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# ALLEGHENY WEST GAZETTE

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March 2017

## President's Message

So what are you doing on Tuesday evening?

You could join (and meet!) your neighbors for a brief gathering, enjoy some light refreshments, learn what's going on in your community, and help steer us on the path forward.

On the second Tuesday of each month, you have the opportunity to learn what's happening AND to have your voice heard about what we can all be doing to make life here in Allegheny West better in every way. We're at Calvary Church, on the corner of Beech and Allegheny, at 7:30 P.M.—use the Beech Avenue entrance. Hope to see you this Tuesday!

On March 31 of 1962, Jane and Ross Johnson sent a letter to a few other property owners in the area of the North Side that we now call Allegheny West. Jane had been born right here in the neighborhood, only a short time after it had ceased to be the City of Allegheny.

She and Ross lived at 934 Western Avenue, and also operated Allegheny Real Estate, on the next block. They were raising their children here, and in the decades to come would sell houses to some of our community's early pioneer "newcomers".

Jane especially was able to see this area not for what it was, or even for what it had once been, but for what it could become. She had a talent for imparting that vision to others—including this writer when he bought his first house from her in 1977. She would ultimately remain active in the Allegheny West Civic Council—frequently as a member of the Executive Committee—well into the late 1980's.

When Jane passed away only a few years ago, she had lived to see her neighborhood far surpass anything that she could have imagined. From the perspective of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it was easy to understand that she and all of those who followed had succeeded most in attracting new believers—decade after decade—who would then take up the torch and forge ahead.

But in March of 1962, Jane and Ross wrote to their neighbors:

"The lower North Side in the immediate years ahead will undergo a major transformation... But what impact will these major improvements have on our particular area...?"

"The Lincoln-Beech-West Park section of the North Side has some unusual, if not unique, characteristics. There is its proximity to downtown; its orientation to West Park—the spacious and attractive section of the Commons. Here are some of the best residential structures built in a previous era ... many of real period and architectural character."

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“However, Lincoln-Beech is now a 75-year-old community with some structures that are not just old, but have been neglected and abused and can be regarded as substandard... Regrettably, we have developed a reputation as being a second-rate neighborhood, perhaps a reputation we in part deserve.”

“Can anything be done to effect a general improvement?”

“Our purpose in sending this informal letter to about a half-dozen property owners is to ascertain if they would favor that we make an organized effort to improve the area and, if so, would join us and add their signatures to send a similar statement and invitation to a larger representative group pointing toward an organization meeting.”

Jane and Ross mailed their letter, and waited to see if anybody would respond to the call.

—John DeSantis, AWCC President

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## Allegheny West Wine & Garden Tour, 2017

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Salud! It's Spanish wines and tapas for this year's Wine Tour! The dates of the tour will be Friday, June 2 and Saturday, June 3. We are finalizing the list of houses and will announce them soon. There will be properties never before featured on the Wine & Garden Tour. We are looking for volunteers, as well as sponsors. Please e-mail [carolgomrick@gmail.com](mailto:carolgomrick@gmail.com) if you're able to help in either capacity.

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## Preservation Summit Being Hosted on the Northside

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The Young Preservationists Association (YPA) will host an event on **Thursday, March 23 from 6-8 P.M.** at The *Preservation Summit* (614 Pressley Street): Representatives from [Partners for Sacred Places](#) of Philadelphia, The Steeple Project of Johnstown, [Preservation Pittsburgh](#), and more will be on hand to discuss and brainstorm solutions for abandoned and neglected churches. Suggested donation: \$5 at the door. For more information, visit: <http://www.youngpreservationists.org>.

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## Casting Call for Vintage Homes in the Pittsburgh Area

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The DIY Network is calling all homeowners with homes built before 1950. If you have a renovation project in the works, our professional team can help make it happen. We're searching in the greater Pittsburgh area for couples and families that would like to complete a home renovation project before May or June, 2017. Homeowners should already have the possible project mainly financed on their own. DIY Network will bring in experts to help with planning, work, and budget. Please e-mail your names, ages, contact info, a brief description of your project, and photos of your home's exterior, interior project, and a recent family photo to [laurenhoustoncasting@gmail.com](mailto:laurenhoustoncasting@gmail.com). Interested applicants should respond ASAP.

## Local Business Spotlight: Northside Yoga



In August, 2016, Allegheny West welcomed a new yoga studio—Northside Yoga—at 845 Western Avenue. Owners Lyndsey Fullen and Katie Mogilski, both Northside residents, noticed the lack of yoga studios in the neighborhood. They wanted neighbors to be able to practice yoga without having to cross the bridge into Downtown. With help from Diane Mercer of the Northside Community Development Fund, they found the beautiful old building on Western Avenue, the former site of the Used Textbook Warehouse.

Lyndsey and Katie's mission is to provide fitness-based yoga classes for all levels to the Northside and neighboring area residents. The classes at Northside Yoga include personal attention and aim to empower practitioners to lead happy, healthy, inspired lives. Additionally, Northside

Yoga strives to enhance the surrounding community by offering regular karma classes and other events that benefit a Northside area charity.

Every Sunday at 2:00P.M., Northside Yoga offers a "Karma" Class. The class is donation-based, pay what you can, and all proceeds benefit a local nonprofit. So far, Lyndsey and Katie have been able to donate to the Humane Society, Light of Life, and City of Asylum. Currently, until April, this class benefits the Northside Food Pantry. They recommend securing a spot online in advance, as the class has been filling up!

For more information and class schedules, please visit <https://www.northsideyogapgh.com>, or follow on Facebook and Instagram (@northsideyogapgh).



Remember, if you're a local business owner and you'd like to tell your business's story, please Send information about your business, its mission, how long you've been in Allegheny West, why you chose the neighborhood, and any important events or future plans you'd like your neighbors to know about. When space allows, one business per month can be featured in the Gazette. It's a great way for the neighbors to connect to and support local businesses, and it's publicity for you. E-mail information to Karen at [gazette@alleghenywest.org](mailto:gazette@alleghenywest.org). Can't wait to hear from you!

### The Allegheny West Gazette

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.

**Editor: Karen Haller Beer**

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## AWCC Calendar

Tuesday, March 14 @ 7:30 P.M.

General Membership → Calvary Church: 971 Beech

Friday, March 17 @ 6:30 P.M.

Neighborhood Mixer → Modern Cafe

Tuesday, March 21 @ 7:30 P.M.

Housing & Planning Committee → Office: 806 Western

Tuesday, March 28, @ 7:30 P.M.

Executive Committee → AWCC Office: 806 Western

**BOWLING EVERY WEDNESDAY AT ELKS LODGE!**

## DRAFT Agenda: AWCC Membership Meeting

Tuesday, March 14 @ 7:30 P.M.

Calvary United Methodist Church, 971 Beech Ave

- **Visitors:**
  - Councilwoman Harris' office
  - Mayor Peduto's office
  - Pittsburgh Police Zone 1
- **Introduction:** Jake Bier, new proprietor of Benjamin's
- New neighbors & guests
- Reading of last month's minutes
- **Treasurer's report**
  - Finance Committee volunteers sought
- **Committee Reports**

### Membership:

- Bowling at Elks
- March Mixer
- AWCC 55th Anniversary Celebration (May)

### Ways & Means:

- Wine Tour updates (June 2 & 3)
- Update on five-year Calvary Plan
- Dates for other 2017 events

### Friends of Allegheny West: Green Space

### 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
- **Northside Leadership Conference**
- **Other business (Old & New)**

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