



Newsletter of the Center City Residents' Association

Vol. 11 No. 3 Fall 2020

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CENTER CITY RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

1900 Market Street, 8th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19103
215-546-6719
centercity@centercityresidents.org
www.centercityresidents.org

Our Greene Countrie Towne

Rural Farmers Connect with Urban Eaters to Benefit All

By Judy Wicks

The pandemic has exposed the failure of our centralized industrial food system. Shelves in chain stores stand empty while mega-farms plow under mono-crops and pour milk down the drain. In contrast, our regional food system keeps growing stronger. Working together, rural farmers and urban eaters have found ways to connect directly, utilizing practices that promote organic, pesticide-free produce and humane treatment of farm animals, while building local supply chains that will have a lasting impact on our region's capacity to feed ourselves.

When the [Riverwards Produce Market](#) in Fishtown was unable to purchase flour from their national supplier due to shortages, owner Vince Finazzo turned to the [Pennsylvania Grain Coalition](#), a project of All Together Now PA, led by Local Food coordinator Katherine Rapin.

Through the coalition, Finazzo connected to [Small Valley Milling](#) near Halifax, PA. Owned and operated by the Steigman family, the mill processes heritage grains grown on their organic family farm and neighboring farms. Finazzo drove 35 miles to the mill to pick up 2,500 pounds of organic flour, now available at [Riverwards Produce Market](#), for his Philly customers who are doing more home baking during the pandemic.

Another exciting development happening through the Pennsylvania Grain Coalition is the launch of the PA Pantry Box, a selection of freshly milled flours, quick-cooking grains, dried beans, and cooking oil sourced from local growers. Instructions to sign up can be found via the All Together Now Local Food Guide: <https://alltogethernowpa.org/guide-to-finding-local-food-during-pandemic/>

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Riverwards Produce Market.

Continued from p.1

Farmers, too, have shown resilience. When restaurants were forced to close during the pandemic, [Green Meadow Farm](#) lost most of its customers. With a greenhouse full of produce, chickens laying eggs, and the first rhubarb of spring poking up from the ground, the Brendle family needed to find a new market. They began making food boxes of their farm products (and those of their Amish neighbors) for individual households.

Using social media to spread the word, they connected directly to customers and are now taking orders online and by phone for food boxes containing fresh greens, pasture-raised meats and eggs, cheese, butter, and other groceries, which can be picked up on the farm or at three urban locations. Some of the Brendles' restaurant clients who have remained open for take-out business serve as distribution points.

It's not surprising that industrial slaughterhouses, where workers stand shoulder to shoulder in stressful conditions, have become hotspots for COVID-19. Driven by a desire to maximize profits, industrial slaughterhouses process up to 20,000 animals a day on fast-moving conveyor belts, showing no reverence for the lives of the animals nor respect for the largely immigrant workforce. After thousands of workers became ill, spreading the disease to their communities and resulting in numerous deaths, the plants were forced to close by local health authorities.

In this centralized industrial system, monopolized by a handful of large corporations, the closure of a single slaughterhouse affects the entire country, and has caused a logjam in the system. With no place to go, millions of healthy pigs are being euthanized and discarded, while grocery stores and food banks experience meat shortages.

Industrial animal factories not only cause untold suffering to farm animals, but the concentration of manure pollutes our air and water, and the animal products we eat contain antibiotics and hormones. Industrial animal agriculture is a major contributor to climate change. Studies show that animal agriculture produces anywhere from 18 percent of greenhouse gas emissions worldwide, as reported by the UN, to an astonishing 51 percent according to the World

Watch Institute, which takes into account deforestation in such places as the Amazon in order to graze animals for the global meat industry.

Whether for health, morality, or climate-change reasons, it's important that we greatly reduce our consumption of animal products, and when we do eat meat, poultry, dairy, and eggs, to consume only that which is raised sustainably and humanely on family farms.

Meanwhile, local butchers like Heather Thomason, who owns [Primal Supply Meat](#) in Philadelphia, are operating at full capacity. When restaurants were forced to close, Thomason pivoted to an online business with deliveries made directly to residents. Unlike the industrial system, where animals are cruelly raised in cramped factories, Thomason sources her meat and poultry from local diversified farms where animals enjoy plenty of sunshine and fresh air in pasture-based systems, and are processed at small, family-owned slaughterhouses, which handle animals one at a time.

The failure of the industrial food system to demonstrate resilience has debunked the theory that only a centralized system of large corporate farms, with their chemical fertilizers and pesticides, and cruel animal factories can feed the world. On the contrary, as the pandemic reveals (and numerous studies from the UN and elsewhere confirm), it is a decentralized network of regional economies made up of diversified, organic family farms acting as true stewards of the land and farm animals that has the capacity to feed the world.

By working together and supporting the growth of local farms and the food enterprises that buy from them, we build regional self-reliance to reduce carbons, enjoy a healthful diet, and protect our environment and ourselves.

All Together Now: Let's source our food locally! <https://alltogeth-er-nowpa.org/guide-to-finding-local-food-during-pandemic/>

Philly Foodworks offers a discount to CCRA members. Use the code "CCRA" when signing up for home delivery and receive a \$20 discount on delivery charges.



Primal Supply Meat.



Green Meadow Farm.

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Newsletter Ad Rates

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Full Page	\$450.00	\$475.00
1/2 Page	\$250.00	\$275.00
1/4 Page	\$125.00	\$150.00

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President's Report

Hope and Healing

By Maggie Mund, CCRA President

As I write this in mid-August, Center City is beginning to resume its liveliness and *joie de vivre*, thanks in large part to a resilient restaurant scene that is maximizing its outdoor dining opportunities and breathing life into our strangely silent streets after June's unrest. Retail is also starting to re-emerge, as masked shoppers begin to frequent some "unessential" stores such as clothing, shoes, books and more. I still remember the thrill of going into a clothing store, feeling almost normal as I looked at clothes in person, grateful for this simple pleasure.



Maggie Mund
CCRA President

Yet we cannot forget that this is not normal, for thousands of our fellow citizens have died, and continue to die, while many more are hurting due to lost income and livelihoods. Our city is still in a state of flux—with advisory panels run by the Mayor and Controller looking at the city's response to the peaceful protests and looting; CCRA has applied to participate in both of these panels. As one of the neighborhoods most impacted by the unrest and COVID closures, we certainly deserve a seat at the table. (Editor's note: Mund has been appointed to the Controller's panel.)

In this trying time, CCRA has advocated for much more than just our neighborhood, joining coalitions of organizations lobbying the city for real police reform, more open streets, the renaming of Taney Street, and meaningful social-justice initiatives. The board is examining ways we can make more of a difference in these areas. Meanwhile, the nuts-and-bolts of life in the neighborhood continues.

CCRA is currently involved in four major development task forces—one, at 1608-1620 Sansom Street just ended with a virtual public meeting and CCRA vote of non-opposition to Southern Land's proposed mixed-use development that will replace a parking garage. Other task forces are concerned with residential mixed-use proposals by Pearl Properties at 19th and Chestnut, Alterra at 2012 Chestnut, and PMC on the Trader Joe's parking lot, which we are co-leading with Logan Square Neighborhood Association. All of these task forces are populated with CCRA volunteers—architects, planners, lawyers, brokers and others—who so generously give of their time and talents to get the best development for the neighborhood that they can negotiate. These proposals prove that, although maybe temporarily down, Center City is not "out." Our residential real-estate market continues to be strong, as people near and far flock to live in and among our quaint rowhouse neighborhoods and in our soon-to-be bustling core.

In addition to our advocacy, more crucial to the life of our neighborhood than ever, our role in communicating vital information to our members has taken on a new urgency. Our e-newsletter, this CCQ and social media thread are among the most informative of the city, with postings about city and state policies, procedures and happenings. Again, we have several volunteers associated with all of these communications vehicles, volunteers who believe in the organization and gladly contribute to the well-being of all of us.

CCRA is nothing without its people, and I am grateful every day for our board, general members, volunteers and staff.

Mission Statement

Serving as the voice of Center City West since 1947, The Center City Residents' Association (CCRA) promotes urban living; advocates for a safe, clean, diverse, and supportive community; pursues accountability; and encourages responsible development while preserving the neighborhood's historic heritage.

Meet Your New CCRA Board Members

Due to the pandemic, the Annual Meeting was canceled this year. Therefore, voting for new members was conducted online. CCRA welcomed three new members and reelected three incumbents to its Board of Directors, each to serve a three-year term that began July 1 and runs through June 30, 2023. Read about them here.



Michael Bowman (Incumbent Director)
Michael has been active on CCRA's Government Relations Committee, chair of Legislative Relations. He also served on the CCRA Zoning Committee. He is Principal at Bowman, LLC.



Tina Breslow
Tina is the founder of Breslow Partners, a Rittenhouse Square-based public relations firm that specializes in hospitality. Regarded as a key player in the introduction of Philadelphia chefs and restaurateurs to the national media, she pioneered the field of culinary PR with nothing more than a couple of clients and plenty of guts. As a board member working with the James Beard Foundation, Tina saw to it that the Foundation continued to include Philadelphians among its guest chefs, ensuring that the culinary cognoscenti looked to our city for hot trends and top talent. Born and raised in Northeast Philadelphia, Tina has resided in Rittenhouse Square since 1983. She looks forward to continuing her mission by promoting Philadelphia as one of the best places to live and work in America.



Harvey Ostroff (Incumbent)
A Rittenhouse Square-area resident, Harvey moved to "the city" three years ago with wife, Lisa, to join their three children and seven grandchildren and to enjoy the sights of Philly. A builder/developer, Harvey takes pride in creating residential environments by design. He has welcomed the opportunity to assist in preserving and enhancing the area's beauty, vibrancy and energy. Among his many philanthropic endeavors, Harvey served as president of the Feasterville Rotary Club, was elected Small Business Person of the Year from the Lower Bucks Chamber of Commerce and the Pennsylvania Small Business Association, and served on the board of the Golden Slipper Club Charities Camp. He can be seen picking up debris in Rittenhouse Square on Sunday mornings, and likes to cook and drink great wine with family and friends.



Richard Speizman
After 35+ years away from "home," Rick returned to Philadelphia in 2019. His wife, Faith Horowitz, was kind enough to join him. This move was enabled by Rick's retirement as a partner at a "Big Four" accounting and consulting firm, based in its Washington, D.C. office, and the sale of Faith's engineering firm. At his firm, Rick had national responsibility for the practice that provided tax services to nonprofit clients. Rick was well prepared for his return to Philadelphia, having remained an avid fan of the city's sports teams, and well informed of developments in the area. While particularly fascinated by the built environment, Rick is interested in all things Philadelphia. He looks forward to contributing to CCRA and helping to make Center City a better place to live and work for all.



Benjamin Weinraub
A Philadelphia-area native, Ben has lived in Center City for 20 years, of which the last 19 have been in the Rittenhouse Square neighborhood. He enjoys the walkability, history, and restaurants with his wife and infant daughter. He runs Vintage Redevelopment and serves on the Board of Tribe 12. He would like to help give back, through his interests in zoning, historic preservation, and pedestrian safety for all.



Benjamin Zuckerman (Incumbent)
A Rittenhouse Square-area resident for almost two decades, Ben is a retired trial lawyer who specialized in complex commercial litigation matters. He and his wife relish the energy and variety of life in Center City, and he is eager to help sustain and improve it through his service on CCRA's Board. Over the years he has been active in a number of nonprofit and cultural organizations, including board service at JEVS Human Services and the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Ben is also an accomplished photographer. He currently serves as Secretary to CCRA's Zoning Committee.

Philadelphia City Institute Library Active and Adapting

By Erin Hoopes, Head Librarian

During this extraordinary time, the library has been adapting at a rapid pace. While our building has been closed during the pandemic, we have been offering a variety of virtual programs to connect with patrons and neighbors:

- The Friends of PCI are sponsoring weekly virtual yoga-based movement classes, and our Cookbook Club also transitioned smoothly to Zoom meetings
- PCI librarians worked with staff at Parkway Central and the Materials Management division to organize a Big Book Giveaway program for Teens, which mailed 270 books to young people age 12-20 during April and May; the Big Book Giveaway for Teens was generously funded by the PCI Board of Managers and Teen Reading Lounge, a program of the Pennsylvania Humanities Council
- Several PCI staff members volunteered to support [food distribution efforts](#) throughout the pandemic
- We've enjoyed giving free books at The Sunday Love Project's breakfast distribution at the Church of the Holy Trinity, Philly PlayStreets, and Wharton Square Recreation Center
- PCI librarians developed and hosted multiple virtual book clubs in July and August focused on antiracism and racial justice for children, families, and teenagers

In early August, our branch began accepting returns of library materials and facilitating pickup of library materials in our lobby. We now have a 24/7 book drop for returning library materials anytime.

We are working onsite, and available to answer questions via telephone, email, and our Facebook page. Because of the uncertainty and fast-changing environment COVID-19 has created, the best ways to find out what library services we currently offer are to:

- Visit our [branch website](#)
- Call 215-685-6621 for a recorded message
- Walk by the library (1905 Locust Street) and check the signs on the front door
- Sign up for our [email newsletter](#)
- Check our [Facebook page](#)
- Email Erin Hoopes, Head Librarian hoopese@freelibrary.org

The Philadelphia City Institute Library was closed for construction and installation of a lift, and we are happy to announce that we now have a lift, enabling access to the Children's Library and meeting room on our lower level. When safety allows, we look forward to welcoming all of you back into our building to inaugurate the lift. We are grateful to so many of you for supporting the fundraising efforts of our Friends of PCI to turn this dream into a reality.



Erin Hoopes, PCI Head Librarian, staffs a library giveaway table at Point Breeze Mutual Aid Pop-Up Event organized by Queen Memorial Library, Dipes 'n' Wipes, and Wharton Square Recreation Center, July 23.

Greene Towne Opens with Detailed Safety Plan in Place

By Nicole Leapheart, Director of Communications and Marketing, GTMS

If you happen to be in the Logan Square neighborhood around 8 a.m., you will likely see children (trailed by their parents) zipping by on a scooter or perched on the back of a stroller, heading to Greene Towne Montessori School.

As families and schools were making decisions about how to safely navigate the pandemic, Greene Towne opened this summer to their All Day Montessori students, an extended-day/extended-calendar Montessori program comprising two classrooms: one with toddlers and the other with 3- to 6-year-olds. The children were excited to return when Greene Towne Montessori School reopened their buildings on June 22.

Greene Towne has implemented an extensive health and safety plan, aligned with guidelines from the CDC, Philadelphia's Department of Public Health, and CHOP PolicyLab. All children and staff begin their day with a health screening at the school gate. After saying goodbye to their parents or caregivers, children walk to their classroom and wash their hands. All staff members and children over 2 wear masks, except for when eating, napping, or playing outdoors.

A child's class is their cohort; they have no interaction with any other children in the school. Work time looks much the same as before COVID-19, but now tables that seat more than one child have clear plexiglass dividers so that the children can see around them as they work separately. Every child brings their own lunch, and everyone washes their hands. A lot.

During outside recess children do not need to wear masks, and enjoy playing in splash pads to cool down in the summer sun. The courtyard playground is sanitized between uses, as are multipurpose rooms.

"We have integrated increased cleaning and disinfecting protocols into our routines, and are more comfortable with them each day," says Head of School Sarah Sweeney-Denham. "Naturally, we have fewer students in the summer, and we are grateful to have this smaller group with which to adjust to the new requirements for health and safety. I'm pleased to tell you that it's going really, really well. The children have not missed a beat—they are thrilled to be back."

The school's protocols will be expanded for all students this fall. "As a small school, we are fortunate to be able to implement systems more easily than larger schools or districts that may have more complex challenges," Sweeney-Denham says. "The ability to put our protocols into place and adjust as needed has been invaluable. In fact, many area schools...planning for the coming year have reached out to Greene Towne as a leading resource."

Greene Towne Montessori School serves children 18 months old through Kindergarten and is accredited by the American Montessori Society and the Pennsylvania Association of Independent Schools. To learn more, visit www.gtms.org. The school has some spaces remaining for this fall and will soon be taking applications for 2021-22.



Greene Towne Primary students enjoy splash pads during recess.



This young learner has adjusted to wearing a mask while working with a puzzle.

Wildlife Sightings in Rittenhouse Square

By *Bonnie Eisenfeld*

This summer, people spending time in Rittenhouse Square noticed some unusual and cute little visitors: quails. Several neighbors posted messages about them on Facebook. St. Mark’s Church even posted a sermon about them.

Some birders have identified them as Common Quail (*Coturnix*), not a native species. Ebird says this quail is a “small pear-shaped gamebird, which breeds in taller grassland and grain fields from western Europe east to central Asia and winters in similar habitat in Africa, southern Europe, and South Asia.”

Some posters guessed the quails might be escapees from local restaurants or markets. Birders and other observers debated about whether quails could survive here on their own, and continued to report observations and to root for these small, gentle creatures.



CCStreetwise

CCRA Spring Sidewalk Campaign

Thank you to everyone who donated to help keep our sidewalks clean. We appreciate your support, especially during these tough times. We would like to recognize the following individuals for their donation of \$125 or greater.

- Guy Aiman
- Irene Baker
- Nadine Biles
- Sheldon M. Bonovitz
- Elaine Camarda
- Alan Richard Cohen
- Constance Cone
- Donna Cordner & Brent Groce
- John Davies
- Luis Develasco
- Jeffrey Dubb
- Andrew Epstein
- Peter Ferry
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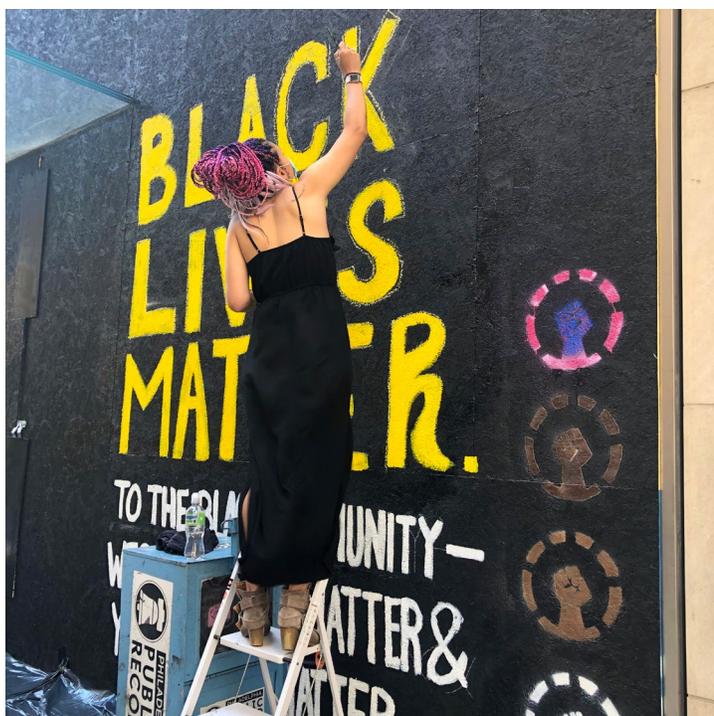
- Adrienne Frangakis & Mark Redemann
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- Matthew Schreck
- Ellen Steiner
- Donna & Joseph Strug
- Robin Real Estate
- Joan & Dane Wells
- Linda Zaimis

Walls for Justice by Bonnie Schorske

Plywood appeared in boarded-up storefronts throughout the neighborhood in the wake of the protests and looting following the police murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis. Soon after, artists, community volunteers, and business owners, led by Walls for Justice founder Samuel Rodriguez, painted messages of hope and inspiration on the plywood storefronts. Fine-art photographer and Center City resident Bonnie Schorske photographed these powerful images.

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The artists were painting customized messages for each store free of charge, with the permission of store owners. Some businesses have commissioned permanent artwork. In order to fund the cost of supplies and legal work to form a nonprofit organization, Rodriguez is [raising money on GoFundMe](https://www.gofundme.com/f/walls-for-justice). <https://www.gofundme.com/f/walls-for-justice>.



Livestream Concert to Benefit Marian Anderson Museum & Historical Society

By Bonnie Eisenfeld

The Marian Anderson Museum & Historical Society, at 762 S. Martin Street in South Philadelphia, which relies on admission fees and concert ticket sales, has come upon hard times because of the COVID-19 pandemic. In March, all museums closed temporarily under mandates of city and state government, and admission fees stopped.

Then, to add to the Museum's financial burden, over the summer, several pipes burst causing flooding and severe damage.

Sacred Art Songs in Concert, a livestream performance, will be presented by the National Marian Anderson Museum & Historical Society on Saturday, September 5, at 2 p.m. Ticket sales and donations will benefit the Museum's restoration fund.

View: <https://www.facebook.com/NationalMarianAndersonMuseum/>. Admission tickets: <http://marianandersonhistoricalsociety.weebly.com/donate--sponsor.html> or mail to The Marian Anderson Museum & Historical Society, 762 S. Martin St. Philadelphia PA 19145.

The museum, which houses three floors of memorabilia, live recordings, and changing annual exhibitions, has for years applied for preservation grants but has been unsuccessful. CEO Jillian Patricia Pirtle says, "Despite not having any support from the city of Philadelphia, we have still for the past 23 years opened our doors to visitors, tourists and concertgoers alike, as well as students in our educational programs."

Born and raised in Philadelphia, Marian Anderson, a world-renowned opera singer, serenaded U.S. presidents at their inaugurations and was the first African-American to perform at the Metropolitan Opera and on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial.

In related news, the University of Pennsylvania Libraries has completed the digitization of more than 2,500 items from the Marian Anderson collection, including letters, diaries, journals, interviews, recital programs, and private recordings, which she donated before her death, supplemented by additional donations from her nephew, James DePriest, and the Free Library of Philadelphia. The Marian Anderson collection is housed in the Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts, which also houses a collection of 4,000 photographs. All are accessible to the public. <https://mariananderson.exhibits.library.upenn.edu/>



Courtesy National Marian Anderson Museum & Historical Society

Marian Anderson in performance, Carnegie Hall 1950.



Marian Anderson Museum & Historical Society Concert Ensemble.

Spotlight On...

Eric Berg Leaves Legacy of Animal Sculptures in Center City and Beyond

By Bonnie Eisenfeld

Most of the bronze animal sculptures created by the late Eric Berg of Center City are not hidden away in museums but instead are out in public spaces, enjoyed by people of all ages. Fascinated by animal life from early childhood, Berg had a goal to create animal sculptures accessible to the public. We are fortunate to have several of these animals residing in Center City.

Eric Berg created both *Grizzly* and *Family of Turtles*, located in Fitter Square, as well as the *Gardener's Cottage Gates* in Rittenhouse Square. The *Gates* features birds, squirrels, a snail, a lizard, a praying mantis, a frog, and a dog, all animals found in the Square.

Other important local works include: *Philbert the Pig* at Reading Terminal Market; *Mario the Magnificent*, the iconic dragon at Drexel University; the *Tortoise* and the sculpted rabbit gates at the Please Touch Museum; *Panda* at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, and *Galapagos Tortoise* at the Academy of Natural Sciences. To see pictures of Berg's bronze animals and his other works in Center City and adjacent neighborhoods, go to https://www.philart.net/artist/Eric_Berg/17.html

Over 44 of Berg's public commissions reside at American zoos, parks, museums, and universities. "He leaves behind a zoo's worth of bronze animal sculptures," the *Inquirer's* Peter Dobrin wrote in Berg's obituary.

In Philadelphia and environs, his sculptures are in the Art Museum, the Please Touch Museum, the Pennsylvania Convention Center, City Hall, Pennsylvania Hospital, and the Zoo, among others, as well as many public spaces and

museums throughout the U.S., including the Smithsonian National Zoo in Washington, D.C. Smaller works have been sold by galleries to private individuals.

Berg's good friend Ed Bronstein, Center City artist and retired architect, wrote this warm tribute: "Eric was an easy guy to like. Always with a dog in Schuylkill River Park, he would start conversations with the other walkers, make jokes. He didn't forget names; everyone became his friend. He could act tough, but he was really a sweet guy."

Sculptures by Eric Berg are for sale; you can find them online. In 2010, a *Toad* sculpture, 17 inches tall, sold for \$4,500 at an estate auction. In 2015, a *Big Horn Ram*, 87 inches tall, at \$75,000, was installed at the Hill School in Pottstown. Animal sculptures for sale include *Sea Lion*, *Rabbit*, *Toad*, and another edition of *Philbert*.

Born in Pottstown in 1945 and raised in Allentown, Berg earned a B.S. from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania in 1968. At that time, he was creating stone carvings, and decided to pursue sculpture instead of business. After graduating with a Masters in Fine Arts from the University of Pennsylvania in 1974, he got his first commission from the Philadelphia Zoo – the *African Warthog*. He resided in Center City and had studios in Philadelphia and New York State. With some works still in progress, he died on April 20.

More pictures of Berg's bronze animal sculptures and his abstract works are on his website:

<http://www.bergbronze.com/bodyofwork.htm>



Gardener's Cottage Gates in Rittenhouse Square.



Grizzly and Family of Turtles in Fitter Square.

"The motivation behind my sculpture comes from an early childhood fascination with animal life and the natural world. The goal of my work is to place hands-on, accessible public art works which, through their character and natural appeal, foster an appreciation and respect for animal life.... and the subtle reinforcement of the beauty and value of these 'other than human' living beings."

—Eric Berg

Dining Scene

Outdoor and Online: CCD Survey Tracks COVID Dining, Shopping Trends

By Bonnie Eisenfeld

This summer, the Center City District (CCD) surveyed residents of Center City and adjacent neighborhoods to learn how their dining and purchasing behaviors had changed with the COVID-19 emergency stay-at-home order and how they might change in the future.

According to the survey findings, residents' use of restaurant takeout and delivery services increased dramatically. (In a separate survey of restaurants, CCD found that almost 40 percent of them remained open since March to provide takeout or delivery of meals.) Prior to COVID-19, only about one-third of residents relied on restaurant takeout or delivery services. After the stay-at-home order, about three-quarters used these services; almost one-quarter ordered takeout or delivery several times a week, and over half a few times per month.

Residents expected that their dining-out behavior would change going forward. The majority planned to dine out less often than before and expected to continue to rely on takeout or delivery, some more often than previously. For those who expect to dine out, almost all would be more likely to dine at restaurants where outdoor seating is provided.

The stay-at-home order also led to more online shopping at local retailers. Over 80 percent of residents ordered merchandise for delivery, and about one-third ordered for curbside pickup. When retail stores reopen, about half of those surveyed expect to continue to purchase online, some more often than they did before.

Expectations about when they would return to restaurants and stores ranged from immediately to two months; people over 65 planned to wait the longest.

Comfort level in a restaurant or store would be affected primarily by spacing, masks, health-safety training for staff, limits on diners or shoppers inside, signage for spacing

and masks, and contactless payment. For restaurants, many residents also wanted staff to wear gloves, and some wanted shields between tables. Respondents were most concerned about whether all customers and employees would consistently adhere to safety measures.

Zagat, in partnership with the James Beard Foundation, conducted a national survey of diners, and reported similar findings. In addition, diners said they miss restaurants for more than just the food; they miss the social aspect. More than half said they miss their favorite neighborhood spot, and one-third miss their favorite fine-dining restaurants. One respondent said, "I miss the company of great friends and family while enjoying a good meal and a bottle of wine."

Center City District distributed a questionnaire on Survey Monkey to 17,000 residents living river to river and between Girard Avenue and Tasker Street, as well as to civic associations and residential managers in that area. The questionnaire was completed between June 8 and 15, by 1,910 people ranging in age from 25 to 65 or older. About 70 percent were female, and about 30 percent were male.

For the Center City District's report, "Reopening Restaurants and Retail: The Customer Perspective," please click on <https://www.centercityphila.org/uploads/attachments/ckbhzyqq0xel-hxqdyh01o49h-retail-restaurant-reopening-r4.pdf>

Zagat's findings were based on a national survey conducted online from May 13 to May 27, among 6,775 adults who dine out at least once a week, drawn from Zagat's national lists of newsletter subscribers and other restaurant diners.

For Zagat's "The Future of Dining Study," this link provides a summary and a link to download the full report. <https://stories.zagat.com/posts/the-results-of-the-zagat-future-of-dining-study>

Shop Talk

Update: Plastic Bag Ban in Philadelphia

The effective date of the single-use plastic bag ban was pushed from July 2 to January 1, 2021. Businesses will be prohibited from providing single-use plastic bags to customers for checkout or delivery starting on April 1.

Retailers will be permitted to provide reusable bags made from plastic or cloth, as well as paper bags made from at least 40 percent recycled content. Exemptions are dry-cleaner bags, packaged garbage or waste bags, or plastic bags used at point of sale for perishable items such as meat, fish, unwrapped prepared foods, bakery goods, flowers, or potted plants.

<https://cleanphl.org/plasticbagban/>

Editor's note:

If you are concerned about transmission of disease from reusable bags, we recommend bringing your own washable cloth bags.

CCRA Reports Findings of March Survey

By Bonnie Eisenfeld

In March, the Center City Residents' Association conducted a survey of Center City West residents, mostly members, to gather opinions about CCRA's activities, communications, and member attendance at events.

Importance of CCRA's activities

The survey listed CCRA's activities and asked respondents to choose the three most important. Zoning and land-use regulation was chosen by the highest percentage, followed by working with groups to reduce homelessness and panhandling; weekly sidewalk cleaning; street maintenance and safety; and legislative oversight of city and state government. Other activities chosen by more than 10 percent were historic preservation, tree planting, merchant discounts, police liaison, and community garden.

Zoning and land-use regulation includes monitoring land use, development, demolition projects, zoning applications, signage, and new-building height and density, and meeting with developers of large building projects. Almost all activities are conducted by volunteers.

Merchant discounts

Of the merchants offering a discount to CCRA members, the most used or likely to be used was Di Bruno Bros., named by over 90 percent of respondents. Second was Rittenhouse Hardware, named by over 70 percent. Other merchants named by 20 percent or more of respondents were Dom's Shoe Repair, Good Karma Café, and PhotoLounge. Several others were named also, and more than half of respondents said they would tend to patronize merchants offering discounts or specials to members.

Communications

Almost 80 percent of respondents said they use CCRA's weekly e-newsletter for information about CCRA and its community activities, and more than half said they use the *Center City Quarterly* publication. Just over 20 percent use CCRA's website. Almost three-quarters of respondents found the *Center City Quarterly* helpful or interesting, and more than 60 percent favored changing it to electronic distribution to reduce costs. Fifteen percent wanted printing of the *Quarterly* to continue, and the rest had no preference.

Events

More than half of respondents attended a town hall meeting in the past three years, and almost half attended a home and garden tour. About one-third attended an annual meet-and-greet social event.

Other local organizations

Many respondents belong to other local organizations including Center City District* (46 percent), Philadelphia City Institute Library (no-fee user group; 37 percent), Friends of Rittenhouse Square (35 percent), Friends of Schuylkill River Park (30 percent), Friends of Philadelphia City Institute (contributors; 21 percent), and Friends in the City (20 percent).

Profile of CCRA survey respondents

Almost all respondents live within the CCRA footprint between Broad Street and the Schuylkill River, and JFK Boulevard and South Street, and are members of CCRA.

Over 80 percent have lived in this neighborhood more than six years, in either a single-family residence or a large condo or co-op. Half of respondents live in two-person households; just under one-third live alone. Respondents skewed older; most ranged in age from 50 to 80+ years old. More than 40 percent are retired, and about 30 percent work full time. Annual household income skewed toward the high end. Among respondents, almost 60 percent were female, and 40 percent male.

Method

The questionnaire was designed on Survey Monkey and distributed to 1,600 people in March, via CCRA's e-newsletter, and posted on the CCRA Facebook page. The list included CCRA members, former members, and non-members. The response rate of 37 percent consisted of 587 people who completed the questionnaire. Over 80 percent of respondents were members of CCRA.

Center City Residents' Association (CCRA), with almost 600 dues-paying residential members, is a nonprofit, volunteer-led organization devoted to making our neighborhood, Center City West, a better place to live, work and play since 1947. Membership benefits include advocacy for our residential neighborhood, a weekly e-news, a quarterly publication, several annual social events, and merchant discounts. <https://centercityresidents.wildapricot.org/>

***Center City District (CCD)** is a business improvement district with the purpose of making Center City clean and safe for businesses, residents, students, shoppers, and tourists. In addition, CCD manages Dilworth, Sister Cities, John F. Collins and Cret Parks. CCD was created by the Central Philadelphia Development Corporation (CPDC). Center City District Foundation (CCDF) is the charitable affiliate. CCD sends a free e-newsletter about events in Center City upon request. <https://centercityphila.org/>

A New Idea Clearing a Route Through the Heart of the City

By Bill West

We could have been a leader. Instead we will be slow followers, picking our way along the parade route, dodging the droppings left by the cavalry leading the charge. Philadelphia used to be a leader, back in the days of Dilworth and Bacon. Yes, we made mistakes, but at least we were attempting to push the future in a positive direction.

New York City recently announced it was going to do [100 miles](#) of Open Streets, upping the ante on Oakland, Calif., which is only doing [74 miles](#).

We're not doing anything; we're not going to do anything. And City Hall won't even tell us why.

I and many others have politely asked the City for a handful of marginal improvements—repurposing the outer lanes of the Ben Franklin Parkway and roads in West Fairmount Park and Roosevelt Park and a few other places. This would involve closing them to cars and opening them to pedestrians and bicyclists.

Continued on p.15

Lots of Good Ideas. Anybody Listening?

By Bill West

There are lots of good ideas floating around Philadelphia when it comes to reimagining our streets. It's not clear that anybody in Philadelphia's city government is listening, but you never can tell. So here's one more try.

Several months ago, a group of non-governmental organizations put out a report entitled Recovery Streets. To see the report, [Click Here](#).

The report recommends repurposing a lot more of our streets for outdoor recreation and active mobility—walking, biking, scooting, skating—and just hanging out on your stoop, watching your kids play in the street, and not worrying about cars. The report also has a number of ideas about how to make

riding the bus more attractive and effective—including bus-only lanes and reworking bus stops to promote social distancing. And it has a number of ideas about promoting outdoor dining.

The idea of closing some blocks to create outdoor dining rooms actually seems to be getting some traction. In Old City, 2nd Street has been repurposed on weekends for outdoor dining, and the experiment seems to be going well. For a story, [Click Here](#).

The Center City District has also issued a report on the subject of outdoor dining, tracking the progress of the move outdoors, and pointing out that restaurants provide a lot of jobs as well as happy diners. To see the report, [Click Here](#).



Moravian Street at 18th, repurposed for dining.

Matt Stanely for Center City District

Continued from p.14

The small ask didn't work. So, just for the record, I'm going to tell you what I really think. Why should Dilworth and Bacon have all the fun?

This idea got its start with the outer lanes of the Ben Franklin Parkway. Giving these lanes to peds and bikes is a no-brainer. If you'd like a fuller explanation, click [here](#). And then Inga Saffron of the *Inquirer* suggested repurposing [Walnut Street](#). This isn't quite a no-brainer, but I'll leave struggling with the details to our capable traffic engineers.

So I was staring at these two stretches on a map, and the thought occurred to me that we could connect them, and provide a highway for pedestrians and bicyclists from the heart of Center City to the Art Museum and the wilds of Fairmount Park beyond. Well, at least to Martin Luther King Drive and Kelly Drive. It's pretty bucolic, but no elk or moose or bison. And you can ride a bike to Valley Forge if you're so inclined.

I looked at 20th and 22nd Streets, and picked 22nd because it's wider and already has a bike lane. Then I said let's make it two-way; finding a southbound mate for the bike lane on 22nd has been basically impossible. So we'll club up the northbound and southbound traffic on 22nd, and while we're at it make the other pieces two-way as well.

Certain people will immediately say this repurposing of 22nd Street is impossible. Just look at Trader Joe's with its heavy traffic into the parking lot on 22nd. And then, of course, there are the entrances and exits to the Vine Street Expressway. To quote *The Princess Bride's* Wallace Shawn: "Inconceivable!"

Well, here's the thing. We're still letting cars onto 22nd Street. But only for one block or less, and they have to go slow. They're doing this on 14th Street in New York City, and it works.

But that won't work here, you say. Yes, people can turn onto 22nd from Market, but when they're leaving the parking lot, they'll have to go to Arch, and then they can only turn left.

But wait. The street is two-way for cars also. So a customer leaving the Trader Joe's lot can turn left or right and go to Market or Arch. Actually better options for egress than exist currently.

As for the Vine Street Expressway, the eastbound entrance and exit are largely unaffected by these changes. Drivers exiting would still have the option of turning on 23rd or proceeding on Winter. And if they're headed for Park Towne, they can do that because it's less than one block.

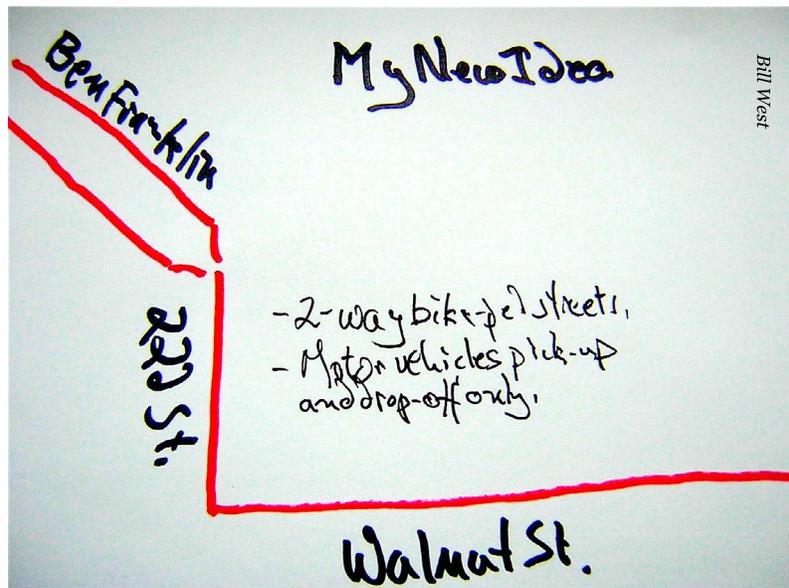
As for the westbound exit, drivers could still go to the Parkway and turn, or head up into Fairmount on 22nd. People would have to use the Parkway to access the westbound entrance— no more careening up 22nd Street at 50 mph. Sorry for the inconvenience.

What does all this give us? The future. I'm not going to rehash all the arguments in favor of a balanced transportation system, instead of the predominantly automotive system we currently have. What I will say is that I think this setup would be pretty cool, and like the Schuylkill Banks and the bike lanes, the City could brag about it when they try to attract large corporations like [Amazon](#). And I think it would be extremely popular with the people who live here. And pay taxes. And vote.

Will it happen? No. With Dilworth and Bacon in the saddle, I think we might have had a good shot at actually getting some of this stuff done. With this mayor, and this city council, and this streets department, I just don't see it.

Still, to paraphrase Senator McConnell, I will persist. Why? I am a member of the Vaclav Havel school of optimism. Here's what he said:

"Hope is not the conviction that something will turn out well but the certainty that something makes sense, regardless of how it turns out."



"My New Idea"

The Clean Air Council: Protecting Our Right to Breathe for Over 50 Years

By Joseph Otis Minott, Esq.

You may not readily see the connection between a traffic jam on I-676 and a pipeline leaking methane gas in southwestern Pennsylvania, but both have a direct impact on the health and lives of everyone in Philadelphia. Urban communities like Center City experience localized air pollution from transportation sources, in addition to pollution spread statewide from Pennsylvania's industrial operations. Clean Air Council, a Center City environmental nonprofit organization created in 1967, works to hold polluters accountable across Pennsylvania, through public education, community advocacy, and legal actions.

Pennsylvania is the second-largest gas-producing state in the U.S., and much of the Council's work outside Philadelphia concerns the rapid expansion of oil and gas infrastructure. Fracking is a familiar term, however, it is only one aspect of an industry beset with leaky infrastructure, malfunctioning equipment, and dubious practices to acquire land for pipelines.

The Council has successfully fought to keep pipelines out of communities where residents expressed opposition, and has focused on fighting pipelines that would bring fracked gas into Southeastern Pennsylvania. These pipelines are a key piece of the gas industry's dirty infrastructure, along with fracking wells, which have been sickening rural Pennsylvanians for over a decade. Attorney General Josh Shapiro made public a damning Grand Jury report last month that highlighted again this public health crisis.

The oil and gas industry has a major emissions problem. Every year, over one million tons of methane gas leak from Pennsylvania oil and gas wells, alongside other hazardous air pollutants. As a greenhouse gas, methane is 87 times more potent than carbon in the first 20 years after it's released. That means more heat is trapped in the atmosphere, creating prime conditions for extreme and violent weather patterns.

Meanwhile, transportation is the number one source of air pollution in Center City. Traffic gridlock along Chestnut and Walnut Streets during (pre-pandemic) midday and rush hour is not just an annoyance, it's also hurting the planet and the health of everyone who lives, works, and shops in Center City. This concentration of carbon emissions exacerbates respiratory conditions, and creates smog that can be dangerous to vulnerable populations, especially children and the elderly.

Every time you walk, bike, or ride transit, rather than drive a fossil-fuel-powered vehicle, you directly reduce the amount of carbon in our atmosphere. People are more likely to use sustainable modes of transportation when they feel safe. The Council's transportation program focuses on reducing vehicle emissions through sustainable commuting, and advocates for modern urban infrastructure that protects pedestrians, cyclists, and transit riders.

GoPhillyGo is the Council's multimodal trip-planning website and Android app that allows users to get easy biking, walking, and transit directions to parks, trails, cultural destinations and more. GoPhillyGo also highlights events (virtual these days) happening at environmental centers in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware. Follow the GoPhillyGo Blog and subscribe to the newsletter for tips, features, and fun ways to enjoy the region. The Council encourages people to double down on their commitment to the environment by commuting sustainably to parks and trails. <https://www.gophillygo.org/>

Feet First Philly is the Council's pedestrian advocacy group, fighting for pedestrian safety. Recently, Feet First Philly and Clean Air Council partnered with other local advocacy groups to create the "Recovery Streets" platform. The platform outlines ways to create safe spaces for pedestrians during the pandemic. Use of parking lanes for outdoor dining is a key component, but we also advocate for other policies like open streets and slow zones. Feet First Philly also has policy, communications, and events subcommittees, and our meetings are open to the public. <https://feetfirstphilly.org/>

This summer, Clean Air Council celebrated 53 years of fighting for everyone's right to breathe clean air and to a healthy environment. The Council's headquarters are located at 19th and Walnut Streets. While staff continue to work remotely during the pandemic, the Council's work has not slowed down at all.

Fighting for clean air and a healthy environment is the Council's mission, and the Council's work is funded by donations. To learn more about Clean Air Council, please visit www.cleanair.org

Joseph Otis Minott, Esq. is the Executive Director & Chief Counsel of the Clean Air Council.

Town Square

CCRA Membership Cards Now on Your Smart Phone

Because of this "new normal," we have made changes regarding receipt of your membership packet. When you join/renew, you will receive an email confirming that both your membership packet and your card will be sent out electronically. Once you receive your card, you can either print it out or save it on your phone, to show our Merchant Members and use for their discounts. If you would like to receive it in the mail, email Travis at centercity@centercityresidents.org

Election 2020: Are You Ready to Vote?

REGISTERING TO VOTE OR CHECKING/UPDATING YOUR REGISTRATION

Not registered to vote in Pennsylvania? You can start the process online at register.votesPA.com

Need to update your voter registration information because you've moved or changed your name? Check your status at votesPA.com/Status

Questions? Visit <https://www.philadelphiavotes.com/>; call the Philadelphia Board of Elections at 215-686-3469; or the Philadelphia Voter Registration Office at 215-686-1591.

Deadline to register or update your registration: Monday, October 19.

VOTING BY MAIL-IN BALLOT

All voters in Pennsylvania are allowed to request a mail-in ballot and to vote by mail. No reason is required.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, and anticipated shortages of poll workers due to health concerns, many traditional polling places will be closed, and consolidated into fewer locations spaced further apart. As a result, long waits are anticipated on Election Day; all voters are urged to vote by mail in the General Election. You can apply for an absentee or mail-in ballot here:

<https://www.pavoterservices.pa.gov/OnlineAbsenteeApplication/#/OnlineAbsenteeBegin>

<https://www.votespa.com/Voting-in-PA/Pages/Mail-and-Absentee-Ballot.aspx>

Deadlines for the November 3 General Election

NOTE: This information is subject to change. Voters are urged to consult the links below for the latest information.

- **Tuesday, October 27, 5 pm:** APPLICATIONS for absentee or mail-in ballots must be RECEIVED by your county election office. (Avoid delays: APPLY NOW.)
- **Tuesday, November 3, 8 pm:** VOTED BALLOTS must be RECEIVED by your county election office. Postmarks are not enough. (See sidebar for information on dropping off Mail-in Ballots.)

<https://www.votespa.com/Voting-in-PA/Pages/Mail-and-Absentee-Ballot.aspx>

ELECTION DAY: TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 3

General Election information:

Office of the Philadelphia City Commissioners: <https://www.philadelphiavotes.com/>

PA Department of State: <https://www.votespa.com/Pages/default.aspx>

Committee of Seventy: <https://seventy.org/>

BALLOT DROP-OFF OPTION AVAILABLE

Voters who are concerned about mailing their completed ballots have the option to drop them off. There is a 24/7 mail-in ballot drop-off location at City Hall (south portal). Also, the Philadelphia City Commissioners announced a mobile mail-in ballot drop-off initiative. Partnering with the Committee of Seventy, personnel from the Board of Elections will be on hand to collect voted mail-in ballots at specific locations listed on this website: https://www.philadelphiavotes.com/en/home/item/1814-mobile_drop_off_location_for_mail_in_ballot

CCRA Fall Calendar — Creative Confinement

Cycle September!

Starting September 1
Clean Air Council's annual workplace biking challenge
Compete for prizes, including a new Charge e-bike.
<https://www.lovetoride.net/philly/signup>

Dinner at Dilworth Park

1 S 15th St (West Side of City Hall)
Wednesdays and Thursdays, 5 – 9 pm
Through October 7
Support Center City restaurants. Pick up takeout and dine outdoors in Dilworth Park. Live entertainment Wednesdays and Thursdays 6 – 8 pm
Center City restaurants offering takeout to dine out: [Eat and Drink page](#).

National Marian Anderson Museum & Historical Society

"Sacred Art Songs in Concert," a livestream performance
Saturday, September 5, 2 pm
Tickets sales and donations benefit the Museum's restoration fund.
View: <https://www.facebook.com/National-MarianAndersonMuseum/> Tickets: <http://marianandersonhistoricalsociety.weebly.com/donate--sponsor.html> or mail to The Marian Anderson Museum & Historical Society, 762 S. Martin St., Philadelphia PA 19145.

Museum of the American Revolution

Open Thursday to Sunday, and holiday Mondays, including Labor Day, September 7
Now open to Members: 11 am – 3 pm
Opening to the Public: beginning Thursday, September 3, 10 am – 5 pm
<https://www.amrevmuseum.org/visit> (reduced capacity, advance online ticketing, and enhanced sanitizing and cleaning)
Special exhibition: [When Women Lost the Vote: A Revolutionary Story, 1776 – 1807](#)
Explore the little-known story of women and free people of color in New Jersey
Onsite exhibit and free online experience
Friday, October 2, through Sunday, April 25, 2021

Barnes Foundation

Friday to Monday, 11 am – 5 pm
<https://www.barnesfoundation.org/>
(Contactless payment, limited numbers of visitors, one-way flow, wear a mask, 6 feet distance, wash or sanitize hands.)

National Constitution Center

Wednesday through Saturday, 10 am – 3 pm
Advanced timed tickets required
<https://constitutioncenter.org/>

The Plastic Club

"Blues" online art exhibition featuring 53 area artists
Through Thursday, December 31
[BLUES: The August Online Exhibition — The Plastic Club](#)

The Philadelphia Museum of Art

(main building only)
The Rodin Museum
Reopening with reduced hours
[Sunday, September 6](#).
Three Members-Only days:
Thursday, September 3 through Saturday, September 5
Visitors advised to reserve tickets in advance. Online timed-admission tickets sales available now.
Pay What You Wish admission at PMA opening day, September 6.
(Masks mandatory; visitors will have their temperatures taken. The [Perelman Building](#) and historic houses remain closed. Public programs are postponed.)
<https://philamuseum.org/visit>

Rittenhouse Square Fine Art Show

Virtual Edition
Thursday, September 10, through Sunday, September 13
<https://www.rittenhousesquareart.com/>

Restaurant Week Returns

Sunday, September 13, through Friday, September 25
60+ restaurants, working with the Center City District to "create a safe experience so residents and visitors can support local businesses and keep local workers employed."
<https://centercityphila.org/explore-center-city/ccd-restaurant-week>

Cancellations:

POST 2020

(Philadelphia Open Studio Tour)
Rescheduled to April 10-11, 17-18, 2021.

Pennsylvania Guild Fine Craft Fair

October 2020 fair has been canceled; 2021 fair scheduled October 8 – 10, 2021
<https://www.pacrafts.org/fine-craft-fairs/fine-craft-fair-fall-rittenhouse-square>

Ball on the Square and Soiree on the Square

The Friends of Rittenhouse Square has made the decision to cancel these events, slated for Thursday, October 8, and Friday, October 9.

Philadelphia Cancels Outdoor Events to Prevent Spread of COVID-19

On July 14, Philadelphia officials canceled all large-scale events of more than 50 people on public property and requiring a city permit, including block parties, through February 2021. This includes festivals, parades, flea markets, carnivals, fairs, and concerts. According to Health Commissioner Thomas Farley, this prevention measure must stay in place until the population is vaccinated against the coronavirus, and that won't happen before 2021.

Mayor Kenney said the ban does not apply to demonstrations or other First Amendment-protected activities, private outdoor gatherings such as weddings or family picnics, or events on private property, including outdoor performance venues and stadiums. Eagles games or other professional sports events may be held, but spectators will not be allowed. Currently, indoor events of 25 or more people are not permitted and all theaters are closed.



Center City Residents' Association

1900 Market Street, 8th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19103
215-546-6719
centercity@centercityresidents.org
www.centercityresidents.org

DATES TO REMEMBER:

Tuesday, October 27, 5 pm
Voter Registration Deadline

Tuesday, November 3
Election Day

Town Square

Take Part in the 2020 Census. It's Your Civic Duty.

It is a civic duty to participate in the 2020 Census.

The census counts *every person* (not just citizens) living in the U.S., once, only once every 10 years, and in the right place. Everyone counts. After each census, state officials redraw the boundaries of congressional and state legislative districts in their states to account for population shifts.

The **2020 Census** will also determine the allocation of hundreds of billions in federal funding among the states. Pennsylvania and Philadelphia could lose federal funding for each person not included in the census count.

Many residents have already received the 2020 census questionnaire. If you are one, make sure you mail it back as soon as possible.

If you didn't receive the questionnaire or cannot find it, you can complete it for your entire household by calling **1-844-330-2020**; a Census Questionnaire Assistance representative will help you.

You can easily fill out the 2020 Census questionnaire online at any time before it closes, but time is short.

If you are responding online, please note that you cannot save your progress and that you must complete the census in one sitting.

You're just one click away...

RESPOND

Enter your Census ID—the 12-digit number that can be found on your questionnaire, letter, and postcard.

If you can't find your Census ID, go to www.my2020census.gov and select the link that says, "If you do not have a Census ID, click here." It is located below the Census ID login field.

Click, call, or write—and be counted!