

The president from Hopkinson House

by Lynn Miller

Our own Steven Weixler assumed his duties as the new president of the Society Hill Civic Association (SHCA) this past summer. That's the organization chiefly responsible for ensuring that the quality of life in our unique quarter of Philadelphia is maintained and enhanced. I sat down with Steve recently to hear how he views our neighborhood and what he sees on the horizon for the SHCA.

Steve's perspective on our community began to develop long before he moved to Hopkinson House 17 years ago.

Trained as an architect in his native Chicago, it was there that he came to admire the effort to revive Society Hill launched by Mayor Richardson Dilworth and planner Edmund Bacon some 50 years ago. Now that the success of that project is visible all around us, Steve is a leader among a second generation of "pioneers" (his term) committed to preserving and building on the legacy of those who created this remarkable neighborhood. His overarching goal is to build upon the hard work of the original generation of Society Hill pioneers and make sure it is not diminished in any way.

On the HOUSE

The Newsletter of
Hopkinson House • Fall 2011



He has found that today's younger Society Hillers may want a somewhat livelier neighborhood—one with more fine restaurants, for example—as well as more local amenities. He plans to work cooperatively with nearby neighborhood associations, such as the South Street/Headhouse, Washington Square West, and Center City Districts, as well as Independence National Park, to ensure that commercial development proceeds rationally and with the goal of elevating all our lives. Steve argues that the failure of New Market at Head House Square lay in its effort to be a kind of mall which didn't serve the needs of residents. The lesson he draws is to be supportive of low-rise residential development there. He notes that one such proposal is now in the works.

Since 2006, Steve Weixler has chaired the Central Delaware Advocacy Group, a coalition of more than 20 civic associations involved in helping to shape the plans for developing

the waterfront.* As SHCA president, he wants to see riverfront development proceed in a way that further integrates our stretch of the riverbank with Society Hill. He is pleased with



the direction so far. Key to the master plan are, first, the creation of small parks within a ten-minute walk or a quarter mile of every home or neighborhood along the river and, second, continuation of the city's grid of streets right to the waterfront. This summer brought a piece of this to fruition. The new Race Street Pier provides a stunning little park jutting out into the river beneath the Ben Franklin Bridge. Across from it, a much improved walkway from the park up to Second Street in Old City makes for quick and pleasant access. Soon, the old pumping station opposite the pier will become the headquarters of the Philadelphia Fringe, which

SEE WEIXLER, PAGE 11

* See Lynn Miller: "Our man for the waterfront," *On the House*, Summer 2009.

What's inside

by Nelly Childress

Haiku by resident **Eric Sellin** on the sights to be seen from his south-side balcony overlooking the river. Council message by **Millie Korn** who reassumed the presidency of HHOA upon Harry Zaleznik's resignation from Council. **Judi Forte's** reminder, in her message from Management, of the city's latest approved recyclable items as well as informing of some new Hopkinson House regulations. **Ralph Rodriguez's** final article from the four-part series celebrating the 50th anniversary of Hopkinson House reports on our house as seen through the eyes of new residents. Two interviews, one by **Lynn Miller**, of resident Steve Weixler, recently elected president of the Society Hill Civic Association, the other by **Susan Tomita** on neighbors Charlene and Vic Compher's interesting life. **David Roberts** speaks about cameras and photography. For those who have not yet experienced Talula's Garden on the Square, **Lynn Miller** will regale you with his experience there. Do not despair because Borders' closed, you have within walking distance, says **Dan Rothermel**, a spacious new used bookstore, The Next Page. Plus, a report of the Big Band concert's success by **David Roberts**. ■

The Editorial Committee of *On the House* regrets that, after over five years of contributing to our newsletter, **Byron Fink** decided to enjoy some time off. Byron has since 1962 lived longer than anyone else in this building—he moved in before construction was completed. Since 1980, as an owner, he was the editor of the Hopkinson House newsletter for some 10 years, and a multi-term Councilor. We hope that he will miss us and soon resume his involvement with the building's committees, etc.

on the Our neighbors, the Comphers

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by Susan Tomita

It's not every day that you run into the mentor of Ph.D.'s in Botswana or a documentary filmmaker—unless you happen to live in Hopkinson House.

Meet your neighbors, Charlene and Vic Compher.

The Comphers moved to Hopkinson House in 2009 from a four-story townhouse near Logan Square. They have two adult children—a son in Philadelphia and a daughter in Los Angeles. Although they grew up 150 miles from each other in east Tennessee, Charlene and Vic did not meet until after college.

When they received bachelor's degrees in German Literature, undergraduate foreign language requirements began to wane. For a time, they worked together at a small alternative high school they had started

at St. Mary's Church on the University of Pennsylvania campus. Then their careers diverged on separate professional paths to improve the lives of individuals, families, and communities.

Charlene went to Drexel University to earn a master's degree in nutrition science and a Ph.D. in Bioscience. She is Associate Professor of Nutrition Science at the University of Pennsylvania School Of Nursing, where she teaches a popular multi-disciplinary course, *Obesity and Society*. She also is Faculty Director of the Biobehavioral Lab and for the Penn interschool Nutrition Minor. She maintains specialty certification in nutrition support delivered by vein (parenteral) and by the intestinal tract (enteral) and serves as Editor-in-Chief of

national clinical guidelines for this practice.

A prestigious Fulbright Africa Scholar award funded Charlene's work in Botswana, where she with Vic spent the 2010 spring semester. She leads an international pediatric obesity research group in a project of the University of Pennsylvania and University of Botswana. The project describes the transition away from the people's traditional diet, the prevalence of adolescent obesity relative to socio-economic status, and culturally relevant intervention options.

The project's research mentorship program for young women at the Botswana university continues. Because actually doing the science "is what moves you up in the work world," Charlene saw how

SEE COMPHERS, PAGE 15

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Message from Management

Recycling concerns for your home

by Judi Forte

This is a reminder of what you may and may not recycle in the City of Philadelphia. The items which can be recycled have changed since August 1, 2010.

Plastic:

- #1: Soda, water bottles
- #2: Milk jugs, detergents, shampoo bottles
- #3: Rigid plastic containers and juice bottles
- #4: Plastic tubs and lids from butter, margarine or similar products
- #5: Yogurt containers and deli trays
- #6: Plastic cups, plates and to-go containers

#7: Many mixed plastic containers and plastic products

These are just some examples of what you can recycle, so look for the number on any plastic container to be sure.

Please be sure to wash out all food and beverage containers before putting them in the recycling bins.

Metal:

Tin and aluminum cans, empty aerosol cans, empty paint cans

Glass:

Jars and bottles

Mixed papers:

Newspaper, magazines,

mail (junk and personal), phone books, food boxes (remove plastic liner), no food-soiled paper or boxes, computer paper, flyers, wrapping paper (no foil or plastic wrap), soda and beer cartons

Plastic containers

Cardboard

Empty and flattened

What you cannot recycle

Metal:

Aluminum foil, pots/pans, paper clips

Glass:

Light bulbs, window glass

Mixed papers:

Hard back books, tissues,



paper towels, napkins, wax-coated cups or containers, food soiled paper, file folders

Plastic:

Styrofoam, plastic bags, PVC pipe, packing inserts or "peanuts"

SEE MANAGEMENT, PAGE 17

Message from Council

On transitions of people and place

by Millie Korn

HHOA Council President

As we watch the days shorten and one season changing to another so too does the energy in the Hopkinson House. The wonderful annual end of Summer Big Band Concert has come and gone and the long days of lazing by the pool have given way to the HHOA Council's busy fall season and the important decisions to be made regarding varied long- and short-term projects.

The most recent transitions relate to Council. Harry Zaleznik, formerly serving as Council President resigned from Council, and I have reassumed the responsibility of President. We also saw the departure of Roe

Durkin. To serve her remaining term, Council is pleased to have appointed Larry Meehan, who comes to Council with a wide range of experience related to the Hopkinson House. Additionally, Council is proud to welcome David Kurkowski as the newly elected member of Council, serving the remaining term of Harry Zaleznik.

On behalf of the entire Council, I would like to thank both Roe Durkin and Harry Zaleznik for their service as Councilors. We also congratulate and thank Larry and David for their willingness to step up to the plate and contribute their time, energy and professionalism to Council. We all look forward to working with you

For those who have served or currently serve on Council, it is with the understanding that we are entrusted by the HHOA to maintain and improve the overall health and maintenance of the Building. Decisions are not made in a vacuum, as each decision, large or small, has an effect on the entire HHOA community, including ourselves. We understand that the idea of participating as a Council member may be intimidating to some of our fellow residents. We continue to hope, however, that interested persons of our community come forth and show their commitment to the Hopkinson House by running for Council in future elections. It is a rewarding experience and offers an opportunity



to familiarize oneself with the inner operations of the building and the protocol for decision making.

In addition to our monthly meeting topics, this fall will be especially important, as Council prepares to gather the information and documentation necessary to determine feasibility, timing and costs for the eventual

SEE COUNCIL, PAGE 19

East Side, West Side, We're All Around The Town



East side condos: Pier 3, Pier 5, 22 Front, Society Hill Towers, The Bank Building, The Lippincott at Locust Walk, Independence Place, Hopkinson House, 220 W. Washington Square, Center City One.



West side condos: Academy House, The Rittenhouse Savoy, The Lanesborough, The Warwick, Parc Rittenhouse, The Barclay, The Dorchester, 250 S. 18th Street, 1820 Rittenhouse Square, 1830 Rittenhouse Square, 1900 Rittenhouse Square, 220 W. Rittenhouse Square, The Rittenhouse, Rittenhouse Plaza, Wanamaker House, 250 S. 17th Street, The Philadelphian.



Independence Place: Exquisite Independence Place penthouse with panoramic city views, a balcony atop Washington Square, chef's kitchen, luxurious master suite and great entertaining space. 3153 square feet. \$1,900,000.



Independence Place: Pristine two bedroom, two bathroom residence with southeast views, updated kitchen and baths and private balcony. 1457 square feet. \$589,900.



Independence Place: Bi-level penthouse with dramatic river and city views, custom finishes and features throughout, lavish master suite. 4403 square feet. \$2,295,000.



Independence Place: Beautiful, sun-soaked two bedroom condominium with custom upgrades throughout including an open chef's kitchen and designer baths. 1387 square foot. \$719,900.



Society Hill Towers: Completely renovated two bedroom home with unobstructed river views from all rooms, beautifully appointed kitchen, marble bathroom and wood floors. 1200 square feet. \$365,000.



The Lippincott: Custom home with street level view of Washington Square, open floor plan, loft-like space, two bedrooms and two baths. 1775 square feet. \$1,075,000.



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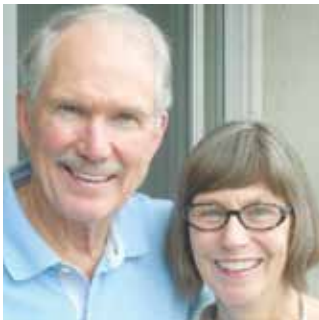
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by Ralph Rodriguez

This is the last of a four-part series in anticipation of the 50th anniversary of Hopkinson House in 2012. The title is a reminder that our building continues to adapt to changing needs and lifestyles. In this article we meet nine individuals who have recently chosen to make Hopkinson House their home.



Tom and Sue Carroll

Met at Roanoke College and moved to Cape May when Tom was assigned to the Coast Guard Training Center. Traveling in Europe, they visited private inns and decided to open a similar business. B&Bs in the early 1970s were a new concept in the United States and the Carrolls helped popularize them. They purchased the historic Jackson's Club House (and two adjacent properties) in Cape May, and operated under the name "The Mainstay Inn." During 34 years in business, they often visited Philadelphia and had friends who lived in Hopkinson House. In 2004, they sold their business and in 2008, purchased a unit in our building, which they use as a year round pied-à-terre.

They chose our building for its light, balconies, swimming pool, closet space and value; and for the historic neighborhoods, museums, restaurants and theaters within a short walk. They note the friendly front-desk and front-door staff that quickly knew their names. Should the couple downsize their Cape May home, they would look for a larger unit "definitely in this building." Sue suggested a Hopkinson House in-house open-house where interested residents could open their units to other residents; and use this as a fund-raiser for a worthy local charity.



Rosina Coltellaro

Was born in Pittsburgh, attended the Universities of Pittsburgh and North Carolina at Chapel Hill and moved to Philadelphia in 1983. Rosina worked for TWA, which afforded her the opportunity to travel widely and "visit every continent except Antarctica." Rosina enjoys theatre and ushers at local venues: she especially likes the "Philly Fringe" Festival. Rosina provides baby sitting and

pet walking as well as house sitting services to a group of friends. She sees herself as a spiritual person, who since childhood, has been attuned to the numinous and unconscious. Rosina rented in our building for one year prior to buying in 2011. She loves the swimming pool and participates in the Washington Square Citizens' League movie and discussion groups, the exercise and water aerobics classes. Next year, she is planting a small garden on her balcony and in memory of her mother's garden, will include herbs and tomatoes. Rosina says that the staff "feels like family" and that she has found a community, rather than just a place to live.



Nancy Ebker

Is a long time New Yorker who graduated from Parsons School of Design and had a career in the fashion industry as a designer, executive and entrepreneur. Her son, Michael Grimaldi, is an artist and teacher (currently at the Art Student's League, Janus and PAFA) who moved to Philadelphia several years ago. During a walk through

Washington Square, he casually mentioned to his mother that Hopkinson House looked like a nice place for her to live. In 2009 she closed her business and considered various places around the country as a new home; but with Michael and his wife about to have a child, Nancy decided to move to Philadelphia to be near the young family and to work on a book about her experiences in the apparel industry. Nancy spotted a Hopkinson House apartment rental on Craig's List and took it sight-unseen. She loves the building, views, friendly atmosphere, neighborhood with its lush trees and well-kept parks as well as taking care of her 18-month old granddaughter.



Charles and Bernadette Formoso

Lived for 20 years in Moorestown, NJ where they raised their son (a Chef at Fish) and two daughters (an Art Teacher and a Barista). In the 1970s, Charlie rented an apartment in Hopkinson House and as a young married couple, the Formosos lived for a time in Society Hill. Charlie was a Beer Distributor, and Bernadette, after working for Index Medicus, a

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Five years of the Big Band



by David Roberts

On Sunday, September 18, The Big Band from the Valley came to Hopkinson House for their fifth annual performance. The weather was fine but unseasonably cold and, for the first time, we saw the band wearing navy jackets for warmth.

The band played with its usual skill and flair but the program was more varied

this year. As always, the big-band music of the swing era predominated but new items included an enchanting piece from Latin America and a haunting lament from Italy for a son lost in battle in World War II. Film music included *That old black magic* from Bus Stop, and the theme music from Rocky.

As always, Bob Deddy led the band and sang, and Marge

Miller was the torch singer. Bill Willis, who leads the trumpet section, is the Big Band's music director. A sprightly octogenarian, and a native of London, Bill arranges all the music, writing the scores by hand with a fountain pen.

The attendance was probably the best we have produced, with residents and guests of all ages present,

including our amazing centenarian, Max Silverstein. As always the special-events committee organized the concert and provided refreshments.

Note from the editor: The HHOA Special Events Committee thanks the resident volunteers: George Koch, Susan Tomita, Larry Meehan, and Scott Childress for their help during the event. ■

South Balcony Haiku

Eric Sellin

Daybreak slowly spreads
Across the sullen river's
Broad gray meander.

◇

A ship's unloading.
How do I know for a fact?
She's taller each day!

◇

.Near the balcony,
A red-tailed hawk spirals up
The thermal staircase.

To east, façades glow;
Behind us in the twilight
The clouds are ablaze.

◇

Nightfall: Riverward,
The windows are salmon pink,
Mirroring the west.

And the dull waters
Of the Delaware turn blue
For one fine moment.

◇

Then darkness blinks down
Over the dome of the sky;
A jet-black membrane.

◇

And the brightest stars
Begin to blossom in space:
An astral garden.

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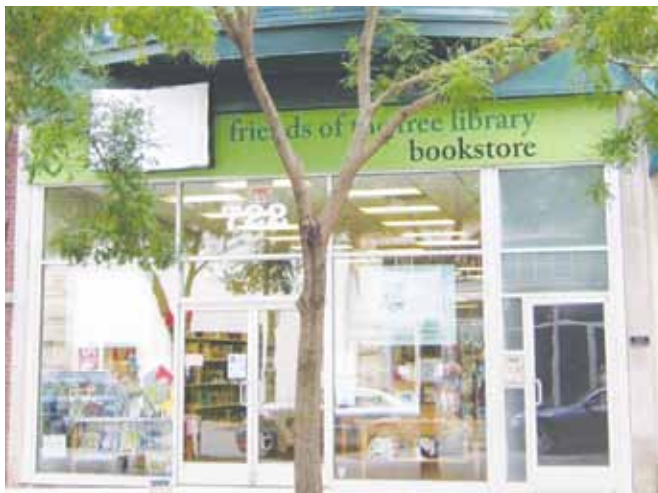
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A new chapter in our shopping story

by Dan Rothermel

Attention, readers and book lovers! Have you discovered The Next Page, the spacious and beautifully organized used book store at 722 Chestnut Street? This welcome addition to the Washington Square neighborhood which opened in May of 2010 is one of the many vital projects of the enterprising Friends of the Free Library. Conveniently located for Hopkinson House residents, The Next Page offers a vast array of used books in all fields, an impressive inventory with rapid, steady turnover. All items available for sale are in good to excellent condition and are aggressively priced, generally between \$1.00 and \$12.00, with the exception of some new, rare, and certain out-of-print books in particular demand. Even some extremely rare and antiquarian books are available and are competitively priced. Recent bestsellers costing \$20.00 or more in commercial book stores turn up regularly for around \$7.00.

Jonathan Sipes, who was employed three years ago, specifically by the Friends organization, manages The Next Page as well as its sister store Book Corner, located at 311 North 20th Street, one block north of the Benjamin Franklin Parkway in close proximity to the Central Library at Logan Square. All members of the staff at The Next Page, Sipes notes, are avid readers and book lovers of varied interests and backgrounds. Compared with readers who frequent the Logan Square location, the patrons of



The new shelves (top) and storefront at 722 Chestnut Street.

The Next Page show a marked predilection for books on art, architecture and photography, Sipes observes. Cookbooks and mysteries are popular commodities at both stores.

The two Friends of the Free Library facilities actively solicit donations of books from neighbors "who prefer that their books be recycled into the hands of readers, instead of into landfills." All genres and formats are welcome with the exception of textbooks, encyclopedias and abridged fiction. (Lighten those groaning

will also reject periodicals, heavily soiled, damaged and moldy books, and books with missing pages. Used CDs and DVDs are welcome at both facilities but only Book Corner, for reasons of space, will recycle the distinctly less desirable audio and video cassettes.

Donations are accepted up to 5:00 p.m. on the six days the stores are open. Sipes stresses that both facilities prefer that donations be packed in cardboard boxes rather than milk crates or tubs and request that donations not be left outside the facilities during non-business hours. Booksellers at both stores will happily assist you with your donation and appreciate your calling ahead: The Next Page, 215-925-0722; Book Corner, 215-567-0527. Contact Manager Jonathan Sipes at jonathan@libraryfriends.info.

Since 1973 the Friends of the Free Library have been powerful advocates for the 53 branches of the library system. To learn more about the activities of the Friends, how you can become involved or to make a tax-deductible donation to help sustain this vital work, visit www.libraryfriends.info or call the Friends office, 215-567-4562. ■



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Not your usual neighborhood joint

by Lynn Miller

Long-time residents will remember when dining around Washington Square meant slumming in a Sansom Street coffee shop or ordering take-out from the handy, but subterranean, Chinese kitchen on Walnut Street.

Not any more. Talula's Garden, practically at our front door in the glitzy face-lifted

Ayer building, is merely the latest in a cluster of both upscale and down-home restaurants that now define our quarter. Since Talula's opened several months ago, Philadelphia's glitterati (if that's no oxymoron) have made it a destination. At the moment, it's the fifth eatery in our neighborhood that's part of the Stephen Starr empire—the sixth, if you count the seasonal SquareBurger in Franklin Square—along with Jones, Morimoto, Buddakan, and Pizzeria Stella. Starr presumably still has plans to reincarnate the late Angelina, also on Chestnut Street, which in turn arose from the predeceased Blue Angel, much as Talula's replaced his eponymous Washington Square.

Since Starr's view of fine dining is that it should be as much a theatrical as a culinary experience, I'll start with TG's theatrics, which are most on display indoors. The space is dramatic, with

seating on two levels beneath a soaring ceiling where, in front, hanging lamps create a golden glow behind shades possibly fashioned from bass drums for giants. The chiaroscuro effect of the lighting throughout flatters every diner. Warm-toned

mostly inside, the actual garden is TG's most distinctive feature, doubling the indoor space for fair-weather dining. It's been opened up to the interior with the addition of big new windows and sliding glass doors. It's in the garden

where the funky look takes over, starting with the signature



Views of the cheese bar (top) and main dining room at Talula's Garden, replacing the Washington Square restaurant at the Ayer.

walls display botanical prints and grand portraits of vegetables. The drama is married to hip greenness, nonetheless, in the restaurant's use of recycled wood for its tables (ours had a knothole that let you stick a finger right through the tabletop), and its emphasis on all things artisanal. At the back of the room, the restaurant's cheesemonger (so named by one of our six smilingly efficient servers) presided with his helper over a huge selection of cheeses, which are featured as separate, cholesterol-filled courses.

Even if the drama's

bird houses at the entrance gate, the south wall's "fountain" of old spigots and faucets, and the barn-board bar in the back. A couple of grandma's lawn chairs adorn the sidewalk. Things growing in pots abound.

The food? Anyone who

remembers co-owner Aimee Olexy's Django restaurant, or waited a year for the chance to dine at her Talula's Table in Kennett Square, knows that the food will be memorable. Three of us shared a table at TG one recent evening. One began with what was puzzlingly described as tortelloni of slow-roasted whole goat. What arrived was not the entire animal, but pasta stuffed with minced meat that presumably came from it. My first plate combined golden potato gnocchi, buffalo milk, Tallegio, dandelion greens, and roasted local figs. That possibly unprecedented mix of ingredients was, I'm happy to say, quite delectable as well as typical in its unexpected combinations for every dish our little band of diners tried. One main course featured caramelized Maine sea scallops along with sweet and crunchy bits of kohlrabi. Another brought seared lamb loin accompanied by house-made labneh (don't ask), lamb sausage, and a couscous pilaf. Mine starred Rhode Island haddock served in a bowl over braised escarole, cranberry beans, and spicy "foam" of red pepper.

SEE TALULA'S, PAGE 21

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Calendar of Events at Hopkinson House October–December 2011

A special insert to
On the House

Tuesday evenings in the Solarium: Jacina Li, a resident of Hopkinson house, will run *Philly Fit Club* sessions of 40-50 minutes. Dates and times will be announced.

Tuesdays & Thursdays, 10:15 – 10:45 am, in the Solarium, Exercise Classes with Byron Fink.

Monday, October 24, 1:30 – 3:00 pm in the Solarium WSCL* discussion: Globalization and Anti-globalization. Discussion Leader Paul Coyne. Contact Nelly Childress 215-627-3471.

Tuesday, October 25, 7:00 pm in the Solarium WSCL* presents A Panel Discussion entitled “Is Nutter Successful?” Panel: Phil Goldman, former CEO Philadelphia School System & former City Managing Director; Joseph Mahoney, Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce; and Chris Satullo, News & Civic Engagement WHYY.

Sunday, October 30, 4:00 pm in the Solarium WSCL* Reel Discussion of a “serious” Film at the Ritz. Contact Larry Meehan 215-925-8464.

Monday, October 31, in the Lobby HHOA Special Events Committee: Children’s Halloween Party. Time to be announced.

In November, in the Solarium, at 7:00 pm WSCL* will host a selected speaker or an event. Date to be announced.

Monday, November 7, 1:30-3:00 pm in the Solarium WSCL* discussion: The Role of Government in the Arts. Discussion Leader Ray Bateman. Contact Nelly Childress 215-627-3471.

Tuesday, November 8, 7:00 am – 8:00 pm in the Solarium, Ward 5 Division 3 Philadelphia General Municipal Elections.

Monday, November 21, 1:30-3:00 pm in the Solarium WSCL* discussion: Population Expansion and its Political Impact Worldwide. Discussion Leader Enny Cramer. Contact Nelly Childress 215-627-3471.

In December, in the Lobby and the Solarium, HHOA & WSCL* Christmas Tree lighting and Holiday party. Date and time to be announced.

Sunday, December 4, 4:00 pm in the Solarium WSCL* Reel Discussion of a “serious” Film at the Ritz. Contact Larry Meehan 215-925-8464.

Wednesday, December 7, in the lobby, Caroling under Murray Savar’s direction, by The Bel Cantos student ensemble from the Agnes Irwin School in Rosemont. Time will be announced. [

Thursday, December 15, 7:00 pm in the Solarium Hopkinson House Budget meeting. The 2012 Operating Budget will be presented.

Tuesday, December 20, in the Lobby, HHOA lighting of the first Hanukkah candle. Time to be announced.

** *Washington Square Citizens’ League at Hopkinson House is a not-for-profit, non-partisan organization. Started in 1996 by residents for residents of Hopkinson House, it is dedicated to motivating residents of Hopkinson House to become engaged in the political and social processes of the day*

Cameras don't take the pictures

by David Roberts

It has been said that cameras don't take photos, people do. A photographer's eyes and brain are more important than the quality of his or her camera. Photography is about capturing interesting scenes and events, and a good photographer is always alert for a scene worth capturing. It may be a flower with raindrops clinging to it after a storm. It may be the charming, unselfconscious pose of a dog or cat. Or it may be a group of people engrossed in animated discussion and oblivious of cameras. Figures 1, 2, and 3 show scenes or events that I managed to capture.

use film because of the technical perfection they can achieve if they have a well equipped dark room and are expert in using it. Unless you are one of them forget about film. A digital camera has a screen on the back that lets you see at once the photo you have just taken; you don't have to wait for the roll of film to be used up and developed.

When you transfer the photo into your computer you can use the computer's photo-editing software to do everything the old pro did in his darkroom. You can make the picture lighter or darker, optimize the colors, and adjust

Point-and-shoot cameras. If you don't have a digital camera I suggest that you buy the best pocketable point-and-shoot camera you can afford. You can readily use such a camera anywhere, indoors or out. Take it with you everywhere because you never know when you will encounter a memorable scene. Every small point-and-shoot camera has a zoom lens that lets you expand or shrink the picture to fit the frame.

A disadvantage of these small cameras is that their makers have abandoned optical viewfinders in favor of very large viewing screens. These work very

well if you use a flash with a swiveling head that can be aimed at the ceiling for "bounce flash." This produces a diffuse light that softly illuminates peoples' faces without flashing in their eyes. An excellent example is the Canon G12. Canon is very good at making small digital cameras. Of all cameras that will fit easily in a pocket, their S95 is outstanding. To save money you can buy a G11 or S90 (Fig. 4, page 23), the previous models, used but in new condition. Their main functions are unchanged.

Single-lens reflex cameras. The next step up is a digital single-lens reflex camera



Fig. 1. St. Peter's church, Society Hill, at sunset in winter. The angle of the sun caused the golden cross to glow brightly while the dark clouds behind the church made the white steeple stand out in contrast. A rare sight that had to be captured.



Fig. 2. The squirrel stole one of the roses I was photographing at the War Memorial in the Square. When I pursued him he climbed a tree and posed briefly with the rose. Fortunately my camera was switched on and ready. Taken at sunset.



Fig. 3. When photographing an interview I stand or sit quietly and wait until my subjects have forgotten that I am there. Byron Fink interviewed the new director of the Athenaeum, Dr. Sandra Tatman, for On the House in 2009.

What camera should you use when you come upon a photogenic scene? Whatever camera is close at hand, because good scenes often don't wait while you look for a camera. They can be gone in seconds as the subject moves or the light changes. An attractive scene captured with a cheap pocket camera will make a much better picture than a boring scene taken with the most expensive Leica.

What kind of camera should you buy?

Some purists still prefer to

the contrast. You can straighten crooked pictures, and crop and then enlarge an area of interest within the picture.

A great advantage of digital photography is the ability to store thousands of photos in your computer, and retrieve them effortlessly (although you should keep your photos safe by backing up your computer on a thumb drive or other storage device.) Another advantage of digital is the ability to send any photo in your computer to others, anywhere, quickly and easily by e-mail.

well for framing a picture except when the sun shines in your face or on the screen. Cameras without viewfinders cannot be steadied against your cheek but must be held at a distance where you can clearly see the picture in the screen. There are, however, a few larger point-and-shoot cameras that have an optical viewfinder in addition to their screen but they require a more spacious pocket or a purse.

These larger point-and-shoots often have another benefit, a "hot shoe" for attaching an external flash unit. This lets

(DSLR.) The big advantage of a DSLR, over a camera with a separate viewfinder, is that you view the scene and take the photo through the same lens, so what you see is what you get. DSLRs have larger sensors than pocket cameras, and this enhances their imaging ability.

DSLRs are too big for any pocket but they have further important benefits. You can attach any of a wide range of lenses to them, and more powerful flash units (Fig. 4, page 23). I take my DSLR out

SEE CAMERAS, PAGE 22



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Our neighbors, the Comphers

COMPHERS, FROM PAGE 2
extended family obligations prevent women professors from advancing, even those with western Ph.D's. The program has 15 young mentees in Botswana who work on their skills writing up their research, editing national journals, preparing resumes, and career planning.

Like his wife's pursuit of innovative research projects in her field, Vic Compher's documentary films deal with complex social problems in Philadelphia and beyond. He earned his master's degree from the Bryn Mawr Graduate School of Social Work and focused on social child welfare for many years as an administrator and a licensed clinical social worker. He also worked with older adults in his family-oriented practice and enjoyed the intergenerational contacts.

Vic has produced and directed three documentary films in the past eight years,

featuring older adults with whom he worked closely. *Treasures of the Elders*, *Peace of the Elders*, and *I Cannot Be Silent*:

Testimonies of Peacemaking are intergenerational films that share the experiences of seniors coping with life and taking action. The documentaries have been shown at senior centers, churches, and synagogues, and at some independent film festivals, including the 2011 New York International Film and Video Festival, where *I Cannot Be Silent* was screened last April.

Vic is looking for compelling stories for his

current film and blog entitled *Caregivers*. The film documents how professionals caring for traumatized clients handle the

connection with this project, Vic offers a full-day workshop for professional caregivers to help them deal with their own

grief while they counsel bereaving clients.

The Comphers enjoy living at Hopkinson House with its diverse residents from diverse generations, capable management, and welcoming staff. Not long after moving to our building, Vic and Charlene left for their months in Botswana. But they did not return as strangers.

"When you go away, people remember you

here." It's a place they love to call home.

For film clips and more information about Vic Compher's most recent film, visit www.icannotbesilent.com. ■



The Comphers at Game Walk in Maun, Botswana.

stress and professional grief of their jobs. His blog at www.caregiversfilm.com posts moving video clips of testimonials, written interviews, and first-hand stories for comments. In

The president from Hopkinson House

WEIXLER, FROM PAGE 1
should generate much more waterfront activity in that section of Columbus Boulevard.

We touched on a number of other issues involving the SHCA:

- Real estate tax reassessment is coming, affecting all of us. Our district will elect a new councilman in November who won't have the political clout of out-going Councilman DiCicco in this and other matters.
- The Americans with Disabilities Act requires new access ramps on city

sidewalks. SHCA has been working diligently with the city to ensure that ramps at intersections in Society Hill are sensitive to our neighborhood.

- The proposed Foxwoods Casino developers on Columbus Boulevard have had their license revoked, which was a victory for the SHCA. But, Steve argues that, even so, casino opponents should "sleep with one eye open," since the city's interest in additional tax revenues could yet revive a proposal that appears dead.

- SHCA is still appealing the plan to build a high-rise residential building on the site of the Dilworth house on Sixth Street. The house is still structurally sound even though it's been vacant for years. The Association is working with the preservation community to try to save it.

SHCA has taken a leading role in maintaining Washington Square. As sponsor of the Washington Square Affair the past two years, the Association has made major contributions to upgrading infrastructure for the park, including a new irrigation

system. What this year's proceeds will fund is still to be determined.

We should be grateful to the Society Hill Civic Association for all that it has done and continues to do to enhance the quality of life in one of the most remarkable neighborhoods in any city in the nation. But embarrassingly few residents of Hopkinson House are members of SHCA, which deserves our support now more than ever. Under Steve Weixler's direction, we can be confident that our civic association will continue to serve us and the neighborhood we have the good fortune to call our own. ■

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Recycling concerns for your home

MANAGEMENT, FROM PAGE 3

Other:
Chemicals, rubber, wood, and ceramic or porcelain plates and cups

For further information on Philadelphia recycling, go to www.philadelphiastreet.com/recycling.aspx.

We would like to remind all residents that the Solarium (when not being used for a private party) and the library are locked by the staff at 10:45 p.m., every night. If you are in the Solarium or the library at the time, a staff member will ask you to leave so that the doors may be locked. We appreciate your cooperation in complying with this rule.

Many, many prescriptions are delivered to Hopkinson House residents from neighborhood pharmacies. Many of them are delivered when the resident is not at home and they are kept in the package room until the resident picks up the prescription. Prescriptions should not be left at the front desk by delivery people. From time to time these prescriptions are delivered to the wrong building by the delivery person. The pharmacy has the prescription logged out for delivery but we have no record of it being delivered here. This is upsetting to the resident who is expecting

the delivery and upsetting to the front-desk staff member who is accused of losing the prescription or worse. Prescriptions from pharmacies will be delivered directly to the apartment. The front desk will not accept pharmacy prescription deliveries. This is for the protection of both the resident and the staff.

We receive numerous complaints from residents with balcony units about cigarette butts or filters being found on their balcony. Smokers who flip their cigarettes from their balcony create a dangerous situation. The butt or filter becomes airborne and can land on

any balcony, creating a burn problem for other residents or a fire hazard by landing on patio furniture. Smokers have a responsibility to keep a closed ashtray on their balcony and extinguish their cigarettes in the ashtray for the safety of other residents and the building.

The Hopkinson House Budget Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 15, 2011 at 7:00 pm in the Solarium. The 2012 Operating Budget will be presented at that time.

From Council, Management and staff at Hopkinson House, have a safe and wonderful coming holiday season. ■



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Paul Levy, is the founding President and chief executive officer of Philadelphia's Center City District, serving in that capacity since January 1991.

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On transitions of people and place

COUNCIL, FROM PAGE 3
HVAC system replacement. Additionally, with approval from the Historical Commission completed we are now at a juncture where we can assess the possibility of converting our current two pipe system to individual heat pumps. This type of system would allow unit owners to regulate their individual unit's air and heat.

Although we are several years away from initiating this type of project Council has begun reviewing the varying possibilities for

funding an expenditure of this magnitude. As *On the House* goes to press, Council is not in a position to determine or communicate bottom line costs to unit owners. Council, however, will be meeting with the Finance Committee to discuss and weigh various funding options. We plan to enlist the assistance of financial experts to assist us with determining viable possibilities regarding

costs. Once Council is able clearly and definitively to determine costs for each unit and a time frame for initiating the funding of the project, unit owners will be apprised accordingly. As stated previously, the job of Council is to maintain and improve the overall health and maintenance of the Building. My goal as President is to hold down costs so that no unit owner is overburdened.

Lastly, I would like to thank the Special Events Committee for another job well done in arranging the Big Band from the Valley concert. The weather couldn't have been more perfect and the attendance was fantastic. We look forward to the opportunity of enjoying this concert again next year and in the interim wish all Hopkinson House residents a Happy and Healthy Fall Season. ■

News Around the House

Our House among the best

Mark Wade from CenterCityCondos.com at Prudential Fox Roach Realtors cited Hopkinson House among the 10 best Center City condo buildings in his article "Ten Best Center City Condo Buildings 2011." He called it the "Toyota of Center City high rise living. Reliable, dependable, good resale and a strong Washington Square location [building]... consistently a strong buy in any real estate market."

For those interested in online information on our area's events and other news, access the Society Hill Civic Association website, www.societyhillcivic.org, or mattdejulio@aol.com for the association's electronic newsletter. ■

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HH50, FROM PAGE 5

home maker. In 2005 their youngest went off to college and they purchased a unit in our building. The couple lives most of the year in Coconut Grove, FL. Traditionally they maintained one or more shore homes and now spend summers, holidays and occasional weekends at their new “shore home” at Hopkinson House which they use to visit their children, other family and life-long friends. They chose our building for its location, unobstructed views, balconies and mix of older and younger residents and proximity to many amenities. They both praise the responsive staff. Bernadette finds the thick medical textbooks read by the pool reassuring should she decide to trip over a piece of deck furniture. They note that the new windows and redecoration of the hallways have been positive improvements and say: “We can’t imagine going somewhere else.”



Eric Karlan

Graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in 2009 where he studied

nonfiction writing. He works for a company that helps high school students navigate the college admissions process. He recently opened his own firm (with a college friend) called “Ivy Experience” providing tutoring to students from pre-K to post-grad. Eric also does freelance writing for area publications. He chose to stay in Philadelphia based on its active sports scene, big city resources and small town charm. He likes Society Hill and Washington Square West for their history, friendliness, neighborhood feel and slower pace. In 2010, the buyer’s market convinced him to buy rather than rent. He notes that friends (particularly in NYC) often pay more in rent, for less desirable apartments, than he pays here to own. Eric loves his balcony overlooking the Square and skyline view and appreciates that the staff knew his name “instantly.” He also enjoys that residents often greet and chat with each other in the elevator; and he has become friendly with several people in the building. Eric knew he’d be one of the younger people living here, but feels welcomed by older residents and notes a shift towards more young people in the building. At the pool, he sees a comfortable mingling of residents of varied ages. He hopes that more events that bridge generations can be developed. In summary, he says: “I love it here.”



Joseph and Marie Nowak

Have two daughters: Eleanore who lives and works in NYC, and Marguerite, who is on a one-year assignment to South Sudan for the UN. Joseph is an investment manager at Oppenheimer & Co and Marie is the cook at the St. Joseph’s Church Rectory. The couple travels frequently, often to Europe and Latin America and they are active in their church. Marie enjoys cooking and baking and the couple has frequent

dinner parties. Joseph recently received his certification as a Scuba Diving Instructor, and has begun training. The couple moved to Hopkinson House in 2007 to downsize after their children graduated from college. They previously resided in a townhouse in Queen Village for 24 years, and prior to that lived in Sao Paulo, Brazil. The couple remodeled their unit and moved walls to create a larger living area. They enjoy the light and views that townhouse living did not afford and walking to work, shop, church, etc. With their active life, they appreciate the freedom from maintenance responsibilities, the convenience and security of Hopkinson House and living in an iconic building, in an historic area adjacent to a beautiful park. ■

Not your usual neighborhood joint

TALULA’S, FROM PAGE 11

One of us actually chose a platter named “Four Rare and Ridiculous Cheeses,” teamed up for their contrasting textures, pungencies, and flavors. Another relished a dessert of orchard fruits and summer berries that included fried brioche, sugared jellies, and Tahitian vanilla bean ice cream. My own blueberry gateau was a cake of crispy wafers stuffed with berries so flavorful they exploded on the palate.

Once sated, we agreed that the only excuse for this kind of indulgence (we’d begun to tote up what the bill would bring) was that the food be not only delicious, but utterly different from our daily fare at home.

Our meals qualified. Being waited on by six snappy young people also made it unhome-like. Unfortunately, so did the decibel level. Unless you dine at home to a background of TV football at top volume, you don’t have to shout to make conversation the way the three of us did at our table with the hole in it. The noise—not the hole—was the only thing to mar our experience at Talula’s. Since you must expect to pay about \$80 per person, including wine, to enjoy the kind of meal we had, you may think, as I do, that should pay for a little more peace and quiet.

But go when you’re feeling rich and celebratory, and find out for yourself. ■

Cameras don't take the pictures

CAMERAS, FROM PAGE 13
of the apartment only when I'm going on a specific shooting assignment—carried in my hand, on a strap around my neck, or in a bag. Otherwise I use it mainly indoors to photograph people or pets and to take scenes from my balcony or through a window.

In a DSLR the image is deflected to the viewfinder by a prism or mirror. When you press the shutter button the prism or mirror flips rapidly out of the light path, letting the beam of light reach the camera's sensor to form the picture. The flipping of the prism or mirror makes a small noise and sends a slight shock wave through the camera but this doesn't seem to blur the picture. This, however, is too crude for the maker (Ernst Leitz) of the traditional Leica camera. Leitz instead provides a superb, large optical viewfinder that coordinates perfectly with the photographic lens. When you press the shutter button of a Leica you feel and hear almost nothing. This, however, is an expensive luxury. (But avoid Leica's new pocket cameras.)

I suggest that, if you buy a DSLR, you reject the usual "kit lens" that comes with the camera and instead buy a "super-zoom" that will range from a wide-angle at the short end to a true telephoto at the other. I use one

that extends in focal length from 18mm to 200mm (Fig. 4). You may keep that lens permanently on your camera although, in time, you may wish to try others. For example, fixed-focal-length "prime" lenses are sharper and virtually free of distortion. They have much larger apertures than zooms, enabling them to take in more light. This allows shorter exposures when the light is dim. The photo of the squirrel (Fig. 2, page 13) was taken at sunset with a 50mm prime lens (Fig. 4), those of the church and the interview (Figs. 1 and 3, page 13) with super-zooms.

A tripod to hold the camera steady?

Moving the camera as you press the shutter button tends to blur the picture, especially if the exposure is long. This doesn't happen when you use flash because then the exposure is very brief. The traditional way to keep a camera steady is to mount it on a tripod but modern technology has made the tripod almost obsolete. Most newer cameras have an anti-shake or image-stabilizing mechanism. Their makers usually achieve this with either a sensor that moves with the image, or extra lens elements within the lens that move to keep the image steady. When you buy a point-and-shoot camera make

sure you choose one that has a version of this feature.

When you buy a DSLR you have choices to consider. Nikon and Canon place the anti-shake mechanism in certain lenses, especially zoom telephotos, but not in lenses of short, fixed focal length, which need it less. Pentax and Sony use an anti-shake sensor in the camera. This is very convenient because it gives you the anti-shake benefit with any lens you attach, including old lenses made before anti-shake was invented. There is a one-time cost when you buy the camera but, with the other brands, the mechanism adds to the cost and weight of every image-stabilizing lens you buy. Both kinds work very well.

Pixels and picture quality

The word, *pixel*, is a contraction of "picture element." Pixels are like the dots that make up the picture but they are much more than dots. Each pixel is a tiny box filled with information—bytes. The more pixels on a digital camera's sensor, the more you can expand the digital image to make a large picture. A large pixel count also enables you to crop a small area of a photo and enlarge it to make a full-size picture. The sensor is a chip made of wafers of silicon.

High pixel counts have become a marketing gimmick, however, with small pocket cameras sometimes having 14 or 16 megapixels (MP, millions of pixels) crowded on their tiny sensor. For most purposes 6MP is plenty and more than 12MP is pointless. Packing too many pixels on a sensor requires the pixels to be smaller, and small pixels are less effective. A high pixel count alone does not ensure better pictures.

From the menu of most DSLRs you separately select image size and quality. Size governs the number of pixels forming the digital image. Quality determines how much information is packed in each pixel. Both settings contribute to the size of the digital image, as expressed in kilobytes or megabytes (MB). In most small pocket cameras you simply choose from a range of image sizes.

There is a disadvantage to digital images that are too large. They take up a lot of space on your hard drive. They also cause congestion in the e-mail system. 14MP cameras, set at the maximum, can produce 7MB images. One photo of that size is about the most that can travel comfortably in an e-mail. You can reduce the digital image of a photo in the re-size option of

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your editing software but first make sure you will not wish to crop the photo. Cropping can drastically decrease the number of bytes in the image.

DSLRs have larger sensors than small pocket cameras and can therefore comfortably accommodate more and larger pixels. The Canon G11 and G12, and S90 and S95, have a larger sensor but fewer pixels (10MP) than most other small cameras. Their superior picture quality is attributed mainly to these two differences in the sensor.

The light

Light is what photography is all about. After all, it is the light entering the lens of the camera that makes the photo. Light comes in diverse qualities and one of the main things a photographer learns is to recognize the kind of light that makes good pictures. Generally, at midday in midsummer, the strong sun directly overhead radiates a fierce unfriendly light. It makes hard shadows and gives flowers a washed-out appearance. There are, however, subjects such as certain buildings where the strong contrast of light and shade shows up structures or surface features and thereby helps the camera to capture the character of the building. Flowers, animals, and people usually look better in the shade or under clouds. That is where flowers radiate their rich colors. The familiar summer condition, "hazy, hot, and humid," produces light that tends to make everything look dull.

On sunny summer days, the light is most pleasant in the first half hour after dawn and the last half hour before dusk. The light then is soft but bright and clear and makes most outdoor subjects look their best. On summer evenings I often take a camera into Washington Square at about

8:00 p.m. looking for whatever may catch my eye. Actually the light is usually good for outdoor photography just after dawn and before dusk in any season.

Portraits (mug shots)

When photographing people don't stand too close to them or you will produce a strange perspective. Their noses will look too large and their ears will disappear behind their heads. Move back until you are 8 or 10 feet away and their heads will regain their natural proportion.



Fig. 4. The cameras and lenses I use most. The Nikon D50 DSLR has attached a super-zoom lens, 18-200mm, and an external flash aimed at the ceiling for bounce flash. The small Nikon 50mm prime lens captured the squirrel (Fig. 2, page 13). The little Canon S90 fits in my pocket and goes wherever I go.

When photographing people indoors, with a camera that has external flash, take advantage of the soft, diffused light from bounce flash. This, however, requires a relatively low ceiling, preferably not more than 10 feet high. If the ceiling is higher, too much light may be lost to illuminate your subject. If you have to use direct flash, remember to set red-eye reduction, and have the subject look at the camera so that his or her pupils will close in response

to the initial small flash. Direct flash, however, eliminates shadows, making faces look flat.

Some people flinch in anticipation of the flash and shut their eyes, even when you aim the flash at the ceiling. A good solution is to have them turn away about 30 degrees and look at something directly in front of them instead of a camera.

When doing portraits outdoors, the objective is to avoid hard shadows. A cloudy sky provides soft even light. If the sun is shining, place your subject in the shade of a tree or building

for similar light. If your subject's back is to the sun, and face in the shade, you can use direct flash as "back lighting." The effect is gentle and quite pleasing. Make sure the flash is set at ON, not AUTO, or it won't flash in bright daylight.

If you don't have a computer should you buy a digital camera?

Certainly! You obviously cannot store your photos in a computer if you don't have one but, with a digital camera, you can buy even better service and satisfaction than you could with film. All digital cameras have viewing screens where you can examine all the pictures currently stored on the camera's memory card. Every time you take a photo you can immediately look to see how it came out. At any time you can take the camera or its memory card to a store that does photo processing, such as a drug store, and they will make

you a set of prints. In addition they will put your photos on a CD for making future prints and for viewing the photos on a computer.

Ritz Camera, on Walnut Street, will transfer the digital images to a DVD, which has two uses. The DVD can be used to make more prints at any time. In addition you can put the disk in your DVD player and enjoy a slide show of your photos. Ritz will also make a book of your photos, twelve to a page. Thus, for each batch of photos you will have a set of prints, a DVD storing the digital images, and a picture book that serves as a guide to what is on the DVD. For a modest fee Ritz will even print one of your photos on a T-shirt.

Once your photos are on a CD or DVD you can safely delete them from the camera's memory card, leaving it clear for the next series of photos.

You cannot do photo editing in a computer if you don't possess one but certain newer cameras, especially DSLRs, contain editing programs that let you do, in the camera, such things as straightening the picture and eliminating various forms of distortion.

A word of advice

The best way to improve your photography is to take lots of photos. This gives you a good feel for the camera and it costs you nothing until you make or order prints. ■

Correction

In the Spring issue of *On the House*, David Roberts' article "Diet details left dangling" described how avidin in egg whites binds a B vitamin and prevents its absorption. The affected vitamin is biotin but the article incorrectly identified it as niacin. We apologize for the error.

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