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# ALLEGHENY WEST GAZETTE

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April 2017

## President's Message

So what are you doing on Tuesday evening?

Your neighbors will be gathering at 7:30 to find out what's going on. They'll also be making decisions about your neighborhood, and the larger community around us . . . decisions that affect you.

And –oh by the way– they'll be having a good time: socializing and chatting and being, well, just neighborly! (And free refreshments help!)

You're always welcome. It's the second Tuesday of each month at 7:30 P.M., in the Calvary Church social hall, on the corner of Beech and Allegheny (use the Beech Avenue entrance). The meeting's usually over by 9.

Don't know most of your neighbors yet? All the more reason! Hope to see you Tuesday evening.

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In April of 1962, the residents and business people of our community – not yet called “Allegheny West” – were surrounded on every side by an uncertain future. That a few of them were considering banding together for the general good was very bold indeed.

The “powers that be” in the city, county, and state were basking in the glow of international media – hailed for “The Great Pittsburgh Renaissance.” The first of its kind in America, this unprecedented vision was even then transforming an industrial slum at the Point into a new state park and the gleaming silver office towers of Gateway Center. At the Melody Tent site in the Lower Hill District, a “residential slum” was giving way to a new entertainment acropolis – anchored by the newly opened Civic Arena, and soon to add concert halls and museums.

A new phrase had been coined right here: “Urban Renewal.” And already announced were the next two planned blockbusters: the extreme makeover of the East Liberty shopping district, and the complete demolition and replacement of the former City of Allegheny town center. In each of these projects, hundreds of substantial buildings would be demolished to make room for an entire new city – formed in the image and likeness of the American suburb.

This new city rising on the Northside wasn't limited to the former center of Allegheny. There were several BIG satellite projects that would extend this grand vision across all of the lower Northside. This new “suburb in the city” would have its very own interstate highway slicing east to west. The neighborhoods of Chateau on the west and Deutschtown to the east, along with the length of the Allegheny Commons park, would provide the highway's route and right-of-way.

*(Continued on next page.)*

*(Continued from front.)*

The neighborhood north of the Allegheny Commons park would be leveled and replaced with a vast complex of garden apartments. An immense public housing development would level and replace much of the Manchester neighborhood. And the land immediately to the west of the park would be divided between an industrial park along the highway and a county college campus.

Citywide, there were thousands of businesses and residents being displaced by eminent domain takings of entire neighborhoods. And nationwide the broadest public sentiment was enormously supportive of this concept. If the Smoky City could do it, anything was possible.

“Out with the old, in with the new.” And Pittsburgh was finally at the forefront of an important new urban movement.

But buried deep in those Master Planning blueprints were a handful of tiny streets. And on those streets, a few ordinary people had started looking for a way to be heard.

- John DeSantis, AWCC President

## Allegheny West Wine & Garden Tour, 2017

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I'm pleased to share that we have secured the homes for the 2017 Wine and Garden Tour.

- Holmes Hall - Tour start—719 Brighton
- Emmanuel Church—957 W. North Ave
- Elaine Stone and Mitchell Schwartz— 831 W. North
- Robert Johnson—812 Beech
- Diane and Tony Caruso - Thaw Mansion— 930 N. Lincoln
- George and Mariana Whitmer— 838 N. Lincoln
- Willock House (Q Development)— 705 Brighton

This tour will be incredibly special this year due to a few historical connections between the properties. The Whitmer home and Emmanuel Episcopal Church were both designed by famed architect H. H. Richardson. Richardson is the architect who designed the Allegheny County Courthouse downtown and other famous properties throughout the US. Another connection is between Emmanuel Church and Thaw mansion. The altar was acquired in Europe by a relative of William Thaw who built Thaw mansion on N. Lincoln. It is also rumored that the angels depicted in the altar are in the likeness of Evelyn Nesbit who was married to William's notorious son, Henry Thaw. We have received a few requests for volunteers to help property owners. **Please email Carol Gomrick at [carolgomrick@gmail.com](mailto:carolgomrick@gmail.com) if you are interested in volunteer opportunities.**

Our theme is a tour through Spain with several Spanish varietals and of course sangria. The food committee has been hard at work testing and pairing tapas. We have great selections for our guests. More to come!

### Reminder: Street Sweeping Begins Again

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Street sweepers will be around April 10 and 11, so please make sure to move your car.

### A+ Schools Presentation

A+ Schools, an independent non-profit that advocates for improvement and equity in Pittsburgh Public Schools, will present their 2016 Report to the Community at our upcoming community meeting on Tuesday, April 11th at 7:30 PM. Similar to presentations done throughout the city, they will tailor the information specifically to schools serving our neighborhood in a PowerPoint presentation as well as have copies of the 2016 Report to the Community for all attendees.



A+ Schools' work is mainly focused on (1) community organizing and advocacy to raise student, parent and community voices, (2) research on achievement, policies and student metrics in PPS, such as the annual Report to the Community and (3) monitoring of school board governance. More information is available on their web site at [www.aplusschools.org](http://www.aplusschools.org).

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## Western Avenue Flower Baskets

Western Avenue will again be beautified through a collaboration between the Western PA Conservancy and generous neighborhood sponsors. We had 32 baskets last year and can easily accommodate double that number.

Please consider sponsoring a basket, regardless of where your house or business may be located. Renewals of previously-sponsored baskets will remain at \$275/basket. New Sponsorships (first year) will be \$325/basket, with a \$30 signage fee.

Contact Trish Burton with any questions: [tdburton3@gmail.com](mailto:tdburton3@gmail.com) or 412-523-9402.  
Thank you for your support!

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## Neighborhood Cleanup

April 22nd is Earth Day, and Allegheny West will celebrate by holding its first clean-up day. Meet at the Allegheny West office at 806 Western Avenue for coffee and breakfast treats and to gather some trash bags and gloves. If you have your own gloves, brooms, and tools, please bring them! Begin to look for areas in the neighborhood that need to be freshened after the winter. We'll also have a group that will attack the leaves in the parklet at the corner of Brighton and Western.

Contact Trish Burton with any questions: [tdburton3@gmail.com](mailto:tdburton3@gmail.com) or 412-523-9402. We'll see you on the 22nd!

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### The Allegheny West Gazette

**Editor: Karen Haller Beer**

The monthly newsletter of the Allegheny West Civic Council. Letters, submissions, advertising and other notices by the first of the month to: [gazette@alleghenywest.org](mailto:gazette@alleghenywest.org). Submission does not guarantee publication.

**A publication of the Allegheny West Civic Council**

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**AWCC Calendar**

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**Tuesday, April 11 @ 7:30 P.M.**

General Membership → Calvary Church: 971 Beech

**Tuesday, April 18 @ 7:30 P.M.**

Housing & Planning Committee → Office: 806 Western

**Tuesday, April 25, @ 7:30 P.M.**

Executive Committee → AWCC Office: 806 Western

**Bowling: Last bowling night of 2017 is April 26.**

**DRAFT Agenda: AWCC Membership Meeting**

**Tuesday, April 11 @ 7:30 P.M.**

Calvary United Methodist Church, 971 Beech Ave

- **Visitors:** Councilwoman Harris' office  
Mayor Peduto's office  
Pittsburgh Police Zone 1
- **Presentations:** A+ Schools 2017 Annual Report  
Carnegie Science Center (new signage

proposal)

- New neighbors & guests
- Reading of last month's minutes
- **Treasurer's report**  
- Finance Committee volunteers STILL being sought
- **Committee Reports**

**Membership:**

- Bocce on Wednesdays
- April Mixer
- AWCC 55th Anniversary Celebration (Saturday May 20,

2017)

**Ways & Means:**

- Wine Tour updates (June 2 & 3)
- Update on five-year Calvary Plan
- Dates for other 2017 events: Alleys, Axles & Ales /

Christmas

Tour

**Friends of Allegheny West: Green Space**

**Property**

**Housing & Planning:**

- Trucks through the neighborhood
- Stadium events parking and traffic issues
- Blocks bounded by Western, Allegheny, Ridge, Bridge -

MCC

- Western Avenue revitalization
- Light of Life Ridge Avenue project
- Film guidelines
- Historic district enforcement issues - old cases
- Proposal for medical marijuana dispensary
- Comprehensive guidelines for new construction on vacant

sites

- **Northside Leadership Conference**
- **Other business (Old & New: AW Preservation Award)**

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