him, and lately, he's asked her to teach him some English. He receives home-delivered meals, and she sets the table and heats the meals as needed. While he is reluctant to venture out of the house due to his heart condition, she encourages him to take short walks with her in the fresh air.

"I love to help people, especially older people," Oppenheimer says.

PCA matched Melida Blackwell, 82, with Maria Lopez,* an elderly homebound Puerto Rican immigrant who speaks no English and who receives PCA long-term care services. Blackwell visited with Lopez for six years. This winter, Lopez became too ill to continue with the program. Blackwell, who is currently

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Celebrate Arts & Aging

Crafting leather helps sustain her spirit

By Constance Garcia-Barrio

Shimmering semi-precious stones inlaid in handmade handbags have become the signature of master leather-crafter Arleen Olshan. "I use stones from around the world, including some you may seldom see," said Olshan, 71, of Mt. Airy.

Olshan says fate must have guided her, more than 50 years ago, to a store that sold hand-crafted goods. "At 17, with a high school diploma, I had just moved to New York to study drawing at the Art Students' League," she said. "I wanted a pair of sandals, but I found that I didn't have enough money. The owner and I talked, and he agreed to teach me how to make sandals."

Olshan proved so adept that she began working in the store. "I learned how to buy, cut and sew leather," she said. In time, she returned to Philadelphia with a trade and the necessary tools. She held down various jobs during the day; and at night, she made leather goods and studied painting. "I taught English as a second language, prepped people for the GED exam, tutored kids, co-owned a bookstore named Giovanni's Room, and helped make holiday displays at Wanamaker's," she said. "I also became an addictions counselor at Jefferson University Hospital. Whatever else I did, crafting leather sustained my spirit."

Twist of fate

Fate then dealt Olshan a wild card. One day, she was running to catch a bus to deliver leather items to Center City boutiques when she was hit by a car. With her back injured, she couldn't continue her craft. "Pain would shoot up my neck every time I hammered leather."

A friend referred her to the Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation where an empathetic counselor helped her get a scholarship to the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. "What a gift



Photo by Linda Slodki

Arleen Olshan's leather work features inlaid semi-precious stones

that was! I was 29 when I started there, and I got straight As."

Olshan gradually resumed working with leather while in art school, and she began inlaying rose quartz, agate, turquoise and other semi-precious stones in her belts, handbags and leather jewelry boxes. "Each stone is different, so each item is different. It's like carrying around a unique part of the earth," said Olshan, who's become a fixture at the Philadelphia Folk Festival, feminist gatherings and other venues.

Eager for community, she launched the Mt. Airy Art Garage (MAAG), 11 W. Mt. Airy Ave., seven years ago. It provides studio and exhibition space for 150 artists, many of them 60 or older. MAAG also hosts arts events and brings together such unlikely collaborators as autistic children from the Houston School and fragile seniors. Together, they made a stunning mural. "MAAG always needs volunteers and welcomes new members," Olshan said. "We would like art to touch more and more people." To learn more about MAAG, go to www.mtairyartgarage.org or call 267-240-3302.

Constance Garcia-Barrio is a freelance writer and author of a novel based on African-American history in Philadelphia.

The hope chest: Memories, dreams

By Dorothy Stanaitis

My mother's hope chest always stood at the foot of her bed. The beautiful dark mahogany wood was protected by a hand-embroidered runner draped over it.

Inside of the hope chest were mother's treasures. A hand-crocheted bedspread made by her own mother as a wedding gift, considered too fine for year-round use, was put on bed the week before Thanksgiving and taken off the week after Valentine's Day. The rest of the year, it lay folded along with the Madeira christening dresses of mother's five children. Several envelopes were kept inside the chest also. They contained locks of hair from each child's first haircut.

Six photo albums had pride of place in the hope chest. There was an album recording the courtship of mom and dad – trips to Atlantic City; Washington, D.C.; and picnic spots throughout the Delaware Valley area. It ended with the birth of their first child. After that, an album was devoted to each of us, filled with pictures and souvenirs of our lives. They were often taken out to be admired and to have the latest black and white photos with deckled edges added. Black photo corners were pasted on the black pages to hold the pictures, and white ink notations of dates and places were written under each photo.

Each album contained the same sort of pictures – baby days, birthdays, trips to the zoo, first day at school, seashore shots and class photos. They also contained a yearly Easter photo of five children standing in a stairstep row. Girls were decked out in frilly dresses that Mother sewed for them, Easter bonnets, white gloves, and small patent leather purses to match their new Mary Jane shoes. The boys were dressed like little men in smart suits, starched shirts, bow ties and small Stetson hats.

When I graduated from high school,

I learned that hope chests had a far more important role than holding family photo albums and souvenirs. Several of the girls in my class received hope chests as graduation gifts from their parents, and immediately set out to fill them.

The "hope" was that the girls would find good husbands and set up house-keeping with the contents that had been lovingly gathered, prepared and stored in the chest. There was a flurry of embroidery to decorate pillow cases and tea towels. Girls learned to crochet so that their hope chests could contain lots of doilies to protect the furniture they hoped one day to own. Aunts and cousins also helped in the effort, giving lovely handmade items as birthday and holiday gifts.

When several of the girls from my class got positions at Penn Mutual Insurance Company, down behind the Independence Hall, they would gather after work on payday to go shopping downtown. Blouses, jewelry and sweaters were often purchases, but the main point of the trip was to see what new, small household items were on sale at Woolworth's.

By then, all of the girls had hope chests of their own, and there was a friendly competition to see whose would overflow first.

Today, my old hope chest rests in a guest bedroom holding spare blankets and pillows. But as I look around the house, I can see some of those long-ago cherished household items that the hope chest used to contain. The red paint that once adorned the handles of the flour sifter and rolling pin has been worn away with use. Now, arranged on an old embroidered tea towel, they form a little vignette to remind me and my friends of the days when those items were coveted hope chest treasures.

Dorothy Stanaitis is a retired librarian and a freelance writer.

Enjoy the arts with special senior discounts in May

People's Light

\$15 Tickets "A Single Shard" (Relaxed Performance)
 May 22, 2 p.m.
 Relaxed performances are specially adjusted sensory-friendly shows.
 Reg. Price: vary. Disc. Price: \$15.
 Redeem online, in person or by phone.
 Use code: RELAX15
 38 Conestoga Rd., Malvern
www.peopleslight.org
 610-644-3500

Act II Playhouse

20% Off "Kiss Me, Kate"
 May 17 - June 19
 Reg. Price: vary.
 Redeem online, in person or by phone.
 Use code: PCA20
 56 E. Butler Ave., Ambler
www.act2.org
 215-654-0200

Pennsylvania Ballet

25% Off "A Program of Firsts"
 May 13, 7:30 p.m.; May 14, 2 & 8 p.m.
 Excludes parquet and balcony boxes.
 Reg. Price: vary.
 Redeem online, in person or by phone.
 Use code: PCA25
 Academy of Music, 240 S. Broad St.
www.paballet.org
 215-893-1999

People's Light

50% Off "A Single Shard"
 May 4, 2 p.m.; May 6, 8 p.m.; May 11, 7:30 p.m.; May 17, 7:30 p.m.; May 18, 2 & 7:30 p.m.; May 20, 8 p.m.; May 24, 7:30 p.m.; May 27, 8 p.m.
 Reg. Price: vary.
 Redeem online, in person or by phone.
 Use code: PCA
 39 Conestoga Rd., Malvern
www.peopleslight.org
 610-644-3500

Art Sanctuary

20% Off Celebration of Black Arts Festival - Legacy Award Concert
 May 20, 7 p.m.
 Reg. Price: \$25. Disc. Price: \$20.
 Redeem online.
 New Freedom Theater
 1346 N. Broad St.
www.artsanctuary.org
 215-232-4485

The Philadelphia Orchestra

Up to 30% Off Stephane Deneve Conducts Williams
 May 5 & 7, 8 p.m.; May 6, 2 p.m.
 Programs and ticket availability are subject to change. Prices subject to change.
 Additional \$6.50 processing fee per ticket. Reg. Price: \$32-\$68. Disc. Price: \$36-\$84.
 Redeem online. Use code: CORPSAVE.
 Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts
 300 S. Broad St.
www.philorch.org
 215-893-1999

Philadelphia Chamber Music Society

More than 60% Off "Musicians from Marlboro III"
 May 5, 8 p.m.
 Reg. Price: \$28. Disc. Price: \$10.
 Redeem online. Use code: PCAdeal
 Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts
 300 S. Broad St.
www.pcmsconcerts.org
 215-569-8080



Photo by Linda L. Riley

The Philly POPS

20% Off "Cirque Goes to the Movies"
 May 20, 8 p.m.; May 21 & 22, 3 p.m.
 Based on availability; may not be combined with other offers.
 Ticket fees apply. Reg. Price: vary.
 Redeem online, in person or by phone.
 Use code: SENIORITY
 Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts
 300 S. Broad St.
www.phillypops.com
 215-875-8004

Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts

33% Off General Admission
 Must be age 60+. Redeem in person.
 Reg. Price: \$15.
 Disc. Price: \$10.
 118-128 N. Broad St.
www.pafa.org
 215-972-7600

Philadelphia Theatre Company

More than 70% Off Senior RUSH at PTC!
 Any Wednesday 1 p.m. performance
 Sales start at noon. No phone or online sales. Max 2 tickets per person.
 Based on availability.
 Reg. Price: \$46. Disc. Price: \$10.
 Redeem in person.
 Suzanne Roberts Theatre
 480 S. Broad St.
www.philadelphiatheatrecompany.org
 215-985-0420

Philly Magic Gardens

\$2 Off General Admission
 Not valid during special programs or events. Check website for more information.
 Reg. Price: \$8. Disc. Price: \$6.
 Redeem in person.
 1020 South St.
www.phillymagicgardens.com
 215-733-0390

Walnut Street Theatre

\$49 Tickets "Sister Act, The Musical!"
 May 17 - 31
 Subject to availability. Valid for ages 65+. Not valid on previous purchases.
 May not be combined with other offers.
 No refunds or exchanges. Price includes facility fee.
 Reg. Price: vary. Disc. Price: \$49.
 Redeem online, in person or by phone.
 Use code: ARTAGE
 825 Walnut St.
www.walnutstreettheatre.org
 215-574-3550

1807 & Friends

25% Off Great Chamber Music Concert
 May 9, 7:30 p.m.
 Reg. Price: \$18. Disc. Price: \$13.
 Redeem in person or by phone.
 Academy of Vocal Arts, 1920 Spruce St.
 Wheelchair access on Delancey St.
www.1807friends.org
 215-438-4027

Anne-Marie Mulgrew and Dancers Company

50% Off 30th Anniversary Concert
 June 9 & 10, 7:30 p.m.; June 11, 2 p.m.
 Reg. Price: \$20. Disc. Price: \$10.
 Redeem in person or by phone.
 Christ Church Neighborhood House Theater, 20 N. American St.
www.annemariemulgrewdancersco.org
 215-462-7720

Clip these coupons
to receive discount.

Celebrate
Arts & Aging!



"En route" by Ronald Lee Washington will be on exhibit at City Hall.

Senior art exhibits and free receptions

Five art exhibits are on display this month at the following venues. Artists' receptions, which are free and open to the public, will be held at four of the exhibit sites.

- **Art in City Hall**, 1401 JFK Blvd. (Gallery hours: weekdays, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.) **Wednesday, May 4, 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.**
- **The Gershman Y**, 401 S. Broad St. (Gallery hours: Monday through Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sunday, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.) **Thursday, May 12, 4 to 6 p.m.**
- **West Philadelphia Senior Community Center**, 1016-26 N. 41st St. (41st and Poplar Sts.) (Gallery hours: Monday through Friday, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.) **Wednesday, May 18, 4 to 6 p.m.**

- **Center on the Hill ... the place for active adults**, 8855 Germantown Ave. (adjacent to the Presbyterian Church of Chestnut Hill) (Gallery hours: weekdays, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sundays, 9 a.m. to noon.) **Tuesday, May 24, 4 to 6 p.m.**
- **Philadelphia Senior Center – Avenue of the Arts**, 509 S. Broad St. (Gallery hours: weekdays, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.)

Celebrate Arts and Aging is sponsored by Always Best Care Senior Services, Health Partners Plans, JEVS at Home and PECO.

Celebrate the arts all year round, with free and discounted admissions

First Fridays at Spring Garden Center

First Friday of the month

Free monthly events showcase works by some of Philadelphia's finest visual artists, and feature a variety of film screenings, literary readings and exhibits of paintings, photographs and sculptures.

Spring Garden Senior Center

1221 Spring Garden St.

springgardencenter.blogspot.com

215-787-2944

First Sundays at the Barnes Foundation

First Sunday of the month

Free admission to this internationally-renowned collection of Impressionist, post-Impressionist, African and Native American art.

The Barnes Foundation

2025 Benjamin Franklin Parkway

www.barnesfoundation.org

215-278-7000

Pay-What-You-Wish

at the Philadelphia Museum of Art

First Sunday of the month, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

& every Wednesday, 5-8:45 p.m.

Explore this vast collection of art, architecture, tools, toys, film and furniture that covers the full range of visual and

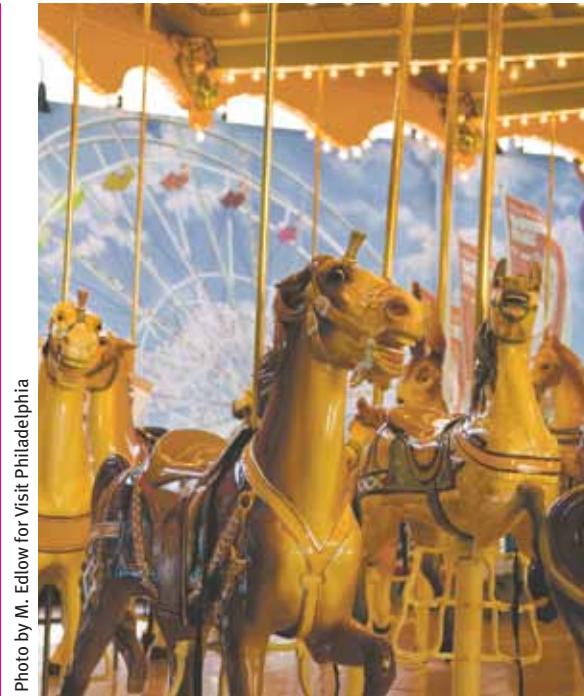


Photo by M. Edlow for Visit Philadelphia

decorative arts and every corner of the globe, from ancient to contemporary times.

Philadelphia Museum of Art
2600 Benjamin Franklin Parkway
www.philamuseum.org
215-763-8100

Pay-What-You-Wish at the National Museum of American Jewish History

Wednesday night after 5 p.m.

Discover the many facets of the American Jewish experience, and connect with the heritage of the Jewish people through events and exhibitions that explore the lives of both ordinary and extraordinary people.

National Museum of American Jewish History
101 South Independence Mall East

www.nmajh.org

215-923-3811

40th Street Summer Series

June 18, July 23, August 20, September 17

Free monthly outdoor concerts in University City.

40th and Walnut Sts.,
behind the Walnut Street Library
www.universitycity.org
215-243-0555

First Wednesdays at Please Touch Museum

First Wednesday of the month, 4-7 p.m.

Reduced \$2 admission first Wednesday of the month.

Please Touch Museum
Memorial Hall, Fairmount Park,
4231 Avenue of the Republic
www.pleasetouchmuseum.org

215-581-3181

Take the grandchildren for a spin on a 1908 carousel, and come along as they have hands-on fun with pint-sized cars and sailboats, or take a magical trip down the rabbit hole to Wonderland.

The Old City Experience: First Fridays

First Friday of the month, 5-9 p.m.

Cutting-edge paintings, sculpture, ceramics, photography and fiber art on display at these monthly open house events at galleries in Philadelphia's arts district.

230 Vine St. and locations throughout Old City
www.oldcityarts.org
215-625-9200

Sunday

Chestnut Hill Home & Garden Festival. Handmade furniture, quilts, jewelry, art & collectibles. 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Germantown Ave., Rex to Willow Grove Ave. 215-247-6696.

PCA Presents: 2016 Celebrate Arts & Aging. Exhibits of art by seniors at: City Hall, Center on the Hill, Gershman Y, PSC – Avenue of the Arts & West Phila. Senior Community Center. See page 11. www.pcaCares.org/seniorart (Through May 31)

8**Mother's Day**

"A Single Shard." Award-winning play with powerful & uplifting coming-of-age story about an orphan who strives to find a better life. 8 p.m. People's Light. 610-644-3500. (Through May 29 at various dates & times.) \$ *Coupon for select dates on pg. 10.*

15

Old City Sidewalk Sale & Stroll. Shop, dine & explore. Acoustic entertainment. 3rd & Arch Sts. 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. 215-592-7929. (May 16)

Philadelphia Chamber Music Society Presents: Clarosa Quartet. Works by Beethoven, Krzywicki & Brahms. 3 p.m. American Philosophical Society. 215-569-8080. \$

22

The Philly Pops Present: "Cirque Goes to the Movies." Acrobats, jugglers & aerial flyers perform to the music of movie classics, including "Gone with the Wind," "Chariots of Fire," "Raiders of the Lost Ark" and "The Magnificent Seven." 3 p.m. Kimmel Center, Verizon Hall. 215-893-1999. \$ *Coupon on pg. 10.*

29

Family-Friendly Art Programs. Spectacular Sculptures tour starts at 11 a.m. Art Cart includes drop-in games, sketch from the masterpieces & hands-on activities, 12-3 p.m. Phila. Museum of Art. 215-763-8100. \$

Monday

Arts & Music Classes: Drama Club & Sewing (Beginners), 10 a.m.; Choir, 11 a.m.; Flower Arrangement, 1 p.m.; Praise Dance (\$), 2 p.m. Star Harbor Senior Center. 215-727-0100. (Tuesdays)

Sing-Along. 9:30 a.m. Center in the Park. Register: 215-848-7722. (Mondays)

9

Jazz Residency Artist: Saxophonist Korey Riker. Music inspired by drum & bass genre of EDM. 8 p.m. SEI Innovation Studio, The Kimmel Center. RSVP: 215-893-1999.

Mother's Day Lunch. 11 a.m. St. Charles Senior Center. RSVP: 215-790-9760.

Philadelphia Chamber Music Society Concert. Works by Beethoven, Janacek, others. 8 p.m. American Philosophical Society. 215-569-8080. \$

Spiritual Journeys. 10 a.m. Peter Bressi NE Older Adult Center. 215-831-2926.

16

The Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia Presents: Mendelssohn, Brossé, Mozart with Violinist Lana Trovovsek. 7:30 p.m. Kimmel Center, Perelman Theatre. 215-893-1999. \$

23

Line Dancing. 12:45-2:30 p.m. Beginners: 2:30-3:30 p.m. Center in the Park. 215-848-7722. (Mondays) \$

Reminiscing About the Phillies. Former Phillies staff photographer Rosemary Rahn shares stories, memories & photos from her assignments, including spring training, All-Star games, the playoffs & World Series. 1 p.m. Center on the Hill. 215-247-4654.

30**Memorial Day**

Brewerytown Spring Festival. Food, drink, shopping, live music & festivities. Handmade art & crafts by local artisans. Girard Ave., 27th to 29th Sts. 215-232-4766. (Rain date: May 31)

Tuesday

Arts & Craft Classes. Photography, 10:30 a.m.; Ceramics, 12:15-2 p.m. (\$); Needlework, 1 p.m. Star Harbor Senior Center. 215-727-0100. (Tuesdays)

Photo & Video Club. 10-noon. Center in the Park. Register: 215-848-7722. (Tuesdays)

Spring Chorus Concert. 10 a.m. PSC – Avenue of the Arts. 215-546-5879.

10

Philadelphia Chamber Music Society Presents: Pianist Imogen Cooper. Works by Shcumann, Liszt & Wagner. 8 p.m. Kimmel Center. 215-569-8080. \$

17

Dessert with a Docent. Slide presentation on "International Pop" exhibit at Phila. Museum of Art. 1-2:30 p.m. Center on the Hill. Register: 215-247-4654. \$

Philadelphia Chamber Music Society Presents Opera by MET Lindemann & Juilliard Programs. Works by Brahms & Schumann. 8 p.m. Kimmel Center. 215-569-8080. \$

24

"All That Jazz & Then Some." 10:30 a.m. Register for lunch: 215-787-2944.

Celebrate Arts & Aging Reception. 4-6 p.m. Center on the Hill. 215-765-9000, ext. 5055.

Health Fair. Wellness information, fitness demos & resource tables. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Center in the Park. 215-848-7722.

31

Monthly Birthday Party. Cake, ice cream, lunch & live entertainment. 11:45 a.m. Peter Bressi NE Older Adult Center. 215-831-2926.

Zentangle. Relaxing, creative & meditative art form using patterns drawn on small paper tiles. 1-3 p.m. Center on the Hill. 215-247-4654. \$

Wednesday

Celebrate Arts & Aging Reception. 4:30-6:30 p.m. Art in City Hall, 5th Floor. 215-765-9000, ext. 5055.

Fashion Show. 1 p.m. Center in the Park. 215-848-7722. \$

Fitness Day. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. West Phila. Senior Center. 215-386-7302.

Rubber Stamping & Card Making Class. 2:30 p.m. Center in the Park. 215-848-7722. (May 18) \$

Senior Health Expo. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sugar House Casino. 215-698-8888.

11

Beginners Knitting Class. Includes materials & needles. 1-3 p.m. KleinLife: Northeast Phila. 215-698-7300. (Continues Wednesdays through June 15.) \$

Crochet Class (Advanced). 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Star Harbor Senior Center. 215-727-0100. (Wednesdays) \$

Jazz Bridge Neighborhood Concert: Vocalist Mary Ellen Desmond. 7:30-9 p.m. Lutheran Church of the Holy Communion. 610-745-3011. \$

18

Celebrate Arts & Aging Reception. 4-6 p.m. West Phila. Senior Community Center. 215-765-9000, ext. 5055.

City in a Park Book Talk. History of Fairmount Park. 5:30 p.m. Phila. History Museum. 215-685-4830. \$

Health Fair. 10 to noon. Star Harbor Senior Center. 215-727-0100.

Songsters 30th Anniv. Concert. 1 p.m. Center in the Park. 215-848-7722.

25

Dinner & Opera. Amici Opera Company presents Verdi's "La Forza Del Destino." Franco's High Note Café. RSVP (after 3 p.m.): 215-755-8903. \$

Thursday

Arts & Crafts Classes. Crochet (\$) & Sewing, 10 a.m.; Flower Making, 1 p.m.; Jewelry Making (\$), 2 p.m. Star Harbor Senior Center. 215-727-0100. (Thursdays)

Mother's Day Breakfast. Makeovers & photos. 8:30 a.m. St. Charles Senior Center. RSVP: 215-790-9760.

Poetry & Discussion Group. 10:45-noon. Center in the Park. 215-848-7722. (Thursdays)

12

Celebrate Arts & Aging Reception. 4-6 p.m. Gershman Y. 215-765-9000, ext. 5055.

Film Screening: "ECHO PARK." East Los Angeles neighborhood residents contend with life & challenges of their zip code. Presented by Reelblack & AR-RAY. 7 p.m. African-American Museum in Phila. 215-574-0380. \$

19

Great American Songs Sing-Along. Pianist Lynn Mather performs music by Ellington, Kern, Porter & Berlin. 2:30 p.m. Center on the Hill. 215-247-4654.

26

Centenarians Luncheon. Honors seniors age 100-plus. Music, giveaways & visit from Frank Sinatra impersonator. 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. KleinLife: Northeast Phila. Register: 215-698-7300. (Honorees & guest/free, others/\$)

Back to the '50s. Original musical production written & performed by Marconi Older Adult Program Theater Group. 12:30 p.m. 215-717-1971.

Friday

First Friday. Art exhibit of textile sculptures by Lynda Grace. 6 p.m. Spring Garden Senior Center. 215-787-2944.

Mother's Day Tribute. Bring photo of mom. Free gift. 10 a.m. St. Charles Senior Community Center. RSVP: 215-790-9760.

Painting & Doll Making Classes. Both start at 10 a.m. Star Harbor Senior Center. 215-727-011. (Fridays)

13

Art Exhibit & Sale. 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. St. Anne's Senior Center. 215-426-9799. (Through May 31)

Inside-Out Block Party. Music, line dancing, games, fashion show, veterans tribute. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. West Oak Lane Senior Center. 215-685-3511.

Older Americans Month Health Fair. Screenings, community resources, health & safety info. 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. St. Charles Senior Center. 215-790-9530.

20

2016 Celebration of Black Arts Legacy Awards. Honors outstanding contributors to Black literature, art & community: Robert Bogle & The Philadelphia Tribune, Deborah Willis, Bilal, & Bernice L. McFadden. Presented by Art Sanctuary. 7-9 p.m. New Freedom Theater. 215-232-4485. \$

27

The Philadelphia Theatre Company Presents: "Hillary and Clinton." Provocative story about gender, power & possibilities in an alternate universe. 8 p.m. Suzanne Roberts Theatre. 215-985-0420. (Through June 26 @ various dates & times.) \$

Saturday

South Street Festival. Food, artisans, live entertainment & family-friendly activities. 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. South St., Front to 8th St. & 2nd to Pine St. 215-413-3713.

Spring Art Star Craft Bazaar. Award-winning retail arts & crafts show. 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Great Plaza, Penn's Landing. 215-238-1557. (May 8)

14

2016 Art Exhibit & Sale. Work by older artists. 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. South. Phila. Older Adult Center. 215-685-1697.

Free at the Kimmel. PNC Grow Up Great: 11 a.m., Commonwealth Plaza. Organ demos & tour: 1 p.m., Verizon Hall. Jazz Residency Artists Pianist Kendrah Butler & Vocalist Shamika Byrd's: 8 p.m., SEI Innovation Studio. 215-893-1999.

21

Armed Forces Day

9th St. Italian Market Festival. Authentic Italian-American culture & food in South Philly. Live entertainment & family-friendly activities. 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. 215-278-2903. (May 22)

Celebration of Black Arts Literary & Arts Conference. Phila. authors & artists, workshops, films. Presented by Art Sanctuary. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The Church of the Advocate. 215-232-4485. \$

28

Amici Opera Company Presents: Verdi's "La Forza Del Destino." 4 p.m. Redeemer United Methodist Church. RSVP 215-224-0257. \$

Garden Railway Grand Opening. This year's theme is "Awaken the Senses." Activities include kids craft & free ice cream. 1-3 p.m. Morris Arboretum, Univ. of Pa. 215-247-5777. \$

May 2016

Older Americans Month

Milestones

Events that end with a \$ require an entrance fee or advance ticket purchase. Events that are free may request a donation or offer items for sale. Please call the number listed for information on pricing or other questions about an event.

Send your calendar items to:
Attn: Calendar Editor
PCA Communications Dept.
642 North Broad Street
Philadelphia, PA 19130-3409
Phone: 215-765-9000, ext. 5081
Fax: 215-765-9066
E-mail: acolombo@pcaphl.org

Celebrate Arts & Aging

PECO has dedicated nearly a century of support to the arts, music and creativity

By Marcia Z. Siegal

A 1920 play program from the Walnut Street Theatre lists the Philadelphia Electric Company (now PECO) among the production’s chief supporters. “It shows how far back our commitment to arts and culture goes,” said Romona Riscoe Benson, PECO corporate relations director.

The commitment has endured and expanded, to include support of activities ranging from Philadelphia Museum of Art exhibits to regional theater company productions to the PECO Multicultural Series at Penn’s Landing to Philadelphia Corporation for Aging’s (PCA’s) “Celebrate Arts and Aging” events. (See page 1.) In 2015, the company invested more than \$1 million in arts and culture in the five-county Philadelphia region. Some of its support is provided in conjunction with Exelon, its parent company.

Benson said that PECO’s support aims to showcase the variety of arts and cultural venues in the Greater Philadelphia region, which encompass a wide range of tastes and ages in visual arts, spoken and written word, film, dance, music, and theater. The company’s support makes arts and culture more accessible to a wider audience, including low-income communities.

PECO-sponsored Free First Sundays at the Barnes Foundation provide free admission, once a month, on a first-come, first-served basis to the museum’s unparalleled collection of art, which includes masterpieces by Renoir, VanGogh and Picasso; an extensive collection of African sculpture; and Native American ceramics and jewelry. “Because no matter what your age and your economic background, you should have the opportunity to participate in art and culture if you would like to do so,” Benson said. (See pages 10-



Photo courtesy of Scribe Video Center

A live performance was part of the fun when Street Movies! came to Las Parcelas Garden in Philadelphia’s Norris Square neighborhood for a PECO-sponsored event.

11 for information about this and other free or discounted arts events.)

In addition to purely philanthropic motives, she said, “it’s a good investment from a business perspective. Arts and culture generate more than \$1 billion a year in economic impact, so they’re also important to the economic development and vitality of our region,” Benson said.

Philadelphia’s rich ethnic diversity also inspires PECO’s philanthropy. Among others, the PECO Multicultural Series at Penn’s Landing (nine Sunday events, June through September) offers up a series of free outdoor festivals – Mexican, African, Hispanic, Indian, Caribbean, Irish and more – featuring musical performances and dancing, along with ethnic foods, arts and crafts, and other merchandise.

For the past 11 years, PECO has been the lead sponsor of PCA’s month-long Celebrate Arts and Aging festivities in May. All of the artists are invited to a recognition luncheon hosted by PECO, during which a slideshow plays, showcasing each of the artworks on display in venues throughout the city. “It’s joyful to see so many participants come together from across the city,” Benson said of the luncheon. “We see participants’ faces light

up when their work is shown for everybody in the room to see and listen to them share stories about their art. It’s a nice day for us. We love the fact that we are able to enjoy this event with the seniors,” she said.

Contact Marcia Z. Siegal at msiegal@pcaphl.org

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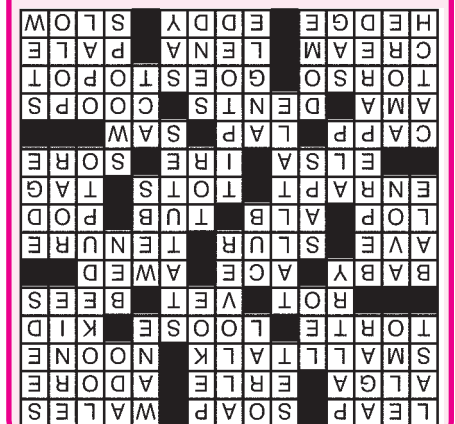
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Solutions to the Milestones Crosswords puzzle

(see page 23)



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In Season

Colorful vegetables combine to make a simple but delicious “Spring Sauté”

A colorful bounty of Pennsylvania spring vegetables will be in season this month. Among them are the asparagus, onion, peas and radishes used in this easy and healthy recipe. These sautéed vegetables will pair well with any meat as a side dish. It could also be the base for a stir-fry with grilled turkey sausage, beef tips or chicken strips.

Spring Vegetable Sauté (4 servings)

Ingredients:

- 1 tsp. olive oil
- 1/2 cup sweet onion, sliced
- 1 garlic clove, finely chopped
- 3 new potatoes (tiny), quartered
- 3/4 cup carrot, sliced
- 3/4 cup asparagus pieces
- 3/4 cup sugar snap peas or green beans

- 1/2 cup radishes, quartered
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1/4 tsp. black pepper
- 1/2 tsp. dill, dried

Directions:

Heat the oil in a skillet. Cook onion for 2 minutes, add garlic and cook another minute.

Stir in potatoes and carrots. Cover, turn the heat to low, and cook until almost tender, about 4 minutes.

If the vegetables start to brown, add 1-2 tbsp. of water.

Now, add the asparagus, peas, radishes, salt, pepper and dill. Cook, stirring often, until just tender – about 4 minutes more. Serve immediately.

Source: National Cancer Institute



Milestones file photo

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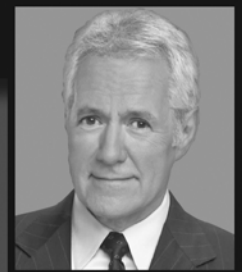
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Celebrate arts

• continued from page 1

This year's signature artwork, "Summer Strawberries," is a watercolor by 70-year-old Ellen Baer, who says it draws on childhood memories of visits to a family farm in Virginia where she and her cousins would often pick strawberries. The hat worn by the woman in the picture was inspired by straw hats worn by her older aunts at the farm. A retired Philadelphia public school teacher, Baer currently teaches two arts classes for older adult students at the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Temple University in Center City, where she says she "enjoys inspiring students to challenge their creativity and explore their own unique gifts."

The celebration is held in May each year to coincide with Older Americans Month. Exhibits showcase older adults' artistry, and the celebration also provides seniors with the chance to experience the arts through classes, workshops and performances, and by connecting to the area's many arts and cultural offerings.

Art all year round

Senior community centers offer prime opportunities for artistic growth and enjoyment during May and year-round. Participants can take a stained glass class; learn tap dance or salsa; try their hand at painting or drawing; or take a drama class and perform for their peers. They can also study photography and ceramics; learn filmmaking; and join in poetry discussions and writing workshops. Crafters can find others who are like-minded in sewing and needlework classes and groups. For music lovers, there are glee clubs and choruses; and piano, ukulele, violin and guitar lessons are available.

Check with the individual centers listed on page 21 to find out about arts activities or go to the PCA website, www.pcaCares.org/events-search to find classes and arts and cultural events.

Special discounts are available to seniors for a number of arts venues and performances for Celebrate Arts and Aging, among them: the Pennsylvania Ballet, the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts and the Philadelphia Orchestra. (See pages 10-11 for details about these and other discounts.)

"When we launched the celebration in 2003, 30 artists participated and artwork was shown at one site," said PCA President and CEO Holly Lange. "This year we have 175 submissions, and five different sites are exhibiting the artists' work. It's very gratifying to see how the celebration has taken hold, that older adults are being recognized for their wonderful creativity, and that more seniors are connecting with arts and cultural opportunities. We know that staying active and engaged is key to healthy aging. The seniors we celebrate continue to inspire us."



"Canal" by Lois Yampolsky

At 93, Edna Bessex is one of the oldest artists participating this year. Her acrylic artwork, "Billy's Gardenia," evidences her longtime love of landscape painting, which she learned in private lessons beginning in her 70s while she was still working as an administrative assistant. Recently, she continued her painting studies at Southwest Senior Center. Her advice to aspiring painters? "If you love it, like I do, just keep on painting. It may not look good at first, but keep doing it."

Professional artist Benjamin (Ben) Cohen, 93, has submitted art each year since Celebrate Arts and Aging began. His pastoral painting, "Lakeside," was the signature artwork for the 2012 celebration. This year, he submitted an oil painting which depicts a picturesque older building in Smithville, N.J. "My feeling is that art should be uplifting and thought-provoking. If I can make someone smile and bring joy, I would like to do that," Cohen says.

For more information about Celebrate Arts and Aging, go to www.pcaCares.org/seniorart.

Contact Marcia Z. Siegal at
msiegal@pcaphl.org

Gift

• continued from page 1

"Kathran's been carving wood for 40 or 50 years," Todd said. "She's something of a rarity, since woodcarving is a largely male occupation." Her whimsically carved wooden salad servers, cheese spreaders and other implements have brightly colored handles that curve and sprout like roots and vegetables.

Siegel's daughter, Cassandra Petruchyk, applies her artistic talents to creating striking illustrations of birds and animals she encounters at The Schuylkill Center's Wildlife Rehabilitation Clinic where she volunteers.

James McNabb makes cityscapes or city wheels, wooden skylines carved in a curved shape so that four of them together make a circle. "He gets orders from all over the world," Todd said. "In fact, he's received so many that he has enough work for the next 18 months."

A blend of ages and experience among the shop's artists amps up creativ-



Photo by Casey Henninger

Todd says the shop features artists of all ages.

ity, according to Todd. "The younger artists bring a special energy to the shop," he said.

While devoted to his craft, Todd, an avid reader, finds time to indulge in books, and to read Latin and Greek. "I took those languages in school, and I still like to dabble in them," said Todd, who also enjoys hiking and canoeing. Yet, his woodland treks return him to his roots and his artistry.

"I've always liked birds. In the fifth grade, I joined the Audubon Society. I would get a booklet about birds in the mail four or five times a year," said Todd, some of whose favorite works have inlaid designs of birds made with slivers of wood of different colors. "I realized the other day that with the marquetry of birds I've returned to my old liking."

For more information about 'Tis a Gift, visit www.tisagiftmairy.com or call 215-264-2062.

Constance Garcia-Barrio is a freelance writer and author of a novel based on African-American history in Philadelphia.

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A few of the participating sites are the Franklin Institute, (regular admission: \$19.95) the African American Museum in Philadelphia (regularly \$10 for seniors); Philadelphia History Museum (regularly \$8 for seniors); Barnes

Foundation (regularly \$20 weekdays, \$23 weekends for seniors); Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site (regularly \$12 for seniors) and Morris Arboretum (regularly \$15 for seniors).

The ACCESS admission discount is not valid on special exhibitions or features, or with any other offer or group rate.

Last year, more than 34,000 people visited museums and attractions for \$2 each through the ACCESS program, which is led by Art-Reach, and sponsored by the Dolfinger McMahon Foundation, Fels Printing, Henrietta Tower Wurts Memorial, Lindback Foundation and PECO.

For a complete list of participating sites, visit www.art-reach.org/programs/access-admission/museums or call 267-515-6720.



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Heavy	

Companions

• continued from page 7

in the process of being matched with a new consumer, says her past experience inspired a caring relationship on both sides.

"I like getting out of the house," says Blackwell, a native of the Republic of Honduras. "I like being around older people. I get joy out of being helpful."

Lopez "was always very happy to see me. Each day I would come, we would say to each other, 'Buenos días (Good morning)!' Then it was 'Cómo estás? (How are you?)' I would ask her, 'Qué citas tienes? (What appointments do you have?)' On Mondays, we would ask each other 'Qué tal el fin de semana? (How was your weekend?)' She would always ask me if I saw my grandchildren and always wanted to hear about them."

Blackwell helped her fill out forms, went to the store for her and accompanied her to medical appointments. The

two also read and watched TV together, including "La Rosa de Guadalupe," a Mexican series dramatizing real-life miracles, dreams and spiritual moments.

Lopez had a home care aide to prepare meals for her, and Blackwell would advise the aide how to cook foods the consumer liked, using yams, plantains, rice and beans, and other vegetables prepared Latin-style.

Blackwell says that Alvarez did not leave her apartment at all, aside from medical appointments. "My visits were important to her," says Blackwell. She never wanted me to leave. 'You're going?' she would say. 'Is it time already? Now what will I do?'"

To volunteer or to learn more about Senior Companions, call 215-765-9000, ext. 5126 or email tmoore@pcaphl.org

**Names have been changed to protect the privacy of these individuals.*

Contact Marcia Z. Siegal at msiegal@pcaphl.org

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She finds joy in capturing life stories

By Barbara L. Sherf

I became a personal historian purely by chance. After creating a small book of stories and photos with my father, I was asked to capture the family history of Lula Pidcock Mohr, a descendant of Jonathan Pidcock, the first white settler of Bucks County. During our interview sessions, Mrs. Mohr shared the good, the bad and the ugly. When it came time to put her stories into print, I made it clear that she had the final say on what was included, but I know the telling of all of her stories gave her closure.



Photo courtesy of Barbara Sherf

A personal project led Barbara Sherf (above) to a new vocation.

Indeed, in her 93rd year, she was taken fairly quickly by cancer. While in a hospice setting, her son brought a big screen TV and a looped version of a video we produced, and she insisted it be played for 48 hours straight up to her passing. It was a comfort to her to see that the history had been recorded, and I suspect she wanted to share this version of her life with the staff as opposed to being a cancer victim dying in a rehab center.

As a personal historian, I have experienced firsthand the power of closure in telling one's story. I've also experienced the opposite. My mother would have none of it. She did allow me to ask her questions and write down some very minor details about some of the people in old photos and the relationships; however, when I probed farther she would zip

her lip. I suspect she wanted her children to remember the happier times and not be burdened by the sad stories.

If you have thought about capturing your own family's history, and have met with a positive response, here are some tips to get you started.

1) **Begin by putting down the bullet points of the individual's life as an outline and flesh it out from there.** If you never get beyond the bullets, at least your family will have the correct information for a proper obituary, eulogy or memorial pamphlet. Choose one good photo of you that can be used for this purpose and put it and the bullet points aside with your important papers and tell your family where these documents are and how to access them.

2) **Consider enrolling in a memoir class to flesh out the details, or work with a friend, family member or personal historian to tease out your stories.** The Association of Personal Historians (www.personalhistorians.org) has a list of professionals by zip code on its website. Prices vary by project, but honestly, think about what you would spend on a vacation and put it aside. It is the gift that will continue to give for generations to come. Children and grandchildren can be encouraged to forgo future (both yours and theirs) holiday and birthday gifts to put the funds into the personal history project pot.

3) **Free resources are available on the web.** Go to www.rememberswhen.com for up to 16 different worksheets. The International Association of Storykeepers (www.legacystories.org) has free resources, as well as subscription services where one can record their stories and upload images. My caution in this is that sometimes these stories are lost if not archived properly, so make sure you have a printout of whatever you produce as backup and put it with your family Bible or important papers.

May is Personal History Awareness Month. For a complete resource list, or more information, contact Barbara L. Sherf at 215-233-8022 or e-mail CaptureLifeStories@gmail.com.

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1340 Frankford Ave., 19125
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215-685-9844

North Broad Street Senior Center
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215-978-1300

*On Lok House
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Philadelphia Senior Center –
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*PHA Emlen Arms Satellite
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and Russian Satellite
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*KleinLife: Rhawnhurst
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*Juniata Park Older Adult Center
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*Northeast Older Adult Center
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Philadelphia Senior Center –
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Senior athletes, aged 50 and older, from the five-county Southeastern Pennsylvania area are gearing up to take part in the annual Philadelphia Games for Adults 50+. Presented each year by the Philadelphia Parks & Recreation Department, the games offer a variety of events for competitors of all sporting interests and physical abilities, from fitness demonstrations and board games to basketball and a triathlon.

If you register by Friday, May 6, you can take advantage of the half-price early-bird discount rate and pay only \$10. After this date, registration will cost \$20. Same-day registration will be available if space permits. For registration forms and information, call 215-683-3683 or visit www.philadelphiagames.org.



The annual Philadelphia Games for Adults 50+ features a range of activities, from board games and horseshoes to swimming and basketball.



Schedule of events

Saturday, June 4

Events held at Lincoln High School, 3201 Ryan Ave.

Registration & Expo – 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.
 Opening Ceremony – 9 a.m.
 Fitness Demos – 9:30 a.m. to noon

Muscle Toning – 9:30 to 10:30 a.m.
 Tai Chi Clinic – 10:30 to 11 a.m.
 Self Defense Clinic – 11 a.m. to noon

Outdoor events

Track & Field; Football Throw – 10 a.m. start
 Horseshoes – 11 a.m. start
 Softball Throw; Pitch, Hit & Run – 11:30 a.m. start

Indoor events

Basketball; Table Tennis; Stationary Bike – 1 p.m.
 Swimming – 2 to 3 p.m.

Monday, June 6

Women's Billiards Tournament – 10 a.m. start
 West Oak Lane Senior Center, 7210 Ogontz Ave.
 Evening Bowling – Check-in 6 p.m.; 7 p.m. start
 V&S Lanes, 7235 Elmwood Ave.

Tuesday, June 7

Evening Basketball – 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.
 Hank Gathers Recreation Center, 2501 W. Diamond St.

Wednesday, June 8

Daytime Bowling – Check-in 10 a.m.; 11 a.m. start
 Thunderbird Lanes, 3801 Holme Ave.

Thursday, June 9

Putting, Golf & Driving Contest – 8 a.m. start
 John F. Byrnes Golf Course, 9500 Leon St.

Friday, June 10

Game Day: Chess; Checkers; Pinochle; Scrabble; Dominoes; Darts; Men's Billiards; Mahjong – 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
 Northeast Older Adult Center, 8100 Bustleton Ave.; and West Oak Lane Senior Center, 7210 Ogontz Ave.

Saturday, July 16

Triathlon – 6:30 a.m. registration; 7 a.m. start
 Fairmount Park – Memorial Hall, Kelly Pool, 4210 N. Concourse Dr.

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Code MIL

Don's Column

Boys would be boys – every occasion a chance to punch, swat or torment



By Don Harrison

Yet another birthday. These are the “golden years,” we’re told. Some of us go along with this fiction (usually to humor those propounding it), but there isn’t one of us who wouldn’t like to be healthier, stronger

and prettier – the way we used to be.

And as anxiety-provoking as the uncertainty was, wondering about our future was exciting. Now, no more suspense – the future is here.

Each day brings each of us one day closer to the end. But it used to be something far off, not worth our attention. Now, it’s just around the corner.

It’s not necessarily something to fear. Much more frightening is increasing incapacity and dependence. Simple routine processes are ever more challenging, like getting in and out of the car, rising from an easy chair, or lacing shoes.

Yet, we’re much better off than preceding generations. Thanks to Social Security, television, health care advances, modern technology and agencies like PCA, we needn’t stagnate unproductively in the rocking chair, lamenting how much better things were “in my day.”

As I’ve said before, as long as we’re here, old timer, every day is “our day,” as much as anyone’s.

* * *

And one for good luck

For a boy in West Philly, birthdays were a mixed blessing. Sure, there might be a cake (with candles) and maybe a party, but you could get a sore arm, too.

A time-honored ritual was punches on the arm – one for each year, plus one for good luck. Just how sore your arm became depended on how old you were, the number of well-wishers and the intensity of their dedication to tradition.

Fortunately, it was a custom we outgrew. If not, a birthday at this late date could



require so many punches that by the one for good luck, it would be almost time for the next birthday – if the Birthday Boy survived the trauma.

This was one of several barbaric rituals boys underwent. Another was “Swats.” After a haircut, if another boy cried “Swats,” he was entitled to swat the back of your shorn head.

Unlike the birthday brutality, however, there was a defense against Swats – vigilance. If you called out “No Swats” first, the back of your head was safe. So, when you left the barbershop, you’d brace yourself for the threat, prepared to forestall it.

For girls, by the way, these rituals did not exist. They could celebrate birthdays painlessly, and go unswatted after their hair was cut.

But girls, of course, were more civilized.

Or, maybe, they had less of a feel for tradition.

* * *

A breathtaking mission

Enough of this nostalgia. I must save my breath.

All those candles to blow out!

Milestones Editor Emeritus Don Harrison served as deputy editor of the Daily News opinion pages and as assistant managing editor and city editor of the Philadelphia Bulletin.

The Milestones Crossword

Talky

ACROSS

- 1 Lovers’ ___
- 5 Cleanser
- 9 Area in Great Britain
- 14 Seaweed
- 15 Mystery man Gardner
- 16 Worship
- 17 Chitchat
- 19 Not a soul
- 20 Rich cake
- 21 Free; unattached
- 23 Soft leather
- 24 Decay
- 26 Animal doc
- 27 Quilting parties
- 28 Infant
- 31 Expert
- 33 Cowed
- 35 Prayer
- 36 Cast aspersions upon
- 37 Term in office
- 40 Trim, as branches
- 41 White linen vestment
- 42 Laundry accessory
- 43 Seed holder
- 44 Engrossed
- 46 Small fry
- 47 Child’s game
- 48 ___, the lioness
- 49 Wrath

- 50 Painful
- 51 *Li'l Abner's* creator
- 53 Fold
- 55 Cut lumber
- 57 Doctors’ org.
- 58 Fender mishaps
- 60 Animal pens
- 64 Human trunk
- 66 Deteriorates
- 68 Butterfat
- 69 Songstress Horne
- 70 Having little color
- 71 Growing fence
- 72 Whirlpool
- 73 Gradual

DOWN

- 1 Endure
- 2 Sailors’ patron saint
- 3 Culture medium
- 4 Insignificant
- 5 Harden
- 6 Verbal
- 7 Covering the entire surface
- 8 Type of tea
- 9 Grow dim
- 10 Commotion
- 11 Respected and admired
- 12 Man’s nickname
- 13 Sows
- 18 Mate for 48 Across
- 22 Laws

- 25 Improbable story
- 27 Golfer Hogan
- 28 Bundle
- 29 Shakespeare’s river
- 30 Boy Scout motto
- 32 Novice reporter
- 34 Spiders’ homes
- 36 Drains, as of energy
- 38 Bellow
- 39 Outer portion
- 42 High, craggy hill
- 45 Lofty mountain
- 46 Walked very quietly
- 50 Pounces down
- 51 Ensnare
- 52 Love: It.
- 54 Slant
- 56 Play division
- 58 Cupola
- 59 Transport
- 61 Iridescent gem
- 62 Game played on horseback
- 63 Simmer
- 65 Droop
- 67 Utter

Solution

The solution for the crossword puzzle can be found on page 14.

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8		9	10	11	12	13
14					15					16				
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71						72					73			



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