
ALLEGHENY WEST GAZETTE

November, 2018

President's Message

So what are you doing on Tuesday evening? Join your neighbors on Tuesday, November 13 at 7:30 at Calvary Church for the September meeting of the Allegheny West Civic Council. Each month this is where we make decisions about our neighborhood - decisions that in ways both small and large will affect you. And we always have a good time socializing and enjoying refreshments. Everyone is welcome – 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 is usually over by 9. It's also a great way for newer folks to meet your neighbors and get involved! We hope to see you on Tuesday evening!

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As this month we will be electing a new slate of officers to serve the AWCC in the coming year, it's a good time to pay attention to the single most distinctive aspect of our small but mighty community organization. Among the City of Pittsburgh's 88 neighborhoods, nearly all of them have a civic organization which attempts to serve the needs of those who live and work there. Allegheny West is distinguished by having one of the oldest, most effective, and most consistently stable of these.

When our Nominating Committee meets each year to assemble a proposed slate of officers and committee chairpersons for the following year, the task can be formidable. In some city neighborhoods, there are more than 10,000 residents – that's a considerably larger pool of prospective volunteers than our tiny population of roughly 400. And yet, year after year, we not only have folks who are willing to serve – they routinely do so as if it were their full-time paying job. Donating their time and talent to their neighbors, they embrace the opportunity to continue moving us forward.

Many decades ago, AWCC created an organizational structure that includes two-year term limits for all offices. This creates challenges in finding volunteers of course, when every office has to turn over at least every other year. But it also prevents president-for-life-type dynasties that can often plague small groups. And most importantly, it forces AWCC to constantly be welcoming and developing new leadership from throughout the community. Most of our new officers for 2019 were not even in Allegheny West ten years ago; some not five years ago. That is a VERY healthy sign for any neighborhood organization.

At the same time, the core of our institutional memory is the large number of long-time members – many of whom have served as officers in the past – who show up for every meeting to make sure that we stay on track. The continued commitment of these active mentors makes it possible for new leadership to comfortably move ahead without fear of making critical missteps. These Members are a living blueprint of what we're doing and why we're doing it.

When folks from other community organizations look at Allegheny West and its many successes, they frequently ask how we manage to do this so well - year after year, decade after decade. The answer is anything but simple. We have been blessed for many decades with an amazing stream of volunteers who step up as newcomers, serve admirably and often in multiple positions across the years, and then remain committed to assuring that their successors have strong support and guidance. Our greatest blessing is a small but dedicated band of devoted neighbors who make their community a lifelong priority. Next time you see one of them, tell them "Thank You!"

- John DeSantis, AWCC President

Thanks All Around!

Thanks to Diane and Tony Caruso and to Carol Gomrick for helping me last Saturday to pull out the parklet annuals and prepare the garden for next spring's planting. Hot coffee from Mayfly Market on Arch St. helped us battle the cold and rain!

A special thanks to Tony Caruso for all of the help he's provided this year to beautify Western: digging up and transplanting shrubs and grasses; wrestling with broken hoses; hauling and spreading many bags of mulch; bagging huge amounts of debris—and remembering to drag those bags to the curb on Sunday nights for trash collection!

And we can't forget the constant care that Dr. Dan provides each week so that we have much less litter on all of our streets. Thank you, Dan!

Looking forward to seeing you all in the spring when we begin work again on the neighborhood green spaces.

-Submitted by Trish Burton

Holiday Concert at Holmes Hall

The Renaissance City Winds return to Allegheny West on **Saturday, November 24**, offering their annual presentation of beautiful music in the elegant ballroom of Holmes Hall on Brighton Road.

The program of classical chamber music, performed as intended in a setting much more intimate than a concert hall, will also include holiday selections and other pieces which paint musical pictures, surrounded by the art and architecture of Victorian America.

For more than forty years, the Renaissance City Winds have brought the world's finest chamber music compositions to life in both live concerts and widely acclaimed recordings. Their annual performance at Holmes Hall is followed by an artists reception and special visit to the antique toy train museum on the upper floors of the mansion. This year's event will also mark the 150th birthday of Holmes Hall itself, whose builder Letitia Caldwell Holmes purchased the property facing the Allegheny Commons in November of 1868.

The November 24 concert will begin at 8:00 p.m., and tickets are available online at rcwinds.org or by phone at 412-681-7111. Regular concert prices are \$20, seniors are \$15., and students are \$10.

- Submitted by John DeSantis

Allegheny West Christmas Tour: Help Needed

Save the Date! - The annual AWCC Christmas Tour will be held on December 7th and 8th. Please consider putting your home on the tour - we are still in need of two houses. If you're willing and able, kindly contact Carol Gomrick at carolgomrick@gmail.com.

Important dates leading into the 2018 Tour

- Wednesday November 14 | 7p.m. - Christmas Tour General Meeting | 940 W. North
- Saturday, December 1 | 9:00 a.m. - Swag bundling / Hanging | Cathy Serventi & Gene Wilson's house at 851 Beech (Enter via Dounton Way.)
- Friday, December 7 and Saturday, December 8 - The Tour.

REMINDER: Beech Avenue will be closed during the tour. Residents can park at the lower Babb, Inc. Parking lot starting at 4:00 p.m. for off-street parking.

Volunteers Needed

- **TOUR GUIDES:** Doug Sprague is leading the charge to sign up tour guides. Please reach out to Doug (doug.osrg@gmail.com) with questions. Please consider signing up for a shift (or three!)
- **TRAIN TOUR:** We are in need of train volunteers for Friday, December 7 and Saturday, December 8. If interested, please contact Cecile Canales (ccanales2@comcast.net) or sign up at <http://goo.gl/M5A4Km>
- **CHURCH VOLUNTEERS:** Help with crowd and tour control. Contact Brandon Williams: brandonpwilliams@hotmail.com
- **RUNNERS:** Deliver meals and assist homeowners with any needs. (Contact Carol.)
- **SET-UP:** Set up and take down luminaria at the homes that are on tour. (Contact Carol.)

-Submitted by Carol Gomrick



The Allegheny West Gazette: A publication of the Allegheny West Civic Council

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. Submission does not guarantee publication.

Editor: Karen Haller Beer

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RAFT Agenda: AWCC Membership Meeting

Tuesday, November 13 @ 7:30 P.M.

Calvary United Methodist Church, 971 Beech Ave

- Visitors:
 - Councilwoman Harris' office
 - Mayor Peduto's office
 - Pittsburgh Police Zone 1
 - Representative Wheatley's Office
 - Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy - Allegheny Commons
- New neighbors & guests
- Reading of previous meeting's minutes
- Treasurer's report
- Committee Reports
 - Membership*
 - Ways & Means:*
 - 2018 Alleys Axles & Ales, Final Report
 - Christmas Candlelight House Tour, December 7-8
 - Friends of Allegheny West*
 - Property*
 - Housing & Planning:*
 - Western Avenue revitalization/electric relocations
 - Proposed sale of Western Avenue lot for house construction
 - CCAC new building, Ridge at Brighton
 - Light of Life Ridge Avenue project
 - Allegheny Commons proposed implementation plan
 - Expansion of Historic District
 - Historic District enforcement issues – old cases
 - Air BnB issues/impacts on AW
 - Guidelines for new construction on vacant sites
 - Railroad bridge replacements, double-stack train impacts
- Northside Leadership Conference
- Nominating committee - proposed slate for November election
- Old business
- New business
- Election of Officers for 2019 - Nominating Committee
- Adjournment

AWCC Calendar

Tuesday, November 13 @ 7:30 P.M.

General Membership Meeting → Calvary Church, 971 Beech

Tuesday, November 20 @ 7:30 P.M.

Housing & Planning Committee → Office: 806 Western

Tuesday, November 27 @ 7:30 P.M.

Executive Committee → AWCC Office: 806 Western

Reminder: Street Sweeping

The street sweeper will come Monday, November 11 and Tuesday, November 12. Remember to move your car!

AWCC Officer Nominees for 2019

The AWCC Nominating Committee is pleased to present the proposed slate of officers for 2019:

President Ann Gilligan
 Vice President Tom Barbush
 Treasurer Cathy Serventi
 Secretary Bob Griewahn
 Sergeant-at-Arms Sara Sweeney
 Housing and Planning Committee Ashley Webb
 Membership Committee Greg Coll
 Ways and Means Committee Annette Trunzo
 Communications Committee Trish Burton
 Property Committee Michael Shealey
 Friends of Allegheny West Diane Caruso

Remember: Voting takes place at the November 13 General Membership Meeting.

