

What's Inside

Nelly Childress

President of Council **Paul Coyne** is predicting a very active summer at Hopkinson House; swimmers can expect a revitalized swimming pool at the opening of the season.

Manager **Judi Forte's** wise recommendations are to be taken seriously for the well-being and safety of all residents of our building. She also reminds owners of the Annual Meeting and Election of HHOA Council on April 17.

The return to the courtyard of the beautifully-restored sculpture of Adam and Eve is lovingly described by **Paul Coyne**, whose involvement in the preservation of this art object made it possible.

Find out from the article by **Enny Cramer** about mother Minna Savar and talented son Murray Savar, residents of Hopkinson House who "visit vertically" from 22 floors apart.

Read **Louis DelSoldo's** interview of Kurt Perez, our long-term, dedicated employee at the Desk.

Interested in books? Check the report by **Margie Weinstein** who led the **One Book One Philadelphia** discussion at one of the WSCL Discussion Group sessions.

What's new in the Solarium? Find out from **Susan Tomita's** article.

Do you struggle to speak and write better English? Read **David Robert's** comments on "Vogue Words and More." It's a must!

During the Winter Olympic Games in Sochi there was a small lobby display of an Olympic torch and other memorabilia from the 1996 Summer Games held in Atlanta. These belonged to resident Millie Korn who was one of the torch bearers when the Olympic flame passed through Philadelphia. Read about the torch relay by **Nelly Childress**.

For the Philadelphia Primary Election on May 20 you are reminded of the value of the act of voting.

In this issue a new column is being inaugurated: **Chef Luigi's Corner** with a recipe for Gnocchi Verdi or Spinach Ricotta Gnocchi. ■

on the HOUSE

The Newsletter of
Hopkinson House • Spring 2014



Message from Council

Paul Coyne



Let's look at the big picture.

Code of Regulations

A Committee was appointed to recommend changes in the Hopkinson House Code of Regulations. This work has been completed. Each member of Council has been asked to review a number of articles of the Code. Following this phase the amended Code of Regulations will be submitted for legal review.

Design Committee

The Design Committee — Gail Winkler, James Scott and Sunny Feldman — has met with representatives of Shepherd Restoration Engineers to discuss their proposal for the renovation of the front and back lobbies. A second meeting is to be held shortly. The Committee is anticipating completion of the design phase of the project by the time the outdoor work comes to an end. This project includes improvements to the

doorman's station in the front lobby, and to the lighting, the front desk, and the mail room, as well as an expansion of the package storage area to the back lobby.

Redesigning the front desk will involve updating the wiring as most communications — fire, security cameras, elevator imaging, etc. — come through the front desk. New mailbox doors, surfaces and finishes as well as an electronic bulletin board may be considered.

Front building outdoor work

Council approved the outdoor work at the front of the building and authorized calling for bids. This work will entail removing the brick pavement and replacing it with broom-swept concrete approved by the Philadelphia Historical Commission. Damage due to water leakage on the supporting structural beams will also have to be repaired. In two cases, the new waterproofing material and the new expansion joints will be just under the south facing wall of the garden beds. This will require moving these walls back one foot. The schedule for the outdoor work will be subject to weather conditions — concrete needs a curing time of 30 days for each section of the pavement replaced — and

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An Occasional Photo



The magnolia tree on the west side of Washington Square
Picture taken by David Roberts in the spring of 2012

on the HOUSE

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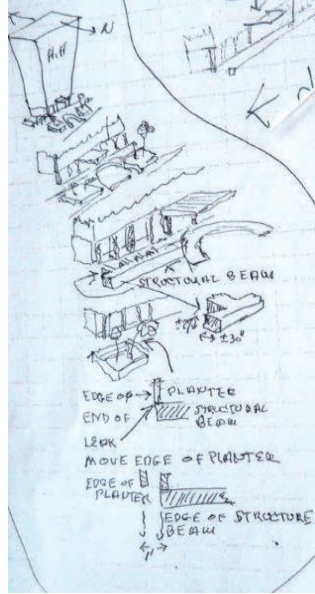
Website

Find past issues of *on the House*
at www.thehopkinsonhouse.com

Message from Council

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to the time it takes to restore the structural beams, and to install the waterproofing membrane and the expansion joints.



Sketch of underground work in front of the building

The replanting of the garden beds will be integrated into the outdoor work as it progresses.

Landscaping Committee

Following Council's approval of the replanting of the large garden bed at each end of the front of the building, the Landscape Committee — Victoria Kirkham, Rosina Coltellaro and James Scott — are meeting with representatives of the landscape architectural firm Orsetti and Associates, to discuss their plan.

Swimming pool

The swimming pool project is moving along on schedule and will be ready for the pool season. All the pipes showed several degrees of deterioration and clogging with calcification. They have been replaced with new special-purpose stainless



New swimming pool stainless steel pipe

steel ones easily accessible outside the pool. Anecdotally, one of the removed pipes had what appeared to be a diaper choking the flow! ■

Pictures by Paul Coyne

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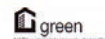


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Message from Management

Judi Forte



Welcome, spring!!! This past winter has done us all in. Between the ice, the snow and the sub-zero wind chills, we are all worn out. There is a lot of spring cleaning to do to get the building shining again, but we have a great housekeeping staff and they are up to the task. They have our heartfelt appreciation for all of the snow and ice removal they have done over the past several months. We also want to thank members of the maintenance and front desk

departments who stayed here and made sure we had coverage during the many snow events.

Concrete Work

As usual, we have a busy year planned for the building and the grounds. There is concrete work scheduled for the front of the building, which will be starting in the spring. Due to leaks in the garage, the sidewalk bricks in the front of the building are scheduled to be replaced with poured concrete which is in accordance with the regulations of the Philadelphia Historic Commission. The color of the concrete was also chosen by the Historic Commission to conform to the conveyance of the building in 1962 and the original intent of the Architect, Oskar Stonorov. Leaking expansion joint material below the existing curb

and pavers is scheduled to be replaced and a waterproofing system to protect the structural concrete and promote positive drainage below the wearing slab will be installed. The driveway cobblestones will remain. There will be waterproofing and repairs to the marble planters on the north side of the building.

The Design Committee has scheduled meetings with Shephard Restoration to work on the renovations of the main and lower lobbies.

Annual Meeting

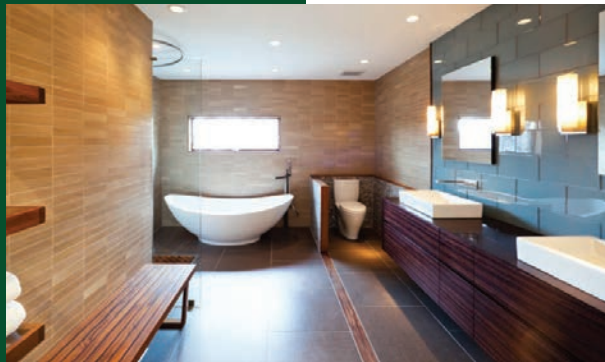
Reminder: The Hopkinson House Annual Meeting and Election will be held on Thursday, April 17, 2013, at 7 p.m., in the Solarium. If you are interested in becoming a member of

the HHOA Council, return your completed resume to the Management Office by March 26. There are four seats open on the Council this year.

Pool

The pool is undergoing major pipe replacement but will open on May 24, 2014 for the summer season. Membership information, pool hours and pool Rules and Regulations will be available the first week in May. Please be advised that you must be a full-time resident of Hopkinson House in order to be eligible for single or household membership. Extended family members, summer visitors, friends, etc. are not eligible to become a part of the membership. These are guests and can only make use of the pool facilities by purchasing a

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visit website to view current projects in Hopkinson House and throughout the area

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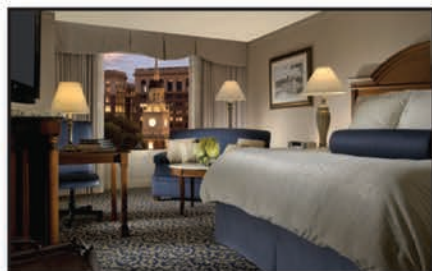
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Message from Management

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guest pass and having the unit owner or resident accompanying them to the pool. A day pass will also allow you to purchase guest passes.

Smoking

A reminder that smokers who are grandfathered under the Hopkinson House Smoking Ban may not smoke on their balconies or on Hopkinson House property. You must confine your smoking to the inside of your units. At this point in time, **renters are no longer grandfathered under the smoking ban which went into effect September 2012.** All leases have reached at least one renewal period since the ban, and renters are not permitted to smoke anywhere in the building or on the grounds. **Owners who bought their units after the ban went into effect and their guests may not smoke anywhere on Hopkinson House property, including the inside of their units.**

We receive many complaints about smoke infiltrating units from adjoining units and from across the hall. We ask that those smokers in the building who are grandfathered under the ban and continue to smoke in their units be considerate of their neighbors. We ask that you purchase an air filtration system to prevent the smoke and odors from penetrating other units.

Hopkinson House is a smoke-free building in all of the common areas.

The use of barbecue grills is prohibited in any apartment, balcony or common area of high rise buildings by order of the Philadelphia Fire Department.

Balconies

With the onset of warm weather, more and more residents will be using their balconies to dine and relax. Please exercise caution when watering your outdoor plants. Do not let the water overflow the drip pan under the planter. Do not sweep dirt or water off the balcony. Your neighbor below does not want to be doused with water or have dirt fall on them or their meal.

A reminder: Shade umbrellas may be used on the balconies with certain restrictions. On November 24, 2008, the HHOA Council amended the conditions under which umbrellas may be used. Umbrellas may be used on the balconies between May 1 and October 31. From November 1 through April 30, umbrellas may not be used on the balconies. They must be taken down and securely stored away during this time.

During any periods of high winds, all loose or removable objects, including patio umbrellas, must be removed from the balconies. Plants, pots, receptacles and other movable objects are prohibited from being placed on or maintained on the ledges of the balconies. The height of planters, pots, receptacles and all loose or movable objects must be below the height of the balcony wall. Owners and residents are prohibited from mounting, installing or otherwise attaching any item to the balcony. Owners and residents may not drill holes or otherwise alter the face of the balcony.

Moves and Deliveries

Deliveries are not permitted on Sundays or on legal and religious holidays. When ordering furniture, appliances,

etc., please be sure that the company you are buying from does not schedule the delivery on any of these days.

We are heading into the busiest moving time of the year. **Please book your moving date as soon as possible and confirm it with a check for \$150.** Only one move per day is permitted Monday through Saturday between the hours of 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. We are sorry that we cannot make exceptions to this rule.

Moves are not permitted on Sundays or legal and religious holidays. A complete list of black out days for moves and deliveries is in the Winter 2014 on the House. If you delay, you may not get the moving date that you need. Remember that most moves occur on the last day of the month when leases expire, so please plan well in advance. Moving companies get booked up as well and moving dates will be limited. This could cause you additional expenses if you are unable to move out on your planned day.

When you have boxes to discard, please do not leave them in the trash room. Break the boxes down and call the resident services desk at 215-923-1776 ext. 110 to have housekeeping pick up the boxes.

Noise

The two most common noise complaints that we receive are because of uncarpeted units and TV volume. **The Hopkinson House Community Rules require all units to have 80% carpeting in the living room, dining room, bedrooms and halls.** The bathroom and kitchen are not required to be carpeted. Landlords are responsible for

their tenants complying with this rule. **Exercise equipment should not be used after 10 p.m. or before 8 a.m.**

TV volume is to be kept at a level where it does not interfere with the peace and quiet of neighboring units. If you have difficulty hearing a lowered TV, think about investing in a head set for your TV. If you are prone to falling asleep with your TV on, please remember to set the sleep timer.

Mothballs

When storing your winter clothes over the summer season, please have your closets treated for moths by a certified exterminator if you are experiencing a problem and you are hanging your clothes for storage. If you use mothballs, please be sure to use airtight containers and/or garment bags in which to store your laundered or dry cleaned clothes, and follow the manufacturer's instructions on the box. Seal the garment bags or containers. If you can smell mothballs, the containers are not airtight. Hang the garment bags in a closet. Place airtight containers on a shelf out of the reach of children and pets. This will keep the moth ball odor from permeating your living space or seeping out of your unit.

Mothballs are registered pesticides and must be used where and how indicated on the label. Store any remaining mothballs in the original container inside an airtight plastic bag, and put it out of the reach of children and pets.

From council, management and staff at Hopkinson House, have a safe and wonderful spring. ■

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Welcome Home to the Adam and Eve Sculpture!

Paul Coyne

After council authorized the restoration of our prized **Adam and Eve** sculpture, attributed to Vivarelli and Stonorov, we requested Pall Mall Partnership to research and appraise the sculpture, and Materials Conservation Co. LLC was selected for the job. The sculpture was then insured from the date of its removal to the date of its return to the courtyard of Hopkinson House — around seven months. During that period Adam and Eve were undergoing rejuvenation treatments at 1625 North Howard Street, just north of Girard Avenue in Philadelphia.

While much attention was given to our sculpture as it left its home, riding in the back of a straining pick-up truck that drove at less than 12 mph, Adam and Eve returned with some fanfare, looking beautiful, bedded on a long open truck with a hydraulic lift gate, a custom-designed built-in dolly, a gantry crane, and swathed in blankets, rigged and ready to be moved. Mounted on the dolly, the figures were pushed to the ramp entrance of the courtyard, and pulled and pushed up and down onto the courtyard. The gantry was assembled, the statue lifted and set on its base,

secured with four stainless threaded rods and then settled in place — all this without any noise being made above that of a casual conversation.

Adam and Eve haven't looked so good since they first took residence at Hopkinson House. The ferrous metal is gone, the open cracks were filled, the dangling toe has been refastened, and the mounting bolts — now stainless steel — have been replaced. Parts were also ground out and the bronze replaced.

On the Hopkinson House website you can access an excellent short video by fellow

resident David Kurkowski on the reinstallation of the sculpture. It is great and worth a visit.

There will be a rededication of the Adam and Eve sculpture when the weather improves. Watch for the announcement. ■



Sculpture of Adam and Eve leaving Hopkinson House



Restored sculpture of Adam and Eve returns home



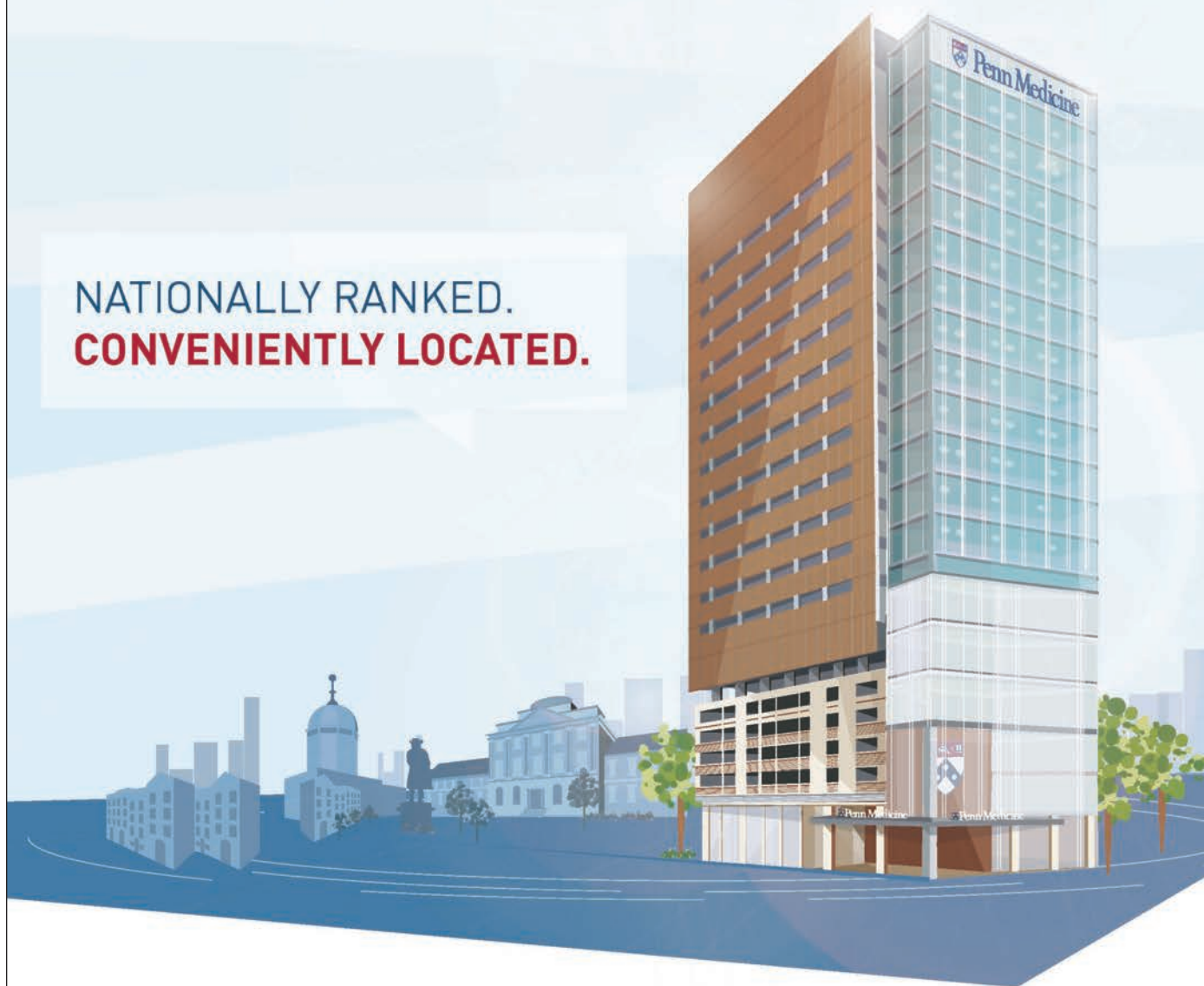
Restored sculpture of Adam and Eve moving to the Courtyard



Restored sculpture of Adam and Eve in its rightful place

Adam and Eve haven't looked so good since they first took residence at Hopkinson House.

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The Savars: Minna and Son Murray

Enny Cramer

A variety of people live among us in Hopkinson House: old, young, married, unmarried, multi-generational — we have them all. One pair, however, has a unique quality. Every Sunday morning they “visit vertically” from 22 floors apart, and have brunch together while doing the Sunday *New York Times* Crossword puzzle IN INK.

Minna, born in 1925, and her one surviving son Murray, born in 1955, are both lifelong Philadelphians. Murray moved into the Hopkinson House in 1999. He has been a caring, active community member serving many years on the Dispute Resolution Committee. In addition, he enthusiastically accompanies our community holiday celebrations on the piano. He attended Central High School of Philadelphia and Gratz College Hebrew High School Division. He honed his musical talents at Settlement Music School, Jenkintown Music School, and Temple University College of Music.

His professional experience is entirely music-related. For the past 37 years he has taught all grade levels of music at The Agnes Irwin School in Rosemont, Pennsylvania. He is now the Music Department chair. Many of us remember his a cappella girls’ choir, The Bel Cantos, who perform for us in our lobby during the December Holidays. These 19 singers also have performed at many venues throughout the area. Most recently they sang at the International World Peace Concert at the Kimmel Center.

Observing Murray with these talented young women is quite

a treat. In addition to his full schedule, he is the accompanist and occasional cantor soloist at Temple Emanuel in Cherry Hill, New Jersey on weekends.

Murray applies a unique curriculum based on The Kodály Method of music education, which he studied both in the United States and in Hungary. It uses a sequential, child-development approach similar to language development.

Murray is also a lover of languages. Presently studying Spanish, he is also able to communicate in Hebrew, French, German, and Hungarian.

Murray’s mother and his older brother Larry moved to the Hopkinson House in 2003. Larry was born with Down syndrome and passed away in May 2008 at age 59. We would often see the two Savar brothers walking in the neighborhood. Larry was a happy and friendly person. He loved music and dancing. In his bedroom he would often have the stereo, the radio, the TV, and even a cassette player playing simultaneously! He lived with his family from birth until a very short time before his death, when he went into hospice care at Elwyn Institute. Larry touched the lives of all who had the privilege to know him. He is deeply missed.

Their father, Martin, was a World War II veteran. In 1933, at age 18, he opened a letterpress printing shop at 429 Market Street. Drafted in 1941, then sent overseas to the South Pacific, he served three years in Australia and New Guinea. In May, 1945,



Picture by David Roberts

Picture of the Savars, Minna and son Murray at home.

while on his 30-day leave home, he met Minna. They married seven months later on Christmas Day, assuring that Marty would never forget their anniversary date. A year later he again opened a printing shop in what is now Northern Liberties. In 1960, the business moved to West Mount Airy. Marty passed away in July 1995.

Murray’s mother, Minna, spent the first 19 years of her life in South Philly. She graduated from South Philadelphia High School for Girls in June 1942. For five years after graduation she worked in a real estate office on Point Breeze Avenue. We remember Minna’s interesting, historical comments about South Philly during our last Mural Arts bus tour. After 1970 Minna was a secretary and administrative assistant at The Green Tree School in Germantown for 15 years.

In the 1950’s Minna and her husband were very active members of the Philadelphia Association for Retarded Citizens. Larry attended public school until age 21. He then entered sheltered vocational training. In 2003 Larry was diagnosed with early onset Alzheimer’s disease, which necessitated their move to Hopkinson House to be near Murray.

After Larry’s passing, Minna immersed herself in the varied group activities offered by the Washington Square Citizens League. Her intelligence and sense of humor are true assets at the many discussions, meetings, and events. Since 1966 she has been a member of MENSA, an international organization of people with IQs of over 140.

I hope that you have enjoyed reading about two of the many interesting people who are our neighbors. ■



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Kurt Perez

Louis DelSoldo

Every morning for the past 26 years, Kurt Perez gets into his car, drives to work, and parks his car in the garage, ready to start his busy work day at Hopkinson House. Kurt came on board in January of 1988, working all shifts, weekends and holidays, in a variety of positions, first in housekeeping, then as door-man, and finally at the desk, where for three years he served as Desk Supervisor. Today at 70, Kurt mans the desk most weekdays and helps Cathy in the office when needed.

Kurt was born on November 11, 1943, "Veterans Day," as he likes to remind us. He grew up in Monmouth Junction, New Jersey, 30 miles outside of New York City. He served two terms in the Army Corps of Engineers in Vietnam. In

1983 he moved to Philadelphia where he held several jobs in housekeeping at many hotels, including the Sheraton.

Kurt's long tenure at Hopkinson House has enabled him to work under many managers, including Charles Dickinson Marks, Manna Tancredi, Jim Dunlap and now Judi Forte. "Things change every time there is a new manager," Kurt says with a jaded smile. Kurt has also seen many changes come to the job of desk clerk over the years. "Computers for one thing," he says, remembering how earlier work orders had to be hand-written and delivered to housekeeping and maintenance. He also noted the increase in the number of packages delivered every day as more and more residents take to internet shopping.

He is looking forward to the proposed changes in the desk and lobby areas and hoping that some space will be specifically dedicated to packages.

Kurt enjoys long weekend at the shore and taking walks with Randy, his life partner. They are very fond of Jane, their rescued Sheltie. But Kurt's favorite pastime is spending time with his grandsons, Antonio, aged 16, and Alex, 7 — particularly when they all go out to dinner or to the park.

What does Kurt like about his job and why has he stayed so long? "The residents are the main thing, and also my fellow employees," he says. You will note that every Friday, Kurt wears a red tie, "Until all the troops come home from overseas," he explains. ■



Kurt Perez

Picture by David Roberts



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*Thaw'd are the snows;
and now the lusty Spring*

*Gives to each mead a
neat enamelling;*

*The palms put forth their
gems, and every tree*

*Now swaggers in her
leafy gallantry.*

*[Taken from "Farewell
frost, or welcome spring"
by Robert Herrick]*

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One Book, One Philadelphia

Margie Weinstein

The Washington Square Citizens' League (WSCL) Discussion Group joined with the Philadelphia Community in celebrating the 2014 One Book, One Philadelphia program. The goal of the program is to promote reading, literacy, and library use by encouraging the community to come together through reading and discussing a single book.

One Book began in 2003 with the novel *The Price of a Child* by local author Lorene Cary. It began with a few corresponding events and activities. The following year, an ardent library supporter became chair. She organized a steering committee that cultivated relationships with numerous sponsors and partners. Now, a decade later, One Book 2014 offered an 8-week program from January 22 to March 19 consisting of more than 100 events and over 600 community partners.

The book is chosen by a selection committee comprised of library staff, library volunteers and educators. It must be of outstanding literary quality, be written by a living author, and must appeal to people from all walks of life. There is no specific agenda or social issue, but most featured books have touched on relevant concerns.

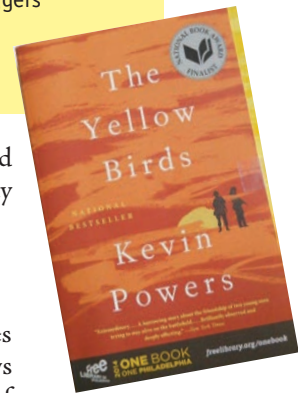
There are similar programs throughout the country. Philadelphia is not the first, but many think it is the best due to its diversity and scope.

Monday afternoon, February 3, 25 WSCL members met for a provocative and memorable discussion of the 2014 book selection, *The Yellow Birds*, by Kevin Powers. The author is an army veteran who served in Iraq in 2004 and 2005. The book is a 2012 National Book Award finalist and winner of the Pen/Hemingway Award for First Fiction. It tells the story of a young soldier's har-

You may want to add these "One Book" featured books to your reading list:

The Color of Water by James McBride
The Things They Carried by Tim O'Brien
Ben Franklin 300 by Remer & Talbott
Waiting for Snow in Havana by Carlos Eire
The Complete Persepolis by Marjane Satrapi
Create Dangerously by Edwidge Danticat
The Buddah in the Attic by Julie Otsuka
What is the What? by Dave Eggers
The Soloist by Steve Lopez
War Dances by Sherman Alexie

Picture by Scott Childress



rowing experiences in Iraq and his alienation from community and family upon his return. It is a brilliant depiction of the truth and tragedy of war.

The discussion included issues that are very much in the news and in the hearts and minds of all Americans, as we welcome home our gallant service men and women.

Enjoy the reading, learning, and discussing! ■

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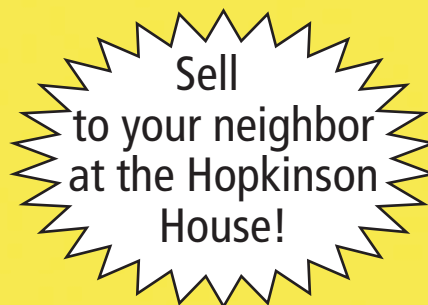
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New in the Solarium

Susan Tomita

New activities animated the solarium this past winter: a morning Zumba class, and a monthly Pop-Up Movie Night. This spring, avail yourself of these opportunities for getting in shape and drop-in fun. The convenience to Hopkinson House residents can't be beat.

Pop-Up Movie Nights

One Tuesday a month, Hopkinson House residents can take in big-screen entertainment in the solarium presented by the Washington Square Citizens' League. Pop-Up Movie Nights feature films not likely to appear on TV. Happy endings are guaranteed, as well as food for thought and conversation.

The featured films represent a mix of genres: *Hear My Song* (a dramatic comedy about an elusive Irish tenor); *Robot and Frank* (a family tale about ageing, memory, and robot friendship); and *Amélie* (a fantastic Parisian romance). Audience numbers are in the 20- to 30-year-old range. The mood is relaxed.

On Tuesday, April 8, at 7:30 p.m., the critically acclaimed documentary *Young@Heart* continues the movie series with a behind-the-scenes look at world-touring rock singers from Massachusetts — average age, 80. Solarium doors are open 30 minutes before and after the show for socializing. Snacks are BYO. Couch potatoes, come on up!

For future films, check the calendar and postings on Hopkinson House bulletin boards and www.thehopkinsonhouse.com.

Zumba®!

Monday mornings from 9 to 9:45 a.m., a high-energy dance workout moves to Latin, African, rock, and hip-hop music in the solarium. Licensed Zumba instructor Janet Ford leads the class "to help people who would never come into a gym." Unlike machine-filled gyms, her Zumba session is a happy place.

Zumba is a dance fitness program that blends upbeat rhythms with easy-to-follow steps. It claims to reach 14 million people through exercise classes worldwide. Use of popular global tunes and non-verbal instruction distinguish the Zumba Fitness brand and its founder, dancer-choreographer Alberto "Beto" Perez from Colombia.

In the solarium, Janet's aerobic, low-impact exercise is gentle on aging knees and limbs while toning all body parts. A Hopkinson House participant says Zumba has lowered her blood sugar and loosened the tightness in her shoulders. Individuals move at their own level and can work up a sweat easily. Resistance bands and light hand weights are sometimes used.

Classes move to the songs of Pharrell Williams, Celia Cruz, Tina Turner, Michael Bublé, and others. The tunes are about four minutes long and vary each week. They are repeated often enough to trigger body memory.

"I want even the rhythmically challenged to say 'I can do this!'" Janet declares. Her own dance career began with ballet classes at PHILADANCO. After raising four children and not dancing for more than 35 years, she regained fitness



Picture by Susan Tomita

From left to right : Jean Tomeszko, Janet Ford, Marie Novak

through Zumba and lost 35 pounds along the way. Janet and three of her children make up the Ford Fitness Team, which specializes in teaching Zumba (and more) across the city.

The small solarium class welcomes more participants. Rhythmic coordination

and the joy of moving are not limited to the young.

Sessions are \$6 and are open to Hopkinson House residents only. Participants must sign a release form.

For more information, call Janet Ford at 267-968-4624. ■



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Vogue Words and More

David Roberts

The main purpose of these articles is to share with you the fruits of my own long struggle to speak and write better English. At the same time I hope to give some comfort, with perhaps a wry chuckle, to those among us who love the English language and who hate seeing it degraded, a process driven largely by TV.

A valuable tool

Good English is not just a matter of aesthetics or personal pleasure. The ability to speak and write simply and clearly is a priceless asset in the world of work. The law-school curriculum includes a course on legal writing, which teaches students to write simple, unambiguous sentences. As a result, people with law degrees tend to be better writers than most of us.

It is well known that employers are having a hard time recruiting people qualified for the jobs they have vacant, especially for junior positions. According to surveys the most important deficiency is not in math, or a mechanical skill, or the ability to use a computer, but in the ability to speak and write English. Employers complain that many job applicants cannot construct a simple sentence. Poor English is thus an important cause of unemployment.

Forty years in science and technology (infectious-disease research and vaccine development) taught me that the use of clear, simple language is essential to the successful shaping and sharing of scientific ideas. Furthermore, having recently spent two days in court defending a patent, I would dread having to defend one written in careless English. The inventor must ensure that the patent attorney understands what he has invented and why he thinks it is patentable. The attorney must write the patent application in language that will effectively show the validity of the patent's claims. The patent will then have a good chance of being granted and of surviving any challenge.

Why we use vogue words

The habitual use of vogue words and phrases is a symptom of a serious malady. As small children we learn the language by copying the speech of our parents and of other adults and older children. As we mature, however, we should grow out of this habit and learn to think for ourselves about the words we use, with help from a dictionary when needed. Adults who parrot vogue words and phrases are still behaving as children instead of thinking

for themselves. Too many of these people have jobs talking on TV, and too many of us copy them. This is a bad habit, a laziness that we can overcome with a little effort. The habitual use of vogue words restricts our vocabulary, shutting out a rich variety of words that are better.

Now for two more vogue words.

Cynical

Cynical and *skeptical* have different meanings but the useful distinction between them is being lost. Today, when people say *cynical* they usually mean *skeptical*. Cynics are suspicious of other people and believe their actions are always self-serving. My favorite definition of *cynical* is, "incredulous of human goodness." About 50 years ago, in a letter to the editor of *The Daily Telegraph*, the English novelist Evelyn Waugh nicely captured the essence of cynicism. I have forgotten what his letter was about but it began with an unforgettable sentence, "It is fashionable nowadays to impute base motives to charity." Skepticism is not an emotional attitude but a tendency to doubt statements or beliefs until they are confirmed by evidence or other supporting information. A *skeptical* person usually shows

prudence or caution based on experience. This is exemplified in President Reagan's rule, "Trust but verify." If an economist says he expects the economy to grow by 10% this year, and you laugh, you are being *skeptical* not *cynical*. I hope our readers are happy skeptics, not bitter cynics.

Utilize and utilization

In trying to keep it short and simple, beware of words that end in -ize or -ation. One of the worst is *hospitalization*, which combines both endings but simply means placement in a hospital.

Utilize and *utilization* are words that appeal to the hot-air merchants—those who think longer words are more impressive—but each word has a 3-letter alternative that is much stronger. Replace *utilize* with the simple verb, *use*, pronounced yooz, and replace *utilization* with the simple noun, *use*, pronounced yooss. "How did you use your time in jail?" is much easier to digest than "How did you utilize your incarceration?"

I had hoped that the brevity forced on its users by Twitter might lead to a general increase in the use of shorter words, but, after seven years, I see no evidence of it. ■

Nick Meli, Jr.

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Carrying the Torch through Philadelphia for the June 1996 Atlanta, Georgia Olympics

Nelly Childress

During the XXII Olympic Winter Games in Sochi, Olympic memorabilia were kindly lent by neighbor and Council member Millie Korn for a display in the back lobby. The Olympic torch she owns was the “pièce de résistance.” Millie was one of the Philadelphia Olympic Torch Bearers for the 1996 Summer Games of the XXVI Olympiad in Atlanta, Georgia.

The torch relay started on April 27 and ended on the date of the Opening Ceremony. It covered 16,699 miles across the U.S. and included a trek on the path of the Pony Express, a ride on the Union Pacific Railroad and one torch was taken into space for the first time. The route, designed to take in

as many historically and culturally significant locations as possible, came through Philadelphia. Runners took the flame from the Liberty Bell down 6th Street to Walnut Street, up Walnut Street to West Philadelphia then on to West Chester. Millie carried the torch for one mile at around 4:30 a.m. Torch bearers included former Olympians, people somehow linked to the Olympic movement, people who had been nominated locally as community heroes, and people selected in a drawing. Torch bearers were allowed to purchase the torch they had carried.

The torch was designed by Malcolm Greer and features 22 aluminum “reeds” intended

to represent the number of times that the Games had been held. A gold-plated band towards the base of the torch features the names of all host cities up to and including Atlanta. The Olympic logo is etched into another band near the top. The handle, made of Georgia hardwood, is found near the center of the 30-inch, 3-pound torch.

The Atlanta Games were memorable for two events: The Olympic torch lighting by Mohammed Ali, one of the most inspiring and emotional



Olympic torch used for the 1996 Atlanta Summer Games

moments in Olympic history and the tragedy of the Centennial Olympic Park bombing on July 27.

Although Millie had the opportunity to fly to Atlanta for a short time during the Games, it was to attend the American Heart Association Delegate Assembly in that city. ■



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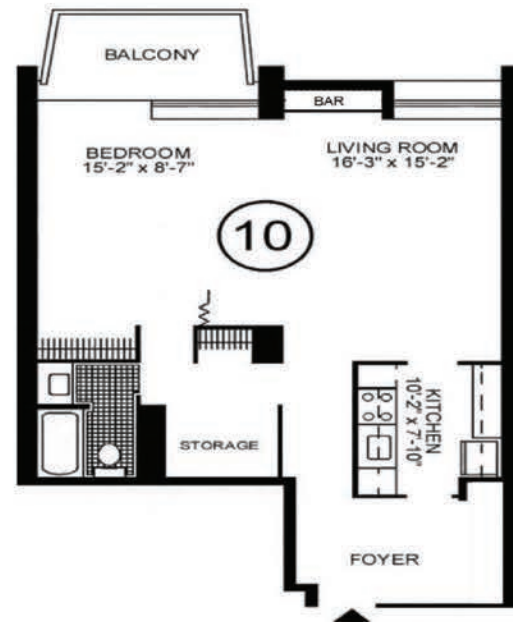
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Why Vote? But Why Not Vote?

Nelly Childress

As we approach the May 20th Primary Election, candidates for Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Representative in Congress and others increase their campaign advertising to attract the largest number of voters.

Why should you vote in any election? Many call voting a sacred right, others see it as a moral responsibility of all eligible citizens of a society or as one of the most important parts of our political system and the cornerstone of democracy.

The U.S. Constitution did not originally guarantee citizens the "right to vote." The U.S. was created with the understanding that only certain individuals would make decisions when it came to government. But after the Civil War, the 14th Amendment guaranteed

rights and privileges of citizenship to all persons born within the U.S. Two years later the 15th Amendment stated that no citizen is to be denied the right to vote based on race, color or previous condition of servitude. Between 1920 and 1971 three more amendments and the Voting Rights Act gave the right to vote to women, forbade poll or any other taxes, or the abridgment by any means including literacy tests of the right to vote of 18-year or older individuals. Much has been done to give every American citizen of voting age the right to vote. Abraham Lincoln said: "Elections belong to the people. It's their decision. If they decide to turn their backs on the fire and burn their behinds, then they will just have to sit on their blisters."

Many today complain about politicians not listening to the public. Of course, if we do not bother to vote our voice will not be heard by our elected officials in the first place. Our elected representatives are guided by what we say, particularly when we vote.

If we don't vote we are telling our politicians that we don't care about what they do, and that is a dangerous thing to tell them. David Foster Wallace said in *Up Simba!*: "If you are bored and disgusted with politics and don't bother to vote [...] do not believe that you're not voting, there is no such thing as not voting: you either vote by voting, or you vote by staying home and tacitly doubling the value of some diehard's vote." ■



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Gnocchi Verdi or Spinach and Ricotta Gnocchi

Louis Del Soldo

Gnocchi are small, ball-shaped Italian dumplings served in one of a variety of sauces. The word “gnocchi” in Italian can also mean a bump or a lump, and it can be used pejoratively to describe a blockhead! The most common gnocchi are made of flour and potato, but Apicius, the ancient food writer, describes a type of gnocchi made with semolina and milk. Gnocchi can be sauced with a simple tomato

sauce, pesto, a Gorgonzola sauce, or they can be served in a soup of homemade broth. Very large spinach gnocchi are called gnudi. This recipe for spinach gnocchi owes much to Marcella Hazan whose *Classic Italian Cook Book* taught a generation of Americans to cook Italian food at home. I have chosen a tomato butter and cream sauce which complements the green gnocchi both in flavor and color. *Buon appetito!* ■

Chef Luigi's Corner



Picture by Louis Del Soldo

Spinach & Ricotta Gnocchi with Tomato Butter & Cream Sauce

A note about the ingredients:

Italian food is simple, so the best ingredients make a difference. I always use fresh spinach, washing the leaves and boiling them in the water that clings to them from the wash and a little salt. One could also use one 10-ounce package of frozen spinach. It is imperative that you get as much liquid out of the boiled spinach as possible. Either press the cooked spinach with a wooden spoon against a food strainer, or squeeze it with your hands when the spinach is not too hot to handle.

This recipe calls for a small amount of pancetta, but any unsmoked ham will suffice, and I have even made them for my vegetarian daughter without any ham. The ricotta and Parmesan cheese matter a lot — you want to buy them fresh from DiBruno's! And don't buy grated Parmesan as it loses its flavor very quickly. You can grate it yourself in the food processor.

The entire dish can be made hours ahead of time and cooked for a short time right before serving.

Gnocchi Verdi

Serves 4

- 1 T finely chopped yellow onion
- 2 T butter
- 2 T pancetta (or any unsmoked ham)
- 1 lb. fresh spinach washed and boiled
- Salt (perhaps a teaspoon)
- ¾ cup fresh ricotta
- ⅔ cup all-purpose flour
- 2 egg yolks
- 1 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
- A grating or two of nutmeg (this is optional)

Sauté the onion in the butter for a few minutes and add the chopped pancetta. Mix the ingredients together and add the squeezed spinach. All the butter will be absorbed by the spinach. In a mixing bowl, add the spinach mixture, ricotta and flour, mixing with a wooden spoon until they are well mixed. Add the egg yolks, grated cheese and nutmeg and mix well. You want a dry looking mixture that you will later shape into tiny balls. If there is too much liquid, you could add more cheese or flour.

Refrigerate the mixture for at least an hour, but several hours ahead of serving is also fine. While the gnocchi are chilling make your sauce.

A note about the ingredients:

The onion, carrot and celery can be chopped in the food processor, but each one separately as each will take a different time to cook. Italian canned tomatoes are an essential ingredient in this dish. Your can must say “product of Italy.” If it just says “imported from Italy,” the tomatoes might have been grown in North Africa or Israel and processed in Italy. It is best to use whole canned tomatoes and break them up in the sauce. The best Italian tomatoes come from the hills around Naples and are called San Marzano.

Sugo di pomodoro e panna or Tomato Butter and Cream Sauce

- ¼ lb. butter
 - 3 T finely chopped yellow onion
 - 3 T finely chopped carrot
 - 3 T finely chopped celery
 - ⅔ cup canned Italian tomatoes
 - 2 teaspoons salt
 - ½ cup heavy cream
- Put all the ingredients except the heavy cream in a saucepan and cook for 1 hour, uncovered. Puree the cooked tomatoes, either through a food mill, the food processor, or best by using an immersable blender. When you are ready to serve, heat the sauce and add the cream.
- You can make the little balls of gnocchi ahead of cooking time too. Roll the chilled spinach mixture into tiny spheres, the size of a jack ball or slightly smaller, about ½ inch in diameter. You can shape them ahead of time and lay them single file on a tray or plate. You may also

return them to the refrigerator until you are ready to cook. Your hands will get messy, but you will be having fun!

Bring a pot of water to boil with a good teaspoon or two of salt. Heat your sauce with the cream and keep the flame low while you cook the gnocchi. Put the gnocchi into the boiling water, ten or so at a time. They will sink but float back up to the top when they are cooked. Remove them with a slotted spoon and add them to the sauce. Cook all the gnocchi this way and serve hot.



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