



# New Allegheny Times

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE MEXICAN WAR STREETS SOCIETY AND THE CENTRAL NORTHSIDE NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

## New Allegheny Times Ceases Publication

We are all aware of the challenges print media is experiencing around the country. Our small community is not immune. With this issue, the *New Allegheny Times* ceases publication in its current format. Both CNNC and the Mexican War Streets Society will explore more cost-effective ways to communicate with their constituents. Most likely this will take the form of an e-newsletter and a bi-annual printed newsletter with limited print distribution to local establishments where residents tend to gather. The Central Northside's branding effort may produce a solution.

Both CNNC and the Mexican War Streets Society would like to thank Leslie Vincen for her excellent editorial and production efforts on behalf of the *New Allegheny Times*. And, we appreciate the advertisers who have helped to keep the newsletter publishing for so long. Finally, we thank the readers of this newsletter and assure them that we will find a way to continue the information stream that is at the heart of this community. - Karen Bryant, CNNC Branding Consultant **CNNC**

## Another Successful House Tour!

The 42nd Annual Mexican War Streets House & Garden Tour braved threatening weather, competitive arts festivals and even the Steelers' first game...and survived! This year we welcomed more than 1,300 visitors, a bump up from last year. Revenues and expenses were in line with previous years. The financial results will be incorporated in the MWSS annual report in November.

Notable highlights included:

- The use of trained docents as guides in selected houses. This pilot program matches the practice of some of the leading tours in the country.
- An "Artists Annex" included in the House Tour booklet to highlight some of the creative talent in the neighborhood.
- A "Neighborhood Book Stall" on the midway to facilitate sales of the works of local authors.
- The use of Groupon sales to create awareness of the tour to a wider audience. A random selection of zip codes from these customers suggests that we drew from a large region through these sales. Groupon customers came from as far away as Zelenople, Greenburg, Ohio and Monesson.

All in all, more than 200 volunteers contributed to the success of the event. Special thanks to the House Tour committee members, who worked more than six months to organize it, and to the advertisers and sponsors who provided support - particularly our event sponsors Horn Corp. Builders, Western Pennsylvania Craftsmen's Guild, Cedar Avenue Giant Eagle and Best Feeds. And above all, thanks to the homeowners who take such an interest in our neighborhood that they agree to open their homes to strangers. - David Charlton, House Tour Co-Chair **MWSS**

## MWSS Annual Holiday Party

**Sunday, December 4, 2011 from 6 - 10 pm**  
**Dennis Vodzak Residence (512 West North Avenue)**

Please join us for seasonal refreshments and festivities at the MWSS annual Holiday Party, held at the elegant home of Dennis Vodzak at 512 W. North Ave. The MWSS will furnish roast turkey, baked ham, beverages and sheet cake. Please come with a side dish to share and nonperishable food items for the North Side Cooperative Ministry food pantry.

Admission renews your 2012 membership dues - a bargain at only \$12 per year! If you'd like to volunteer to help, please contact Bruce Harshman at bruski730@comcast.net. **MWSS**

NOV/DEC 2011



PO Box 6588  
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412-323-9030  
[www.mexicanwarstreets.org](http://www.mexicanwarstreets.org)

**OUR MISSION:**  
*To preserve the historic character of the Mexican War Streets and to promote our neighborhood through personal and community involvement.*



PO Box 6255  
Pittsburgh, PA 15212  
[www.cnnc-pgh.org](http://www.cnnc-pgh.org)

**MISSION STATEMENT:**  
*To enhance the lives of all Central Northside residents.*

**VISION STATEMENT:**  
*By end of 2015 CNNC will transform all our neighborhood's vacant lots and empty storefronts by filling them with thriving individuals, commerce and families of all kinds.*

*NEW ALLEGHENY TIMES*  
is sponsored by  
**Cedar Avenue Giant Eagle**

# Happenings at the Library

## Stretch and Relaxation

**Tuesdays through November 8th • 6:00 – 7:00 pm**

Grab your yoga mat and come to the library! Learn breath control and proper stretching techniques to take the stress out of your life.

## Secrets From Behind the Curtain: Ballet Fundamentals!

**Saturday, November 5 • 2:00 pm**

A ballerina from the Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre will read The Nutcracker, take audience questions and then teach a few steps and positions.

## Allegheny Commons: Past and Future

**Wednesday, November 9 • 6:30 – 7:30 pm**

Learn about the park's proud history and see the vision for its future. Local historian, John Canning and Alida Baker, Project Director at Allegheny Commons Initiative, will give a presentation about the history of the Allegheny Commons and provide an overview of the master plan for its renovation. Allegheny Commons: Past and Future is a collaboration of the Allegheny City Society, the Allegheny Commons Initiative and Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh – Allegheny.

Ongoing Programs:

**Conversation Salon at West Park Court • First Fridays at 10:00 am**

**Basic Computer Class • First and second Thursdays at 9:00 am**

**Friends of CLP Allegheny general meeting • Third Saturdays 9:00 am**

**Wii Gaming for Teens • Thursdays 3:30 pm**

Registration for all programs is suggested. Please call 412.237.1890 or visit [www.carnegielibrary.org](http://www.carnegielibrary.org) to reserve your space.



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# CNNC Safety Committee

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

Our neighborhood has suffered in the past few months, plagued by a rash of violence that includes two murders and more than a handful of shootings. All told, an excessive amount of gunfire has permeated the very fabric of our richly diverse community in the waning summer months of 2011. As current chair of the CNNC Safety Committee and a neighborhood father, I share your concerns. The various forums and chat groups are alive with frustration, anger and questions as to what is being done to quell the violence in our neighborhood. I for one am sick of hearing gunfire, as many of you are. Enough is enough. But, this epidemic we are facing is not exclusive to our neighborhood. It is pandemic, across this nation and our city of champions. That's a larger issue, a national issue but if we want change and safety, we have to start with transforming our own backyard.

The CNNC Safety Committee is starting to meet more frequently. We recognize that more communication between the upper and lower war streets is integral to our success and that a united neighborhood approach is absolutely necessary. I don't like to hear about my neighbors on Garfield, in the upper war streets, putting their homes on the market because they are being pushed out of this neighborhood by violence and drug related crimes. I don't like to hear that many of our neighbors in the upper war streets, out of fear, complacency or objection to gentrification, don't stand up to those who degrade themselves, this neighborhood and nation by taking part in illicit and often deadly activities. Enough is enough. We must come together. If we want change, if we want to purge the plague, we need to stand up and take action. This is a neighborhood in which everyone deserves safety. There is no political agenda, no race or class warfare at the heart of taking action, only the well deserved safety of every inhabitant within our neighborhood. That is my platform and the only one I stand behind; safety for all.

So what steps are being taken? I know that it's well and good to talk the talk but how am I, or we, going to walk the walk? The safety committee has brought together neighbors from upper and lower war streets with the purpose of developing a strategy. Here is what we are discussing; neighborhood parking permits, hiring off-duty police officers, the effectiveness of the cameras throughout the neighborhood and whether it's possible to get more; working to reduce the high concentration of low-income housing, dispersing these homes throughout the neighborhood instead of occupying a two block radius in the upper war streets. We are looking for ways to strengthen our relationships with our political leaders and our Zone One Commander and police force. We have also discussed the creation of a sticker or sign we can all place in our doors and windows stating that this neighborhood is united, that we are watchful and intolerant to crime and those who are not civic minded. We have and will disseminate information regarding our Google/safety telephone number (412-204-6116) and the steps one should take in reporting a crime to the police following that up by calling the Google/safety number. The safety committee is dedicated to finding ways to invite many of our neighbors who have been excluded or unwilling to participate, into the conversation regarding neighborhood safety. And as a sign of solidarity and fellowship, we are looking at many ways we can collectively celebrate this neighborhood. We are looking at safety stoops, street events, taking part in National Night Out as ways to awaken our neighborhood with both pride and stewardship.

We have only begun. Admittedly, the CNNC Safety Committee disappeared for a year or so. I take ownership in that even though I became a member of the board three months ago. But, we are here now and these small steps will become larger ones until there is a difference and everyone in this neighborhood or those that come to visit, feels safer. The only way we get there is together, without the burden of "us versus them" or lone wolf mentalities. It won't be easy but we must come together to become the community we all know Central Northside can be.

Sincerely,  
Paco Mahone  
CNNC Safety Chair

**CNNC**



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## What's UU All About?

Ever wondered what that 100-year-old church on West North and Resaca is all about? Uni... Univer... say what? Starting in October, we began offering a course on Unitarian Universalism called "What's UU All About?"

Here are some details:

**Nov 6 - Philosophy of Life-Long Faith Development**

**Nov 13 - Philosophy and Practice of Social Justice**

**Dec 4 - Governance & Polity**

**Dec 11 - Pathways of Membership**

Sessions are led by Rev. Dave and run about 90 minutes. Please join us as the spirit moves you! All are welcome just as you are. (And yes, we mean it.) Contact <minister@alleghenyuu.org> or www.alleghenyuu.org for details.

## KEEP UP TO DATE ON ORG NEWS

The Mexican War Streets Society & the Central Northside Neighborhood Council has been pleased to bring the *New Allegheny Times* to you every other month.

Be sure to look for neighborhood updates posted at www.cnnc-pgh.org and www.mexicanwarstreets.org.

To join the email bulletin board, simply join Yahoo and then subscribe to the YahooGroup. The HRL is <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ChatNorthside>.

## CNNC Branding Update

CNNC's Branding Committee reports steady progress with the rebranding process for the Central Northside. North Star's Adam Winstead and Kevin Hinson, armed with results from the Vision Survey and research from their recent onsite visit, are inspiring their creative team to envision a new image for our community. They have shared preliminary findings with the Branding Committee and, after incorporating the Committee's responses, are now moving into the Imagination Phase.

Here's a snapshot of what North Star has delivered to-date:

- **Research summary** – residents shared insights into what makes the Central Northside unique and desirable, like the strong sense of community and the "stooping" culture, walkability to Downtown, cultural opportunities, historical architecture and rich diversity of people.
- **Name recommendation** – a compelling 55% of Vision Survey responders said the name Central Northside was either boring or unattractive and more than 60% recommended a name change for Central Northside to include "Allegheny." The Committee will, therefore, incorporate "Allegheny" in the new name.
- **Creative brief** – the Branding Committee participated in development of the creative brief which captures the essence of our community and provides North Star with a direction and roadmap for creative direction of deliverables like the logo, tagline and color palette.

Here's what to expect as North Star moves into the Imagination Phase and then wraps up its role in the rebranding process:

- **End of October** – North Star will present rough ideas of creative direction for Central Northside's new brand. The Branding Committee will provide responses and comments.
- **Mid November** – North Star will present the final brand identity package to the Branding Committee including logo treatments with taglines for Central Northside and the CNNC, a new color palette and designs for an array of possible deliverables to be selected (e.g. newsletter, website, brochures, letterhead, business cards, pole flags, to name just a few possibilities).
- **November and December** – Branding Committee will confer with key stakeholders in developing a strategy for rolling out a new name and new brand identity.
- **January/February** – Branding Committee will present the entire re-branding package including a new name and creative deliverables to the membership for ratification in January with an initial strategy focused on rolling it out and implementing it in stages.

CNNC

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# How People Make Things

## Tough Art Through January 16, 2012

An exhibition of four, original, interactive artworks that are "tough" enough to withstand kid handling.

**Felipe Castelblanco:** Felipe is producing a piece that connects museum visitors at the Children's Museum in Pittsburgh and Maloka Museum in Bogota, Columbia, simultaneously. Video projections will play an important role in producing an immediate exchange & communication between the locations, while sculptural pieces will inflate and deflate, visualizing the respiration rhythm on the other side.

**Zach Dorn:** Zach is creating a piece that snatches museum-goers out of reality & places them directly inside one of his miniature landscapes - three dollhouse-sized environments made from recycled & found materials. Through the use of digital cameras, visitors can project themselves inside a miniature environment and "move" mechanized miniature puppets to sweep up stardust on the moon, replace a light bulb in an attic or navigate a submarine.

**Daniel Luchman and Jennifer Nagle** - This project engages children through the use of their voice. Kids stand on a small platform and sing into a microphone to activate inflating a large sculpture (12'x15'x6') made of colorful parachute fabric, with 30 appendages of various shapes & sizes.

**Christina Zaris** - Visitors will arrange colorful slides, objects, liquid-filled cells and other elements on a cylindrical light box to create their own Kaleidoscope projected on the wall - a unique combining of the traditional kaleidoscope mirror system and video technology.

This exhibit is supported by a grant from the Federal Institute of Museum and Library Sciences.

## How People Make Things November 5, 2011 - February 5, 2012

By popular demand, How People Make Things - an exhibit inspired by Mister Rogers' factory tour videos - brings the stories of making everyday items to life, featuring the people, processes and materials used to make them. In this exhibit, originally created by Children's Museum of Pittsburgh, visitors can operate a die cutter and assemble the body panels, dashboard and steering wheel of a real golf cart, stamp coins, fill molds and explore vacuum forming. Visitors can also perform cutting, molding, deforming and assembly jobs like in a real factory, and make their own toy horse and a box. Mister Rogers' factory tour videos show how products are made and many locally-made products will be featured.

More information at 412-322-5058 or [www.pittsburghkids.org](http://www.pittsburghkids.org)

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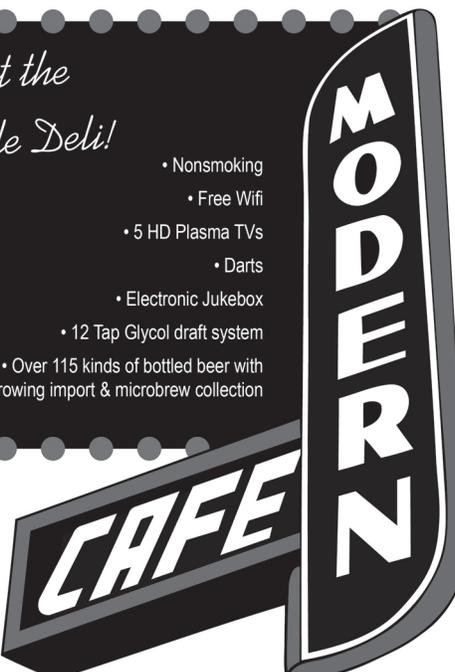
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## Calendar of Events

- Monday, November 14, 7pm  
**CNNC General Membership Meeting**  
Allegheny Traditional Academy  
[www.cnnc-pgh.org](http://www.cnnc-pgh.org)
- Wednesday, November 16, 7pm  
**MWSS General Membership Meeting & Board Election**  
Unitarian Church, North Avenue  
[www.mexicanwarstreets.org](http://www.mexicanwarstreets.org)
- Sunday, December 4, 6pm  
**MWSS Holiday Party**  
Dennis Vodzak Residence, 512 W. North Ave.  
[www.mexicanwarstreets.org](http://www.mexicanwarstreets.org)
- Fri & Sat, December 9 & 10, times vary  
**30th Annual Old Allegheny Victorian Christmas House Tour**  
Tickets are \$25 per person and available at [www.alleghenywest.org](http://www.alleghenywest.org)
- Monday, December 12, 7pm  
**CNNC General Membership Meeting**  
Allegheny Traditional Academy  
[www.cnnc-pgh.org](http://www.cnnc-pgh.org)

## Whirlwind Walk

Thanks to generous contributions from the Carl Wood Brown Fund of the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation, a second edition of **Whirlwind Walk: Architecture and Urban Spaces in Downtown Pittsburgh** is in the works. The popular downtown guidebook, released in 2008, sold out within a year. The second edition has about 30 more pages and includes several new entries and many new photos. The soft-cover guidebook will be \$10.00 (PHLF members receive a 10% discount).

To reserve a copy, please contact Frank Stroker at [frank@phlf.org](mailto:frank@phlf.org); 412-471-5808, ext. 525. Expected publication date: early November.



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# Prime Stage at New Hazlett with Northside Discount

Prime Stage Theatre is celebrating its 15th season with a special Buy-One/Get-One Free offer for Northside residents for their first production of the season, **The Scarlet Letter** (November 4-14, 2011). All ticket buyers (at the door only) who have a picture ID with an address of a 15212, 15214 or 15233 zip code qualify.

This very special production of **The Scarlet Letter** is co-authored by internationally acclaimed, award-winning author Carol Gilligan and her son, Jonathan Gilligan. Carol Gilligan is best known for her groundbreaking 1982 work on gender studies, *In A Different Voice*, described as "the little book that started a revolution" and the book is now required reading at universities around the country. This adaptation was presented as part of the 2007 Women Center Stage Festival in New York City.

Prime Stage is also initiating a new event - the **Dark Nights Reading Series**. The first of the series will be on Monday, November 7 at 7:30 pm and will feature selected readings from *The Last Lecture* by Randy Pausch and co-authored by Jeff Zaslow. On September 18, 2007, local Carnegie Mellon professor Randy Pausch, who was diagnosed the previous year with pancreatic cancer, delivered his talk entitled "*The Last Lecture: Really Achieving Your Childhood Dreams.*" Despite the fact that cancer was invading his pancreas and would claim his life in a matter of months, he delivered a message full of inspiration and wisdom not about dying, but about overcoming obstacles, reconsidering ambitions and seizing every moment. His words, "We cannot change the cards we are dealt, just how we play the hand," inspired millions with over five million copies in print in English alone. The book has been translated into 48 languages and was #1 on bestseller lists worldwide for 110 weeks. A portion of the proceeds will benefit pancreatic cancer research. The readings will be followed by a reception and book signing with Zaslow.

The remaining 2011-2012 season will feature **The Elephant Man** (February 24-March 4, 2012). Directed by critically acclaimed director Richard Keitel (*The Glass Menagerie*, 2011), he weaves this heartwarming and dramatic true-life tale about Joseph Merrick, the man who looked like a monster but whose spirit captured the heart of a nation. Their final production of the season, **A Wrinkle in Time** (May 11-20, 2012), is a delightful story about the battle between good and evil, the control of the universe and the ultimate triumph of love. The collaboration with the Carnegie Science Center, the Entertainment Technology Center of Carnegie Mellon University and the Pittsburgh Youth Symphony Orchestra fuses science, technology and the arts for a high definition experience.

All the above events will be held at the New Hazlett Theater. More information can be found at [www.primestage.com](http://www.primestage.com).

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## CNNC Announces Another Development Win

CNNC's Development Committee is proud to announce two significant grants that move the Scattered Site Project forward. The URA has made a grant of \$73,000 to cover predevelopment costs such as architecture, engineering, and site acquisition. And, Allegheny County has made a grant of \$200,000 from the Community Infrastructure and Tourism Fund (CITF) that will cover a portion of the site work on the project.

The project is the first to come out of the vacant lots RFP process initiated by CNNC. October Development and S&A Homes were selected to transform approximately 50 vacant lots into new housing over the next several years. The first phase of the Scattered Site Project consists of six new homes in the 100 block of Jacksonia and one renovated home at 105 Jacksonia. All units will be three bedroom units designed to complement the existing architecture in the neighborhood with pricing in the low \$200,000s.

"The CNNC is excited and proud to watch our vacant lots and blighted properties become affordable housing for new neighbors," said Board President Chris D'Addario. "Home ownership is a difficult conversation during challenging economic times, yet our community is bucking the trend. The help received from the URA, Allegheny County and others is allowing our community to build beautiful new homes and offer them at below market rate. Our best days are ahead of us in the Central Northside."

Construction on the new units is anticipated for early spring 2012 with occupancy by the end of the year. October Development is the contractor and Bob Baumbach is the architect. Both are Northside based firms.

**CNNC**

## Community Gem: The Pittsburgh Promise

Parents with kids preparing for college – get ready to have your world rocked! Your students can earn up to \$40,000 toward college just by living here and meeting minimum requirements (see sidebar)! That's The Pittsburgh Promise.

You don't have to be a straight-A student or a star athlete to earn this tuition support. The Pittsburgh Promise is available to all graduates of the Pittsburgh Public Schools and PPS-approved charters, regardless of financial need or income. As one of 90 communities in the Pittsburgh area, the Central Northside can add this community gem to a long list of amenities that pose the question, "Why aren't you living here?"

Just like the Central Northside, scratch the surface of The Pittsburgh Promise and you'll find far more than meets the eye. It's not just about scholarships. The Pittsburgh Promise is driven by a bigger vision. This program, led by Executive Director Saleem Ghubril, is all about strengthening Pittsburgh neighborhoods, impacting the region's economy, battling population decline and promoting the reform of Pittsburgh Public Schools.

And the staff walks the walk. Two of its leaders live on the North Side. Saleem, Ghubril, long-time North Sider, has been having an impact in the area since 1985 when he founded The Pittsburgh Project, a community development organization that annually provides free home renovations to hundreds of vulnerable seniors. He led that organization until 2008, when he assumed the leadership of The Pittsburgh Promise. He is currently the volunteer Co-Pastor of the Mosaic Community Presbyterian Church in Pittsburgh, and serves as the Chair of the Pittsburgh Partnership for Neighborhood Development, and Treasurer of The Buhl Foundation. In addition, Mr. Ghubril is a member of the boards of A+ Schools: Pittsburgh's Community Alliance for Public Education, Vibrant Pittsburgh, and The Pittsburgh Project.

And, Gene Walker returned to Pittsburgh with his family after 18 years to serve as Benchmarks Manager for The Pittsburgh Promise. He also resides on the North Side.

### The Pittsburgh Promise Eligibility Criteria

- Be a student in the district and a resident of Pittsburgh continuously since at least the 9th grade;
- Graduate from the Pittsburgh Public Schools or one of its charter high schools;
- Earn a minimum of a 2.5 GPA;
- Maintain a minimum attendance record of 90%;
- Earn admission to any accredited public or private post-secondary school located in Pennsylvania.

Learn more at [www.pittsburghpromise.org](http://www.pittsburghpromise.org).

**CPMC**

## Breakfast with Santa at the Aviary

### Flight Up Night

**Friday, December 2nd • 6-8 pm**

Join us for the National Aviary's second annual tree lighting complete with a visit from Santa Claus and one of his penguin pals. Enjoy night time bird encounters, an extra discount in our Gift Shop and free gift-wrapping for all of your Aviary purchases. Light snacks are provided and the Aviary's café will be open for dinner. Advanced registration suggested.

### Breakfast With Santa

**Saturday, December 3rd**

**Saturday, December 10th**

**Saturday, December 17th**

**8:30 am**

Enjoy a special Saturday morning with Santa and lots of feathered friends. Guests will enjoy a hot breakfast, coffee and hot chocolate, and a visit with Santa himself. Santa's penguin helpers will pose for pictures and help hand out a special take-away treat for each child. Admission includes seating for Wings! the Aviary's free-flight bird show.

More info at [www.aviary.org](http://www.aviary.org)

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