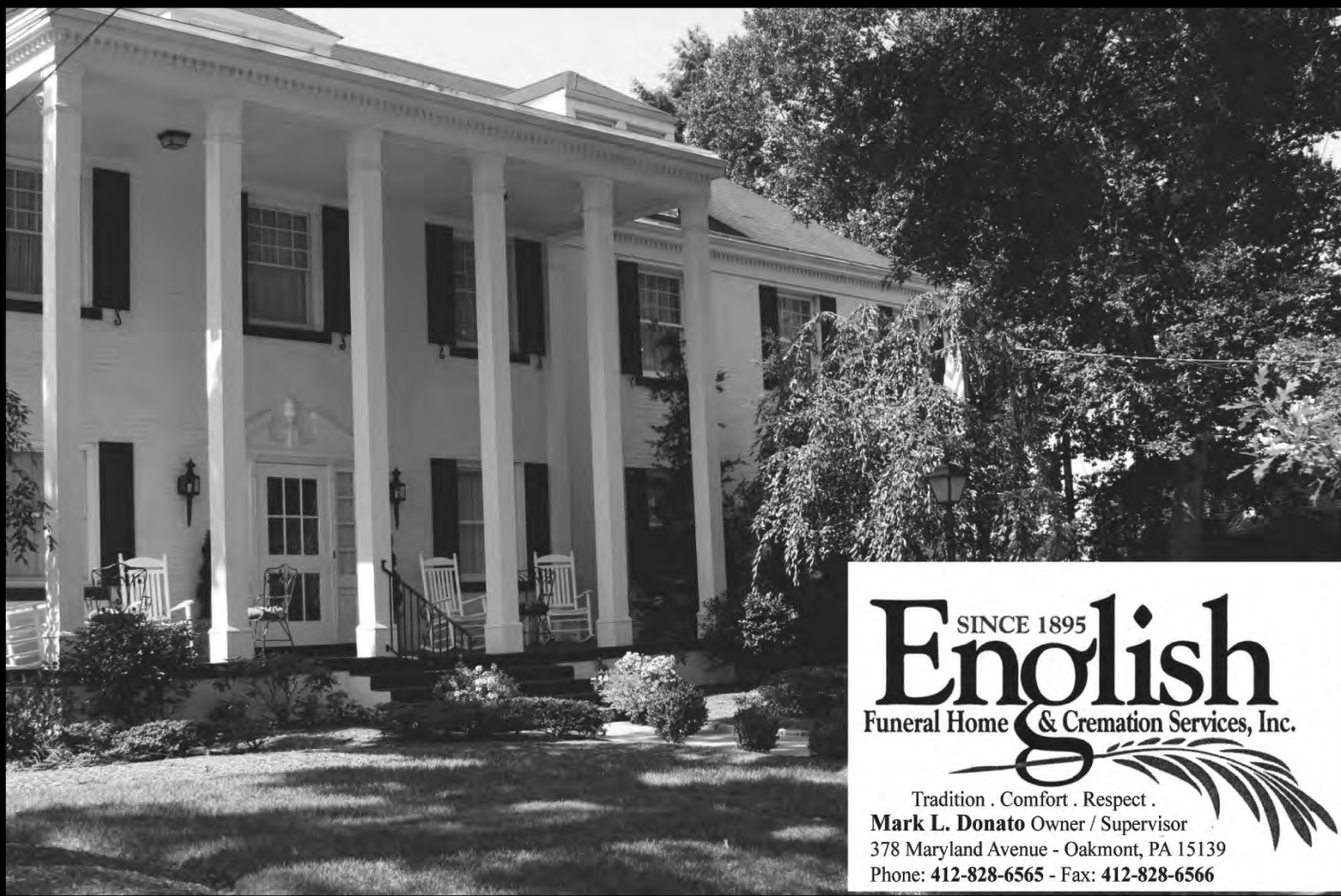


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The Verona Litter-Gitters Fall Cleanup Benefits Our Borough

by Kathy & Luke Mattocks
Founders of the Verona Litter-Gitters

The **Litter Gitters of Verona** completed another successful Fall cleanup event! Once again, this year it was primarily organized on Facebook and by word of mouth. There were individual efforts throughout the weekend of 10/15 covering the entire borough split into nineteen assigned territories. There was also a focused, group effort on 10/17 along Seldon Avenue and the hillside heading up to Ridge (a long-neglected area.)

There were roughly 41 participants overall, including Verona, Oakmont, and Penn Hills residents. Nine volunteers including three juniors from Riverview participated for their volunteer hour requirements during the 10/17 effort at Seldon. (Those kids CRUSHED it!) Easily, a half of a ton of litter was gathered in the Seldon territory alone. While we didn't get to the very top of the hillside, it looks SO much better. Litter from 30 years ago or more was collected!

Continued on page 3



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Important Information

In Case of Emergency Dial 911

BOROUGH BUSINESS

Scheduled Borough Council Meetings

7:00 p.m. – Second Tuesday of each month, Municipal Building

Scheduled Borough Council Workshop Meetings

7:00 p.m. – Last Tuesday of each month, Municipal Building

Community Group Meetings

7:00 p.m. – 7/29, 9/30, 11/18

Verona Chamber of Commerce

7:00 p.m. – Third Tuesday of each month, Municipal Building

Verona Parks and Recreation Board

6:30 p.m. – First Tuesday of even months, Municipal Building
They will also be virtual until further notice, Link will be shared on our Face Book page, or by requesting a link by emailing veronaparksandrec@gmail.com.

Verona Historical Society

7:00 p.m. – Third Thursday of each month, Municipal Building

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Non-Emergency 412-828-3036

Police Department

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Emergency 911
Non-Emergency 412-828-6034
Police Chief – Ron McLemore

Lower Valley Ambulance Service

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FROM THE MAYOR'S DESK

by Mayor David Ricupero

As snowy and icy winter weather approaches, please remember to shovel and salt your sidewalks. This is an ordinance, and we have, in the past, sighted people for snow covered sidewalks. Remember, children, the elderly, mail carriers and other delivery people along with our neighbors use our sidewalks. Additionally, you can get involved in a costly personal lawsuit if you are sued and found guilty of causing bodily injury for not keeping your walkways clean of ice and snow.

Congratulations Verona on your 150th Anniversary. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to: (1) the Verona 150th (Sesquicentennial) Celebration Committee for its series of year-long events designed to celebrate Verona's 150th Birthday; (2) the Verona Historical Society for dedicating and sealing the *Verona Time Capsule*; to be reopened in the year 2071 when Verona will be celebrating its Bicentennial Birthday!; (3) the Verona Flower and Garden Club for its involvement in making Verona a much more attractive town as well as its engaging community events; (4) to the Verona Businesses and the Verona Chamber of Commerce for planning and participating in the Christmas Parade and Cookie-Walk and for decorating the town for the Holidays; and finally, (5) to all the participants who showed their Community Pride and Spirit of the Season, by coming out and supporting these events.

There are so many groups and people to thank personally. My apologies to any organization(s) or individuals that I overlooked to thank for their involvement in making Verona a more fun and engaging family-oriented place to live.

Verona is certainly proving that it is more than *"The Spot That's More Than A Dot."* Verona is proving that it truly is *"Someplace Special!"*

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! Happy Holidays to everyone!
As always, keep GOD Close!

Mayor David Ricupero

EDITORIAL CORRECTIONS:

In the last issue of the Verona Community Newsletter, (Volume 8, issue 4, Fall, 2021) in the article titled, *VERONA: 150 YEARS*, on page 13, the following correction is in order: The author's name is misspelled. The correct spelling of the author's name is **Anita Berardi**. Please accept the editor's apology.

ATTENTION: If you are interested in contributing to the **Verona Community Newsletter**, by writing an article collecting news, writing, explaining a hobby, or taking pictures; contact **Donald (Don) Worf** at VeronaNewsRoom@gmail.com or at **412-828-3607**.

Articles for the next issue, (Winter issue), will be due December 1, 2021 which will be published by the end of the month. The Fall issue covers articles spanning the months of October 1 through December 31. This would include the Holiday season.

If you would like to place an advertisement in the Newsletter, contact **Sylvia Provenza** at **412-828-9542**.

Verona Historical Society's 2022 SCHEDULE

by Rhoda Worf, VHS President

Meetings are held the third Thursday of each month at the Verona Municipal Building at 7 pm.

Scheduled programs follow a brief business meeting.
OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

- **JANUARY 20, 2022Thursday.....MOVIE (TBA)**
- **FEBRUARY 17, 2022.... Thursday.....MOVIE (TBA)**
- **MARCH 17, 2022..... Thursday..... Gary Rogers presents the "1936 ST. PATRICK'S DAY FLOOD"**

Verona Litter-Gitters

Continued from page 1

There was also a photo contest for small prize packages and bragging rights. The winners were:

- Spookiest item found: Sara Rae and Anna Mayhood for the skull.
- Best recycling participation: Sara Rae for highlighting the recycling efforts on Seldon. Over 500 cans were collected!
- Largest item found: Krystal McDonald's large cardboard box.
- Best individual/group pic: Traci Buxton's granddaughter, Olivia

It was fun to see all the pictures of the interesting finds.

A small group gathered at **Inner Groove Brewing** on Sunday to celebrate. Inner Groove graciously treated any participant (21+) to a free pint. Thank you, IGB, for your continued support!

If you want more information as to how to participate or support litter gittin' efforts, please join the group Litter Gitters of Verona on Facebook. If you are not on Facebook, please reach out via email at neighbors@veronacommunity.org. By phone, you may contact the borough office at (412) 828-8080 and they will direct your message to the appropriate contact. Business sponsors are also desired for future efforts.

Many thanks to all that participated and are dedicated to keeping Verona clean! It takes many hands to maintain our presence as a low-litter borough. We can all do a small part. All are encouraged to clean up around their own property on a regular basis.

Editor's Comment: On behalf of the citizens of the Borough of Verona, I'd like to extend a hearty and sincere *Thank You* to all members of the Verona Litter-Gitters Squad for their strong community commitment to eliminate refuse from Verona's streets, alleys, hillsides, and any place where litter hides. Please help them and the Borough of Verona by disposing of your trash in a proper and responsible manner. And please remember to practice proper recycling practices as well.

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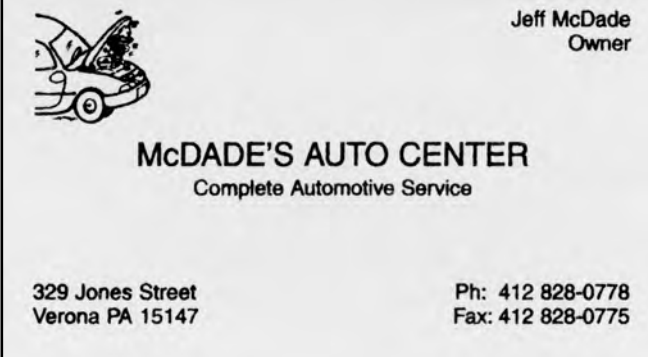
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Oakmont Library is going Fine Free January 2022

What does that mean?

by Beth Mellor

It means that the library no longer charges daily late fines on items that are overdue, and if your home library is Oakmont, any existing fines lingering on your account have been waived. You may still be charged for lost or damaged materials, printed items, or other fees, but you can turn in that stack of children's picture books a day or two late without fear of racking up a big bill!

All library materials will still have a due date, and books that are lost, damaged, or otherwise not returned will be charged just as they are now. As the due date approaches, the library will notify the patron of the due date and ask that they return it (if the item is NOT eligible for renewal). If the item is six weeks overdue, a bill to replace the item will be issued, and if an item is more than six weeks overdue, the account may be referred to a collection agency depending on the registering library.

Overdue fines generate less than 1% of our annual budget at this point. We constantly explore other ways of generating income to help supplement our operating budget.

Our expectation is that the majority of items checked out will still be returned within a few days of the due date, regardless of an overdue fine. Other libraries that have made this change have not seen a significant change in the rate of items that are overdue and see around 95% of items returned within one week of the due date.

Oakmont Library's mission is to "is to serve as a community source of lifelong learning, information, recreation, and inspiration." We believe this policy change will help us better accomplish our mission to create an inclusive, welcoming environment. Studies have shown that overdue fines create a barrier to access for the library patrons who need our services the most. We want everyone to feel welcome at the library!

Though we will continue to collect fees, fines and past fines will be eliminated. What is the difference between a fine and a fee?

Fines: funds owed for overdue items
Fees: funds owed for replacement items, collection agency charges, and other manual charges.

Beth Mellor, Director Oakmont Carnegie Library
mellorb1@einetwork.net
412.828.9532x

Winter Schedule for Oakmont Library

by Robin Almendinger

Oakmont Carnegie Library Hours
Lobby open daily at 9AM for pickup
Mon, Tues & Thurs 10-8; Wed. 10-4; Fridays 10-2; Saturdays 9-4
412-828-9532
oakmontlibrary.org.

CLOSED MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY (Monday, Jan. 17)

The library is open for patron visits for browsing, reading or computer use. Masks are required!

The Squirrel's Nest is open most library hours except Saturdays! Come and shop our great finds!

Find our programs on our website under "Upcoming Events". Also, a wide variety of virtual programs offered by area libraries. Something for every interest and all are free. Check them out on our homepage!

- **In the Kitchen with Chef Emily: 3rd Wednesdays, 5:00PM** The Library offers **virtual** cooking classes with Pittsburgh Chef Emily Larsen. It's like having a private chef in your own kitchen! **Live on Zoom.** Registration required on our website. You will receive an invitation and recipe.

In-person adult programs: (All subject to Covid-related changes!)

- **RWA Community Connections Series: "Strategic Leadership through Chess Education", Thursday, January 20, 6:30PM**
Join founder, president, and CEO of **Queens Gambit**, Ashley Lynn Priore, for a discussion on how **chess** can teach young people the skills they need to succeed. Starting with background on the increasing role of strategic leadership skills in the workforce, the talk will describe why chess is so important and how we can work together to empower a community of young leaders.
- **Gentle Yoga with Cora - coming in January**, check our website for times.
- **Meditation with a Monk, Tuesdays, 6PM.** With monks from the Pittsburgh Buddhist Center in Allison Park
- **Cookbook Club, 2nd Mondays, 6PM.**
This is like an organized potluck: there is a monthly cookbook on display at the library. Look through it, choose and copy your recipe, cook it at home and bring it to share at dinner. For singles, couples, and families of all ages. Meet, greet, eat, fun!
- **Book club, 3rd Fridays, 10:00AM.**

In-person Children's Programs Attendance is limited, registration required!

- **Book Buddies Storytimes** (ages 2-5) Wednesdays, 10:30AM.
- **Baby Lapsit with Ms. Beth** (ages 0-2), Tuesdays, 10:30AM

Virtual Children's Programs

View on You Tube under "Storytime with Dudley and Miss Karen". Weekly themes are posted on social our media sites.

- **Storytime Mondays:** Ms. Karen will read a story with a seasonal theme, 10AM
- **Grab & Go Wednesdays:** A story-related craft, available for pickup every Wednesday in the lobby
- **First Chapter Fridays:** Ms. Karen will read the first chapter of an elementary- age book. Check out the book to see how the story ends! 10AM

What Are Your Financial Resolutions For 2022?



Have you made your New Year's resolutions? This year, in addition to setting goals for your health and self-improvement, why not make some *financial* resolutions, too?

Here are a few suggestions:

First, resolve to be prepared for the unexpected. One way of doing this is to build an emergency fund containing three to six months' worth of living expenses, with the money kept in a liquid, low-risk account.

Next, set a goal of boosting your retirement savings by contributing more to your IRA and 401(k).

Here's another good resolution: Reduce your debt load. The lower your debt payments, the more you can save and invest for the future.

Finally, tell yourself you won't overreact to news events by constantly changing how you invest. Stick with a strategy that's suitable for your goals and risk tolerance.

These aren't the only financial resolutions you can make – but following them will help you develop good habits that will benefit you in 2022 and beyond.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor.

Member SIPC

Seth D. Thompson, AAMS®
Financial Advisor
Office: 412-828-2437
seth.thompson@edwardjones.com
201 Allegheny Ave. Suite 2
Oakmont, PA 15139

New Welcome Signs Coming to Verona!

by Jeff Pepper, Karyn Brooks, and Trish Hredzak-Showalter

Big changes are brewing in Verona, with the recent openings of many new businesses and lots of new people moving into town. To support this renewal, a group of volunteers has been working to design and install three beautiful new welcome signs to greet motorists (and cyclists!) as they enter the borough.

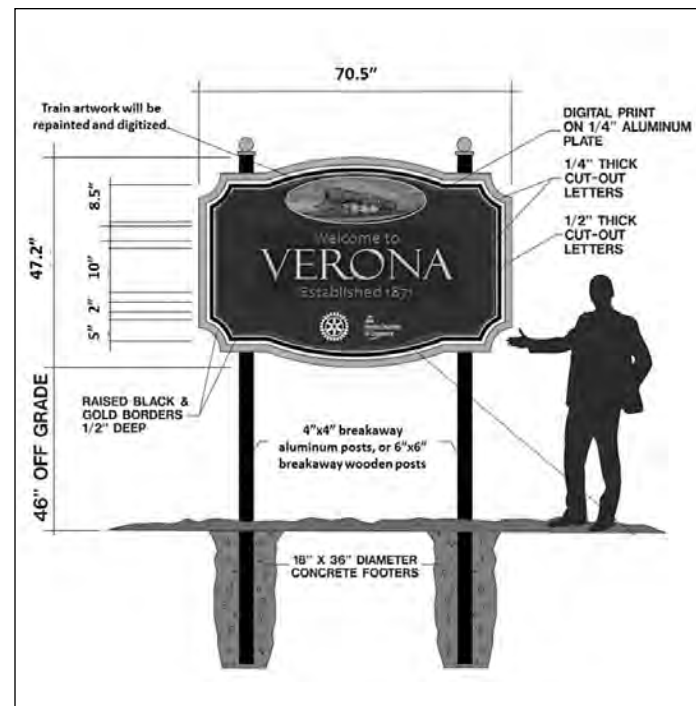
As everyone knows, Verona currently has two small welcome signs, one at either end of Allegheny River Boulevard, the main road that runs through the town. These are painted wooden signs and are quite old. We recently learned that these signs do not conform to current PennDOT regulations and will likely need to be removed within the next couple of years.

So, a group of volunteers, led by the Verona/Oakmont Rotary Club, has developed a plan to install three beautiful new welcome signs. Two of them will be the same locations as the existing signs, plus a third sign at a new location on Wildwood Road. The existing wooden signs will be removed and placed elsewhere in the borough.

The new signs will be made of 1/8" thick aluminum plate, with raised borders and lettering made of routed aluminum. Each sign will be mounted on 6"x6" painted wooden posts that are pre-drilled to break away, in conformance with current PennDOT safety regulations. These signs should last for decades without the need for maintenance. The entire sign plan has been reviewed and approved by PennDOT.

The sign design was the result of intensive design work by the sign committee, input from Verona Borough Council and PennDOT, and 72 individuals who responded to a series of surveys conducted over the last few months. This input helped us decide on the final sign design. Survey results showed that 79% favored replacing the old signs and only 18% opposed. Voting on the tag line, 53% wanted "Established 1871" compared with 12% for "Proud of Our Heritage" and 28% for the borough's old tag line, "The Spot That's More Than a Dot." Overall, 81% liked the new sign design and only 15% didn't like it.

The total cost of the project is expected to be \$20,605. The project will be completely funded by contributions from individuals, businesses, and local foundations. Every dollar raised will go directly towards covering these costs.



We have several large initial donations, including \$3600 from the Verona/Oakmont Rotary, \$2000 from the Verona Chamber of Commerce, and \$2000 from the Earth Volunteer Fund. That will cover roughly 1/3 of the cost of the project. For the rest, we are counting on local Verona residents and businesses.

We'd like to invite every Verona resident and business to contribute to this project, at whatever financial level they're comfortable with. To donate, please visit www.gofundme.com/f/verona-welcome-signs.

Questions? Contact any of the following: Project Coordinator Jeff Pepper (jeffpepper53@gmail.com), Rotary Club President Karyn Brooks (karyn@pisausa.com), or Verona Borough Council Member Trish Hredzak-Showalter (phredzak@veronaborough.org).

Verona Chamber of Commerce - Reorganizational Meeting

by Kier G. Ewing, Jr.
Verona Chamber of Commerce, Recording Secretary

Calling all Verona businesses! The Verona Chamber of Commerce is holding a reorganizational meeting on Tuesday, January 18, 2022 at 7:00pm at the Verona Municipal Meeting. We invite all Verona business owners and interested community members to join us.

After almost 2 years of not holding our monthly meetings due to covid concerns it's time to get things up and running in 2022. We need to present candidates for the Board of Directors seats and elect officers. The candidates will be presented at our February meeting and elections will be held at our March meeting.

The VCC has 3 dues levels. Individual memberships are \$10, small business memberships are \$50 and large business memberships are \$100. A member's dues must be paid for the 2022 year in order to run for the board of directors and to vote in the election.

WINTER MEETING SCHEDULE

Tuesday, January 18, 2022

Reorganizational Meeting

Tuesday, February 12, 2022

Monthly Meeting/Presentation of Slate of Candidates

Tuesday, March 15, 2022

Monthly Meeting/Election of Board Members

The VCC meets on the third Tuesday of each month (Except August and December) at the Verona Municipal Building at 7:00pm.

COME AND GET INVOLVED! KEEP VERONA MOVING FORWARD IN 2022.

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Edward Jones
MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING

Vacancies Available on Both the PLANNING COMMISSION and the PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD

by Nancy A. Carpenter

I. Want to get involved by helping serve the Borough of Verona?

- The Borough has identified openings available on the Planning Commission and the Parks and Recreation Board.
- If more applicants apply than openings, Council will vote to decide who fills the slots.
- There is 1 position available on the Planning Commission. There are 1-3 positions available on the Parks and Recreation Board.
- Letters of interest should be emailed to the Borough Secretary, Christine DeRunk at cderunk@veronaborough.org, and are being accepted until January 31st, 2022.

II. Brief Descriptions of the Primary duties of each Board or Commission:

The Planning Commission's primary role, as its name implies, is to plan. A Planning Commission is a body of citizens that serve within local government, acting as an advisory group to the municipal governing body on issues and policies related to planning, land use regulation, and community development.

A Planning Commission acts as an advisor to the governing body. Its principal role is stipulated in Section 209.1 of the MPC: A planning commission is required – at the request of the governing body – to prepare a comprehensive plan for the long-term growth, development, and well-being of the municipality.

The Recreation Board is an Advisory Board to Borough Council and is responsible for recreation issues and implementation of parks and recreation programs, including Park activities, and holiday events.

Verona Man Mike Cannon Stars on NBC's *Law and Order: Organized Crime*

By Linda & Gary Cannon



What started out as a way to make friends turned into a life-long career on stage and film for Verona native, Mike Cannon. Back in his high school days at Riverview High School, Mike was extremely shy and decided that a way to step out of his comfort zone and make more friends would be to try out for the spring musical *Bye, Bye Birdie*. He had no idea how life changing that decision would be.

His love for acting started there on the Tenth Street school stage and has taken him all over the country on two national tours... to New York City in six different Broadway shows. And currently on to your television every Thursday night.

Mike is currently starring as *Detective Carlos Maldonado* on *Law and Order: Organized Crime*. He is, "So honored to be joining such an amazing cast." This is the shows second season. Mike joined in episode 1 "Most of the time I just can't believe how fortunate I am. I am standing on 72nd Street in New York, the street is blocked off. There's a paparazzi and spectators on the side and the camera is pointed at me as I bust into a party to take down criminals along with Ice T and Mariska Hargitay. I just arrested a guy in Queens last night with Danielle Monet Truitt and Chris Meloni. Um... what is happening?! I am learning so much from Chris and Danielle. Every day is a masterclass."

"I attribute any success I've had to great teachers and work ethic. Growing up, I never got the lead in anything. I wasn't the star. I didn't hit it big at 19. I was singing Christmas Carols at

Monroeville Mall and going to class. But I knew it was a marathon and not a sprint. If I put in hard work, some day it would pay off."

"However-much success I achieve though, I am still always thankful for my childhood in Pittsburgh. I still put on the black and gold on Sundays. A dream of mine would be to come back to Pittsburgh to film a movie. That would be awesome. *Primate's* sandwiches all day!"

His advice to anyone pursuing a career in acting, "work hard and never stop dreaming. That goes for anyone pursuing anything. You get one life. Why not go for it?"

For all his updates, you can follow Mike on Instagram @mikecannonofficial. And be sure to tune in Thursday's at 10 pm on NBC to watch him and the cast of *Law and Order: Organized Crime*.

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Love, At First Sight, At Verona's Centennial Celebration, Continues Strong After Fifty Years

by Jennifer Marasco

A sesquicentennial (150 years) minus 50-years ago, in 1971 Verona was celebrating its Centennial birthday celebration. In 1971, meeting people and finding love was a very different adventure than it is now. In 1971, no one had cell phones with dating apps where they found their true loves with just the swipe of a finger. No – back then, true love often-times happened merely by pure chance. It can be a magical, spontaneous, and unexplained occurrence which makes people say they “fell in love at first sight.” Well, it just so happens we have a real-life love story that began at Verona's very own Centennial (100th) Street Fair.

Let me introduce you to Joe Larkin and Marianne Poppish. It WAS “love at first sight” for a 14-year-old young man named Joe when he laid his eyes upon Marianne Poppish at the Verona Centennial Street Fair on August 26th, 1971.

Marianne was just 13 years old and from the nearby community of Penn Hills. She and her friend Lois

Loggi Reese decided to enjoy the last days of summer by attending Verona's 100th anniversary party. Near and far to show off what Verona had to offer. The night was festive, with a band playing to the crowd on the open boulevard. Joe lived over in Oakmont and found himself at the Verona fair. He saw Marianne and started talking to her, thinking she was someone else at first. What was a conversation based on mistaken identity sparked a love story that has lasted 50 years and counting?

Marianne's friend Lois saw the strong attraction between the two



young teens and shared Marianne's phone number with Joe. After a few phone conversations resulting from their encounter at Verona's centennial event, the couple decided to attend a showing of 'Evel Knievel' at the original Oaks Theatre on September 17, 1971! The couple continued their courtship throughout high school. Things became serious on Christmas Eve of 1978 when, surrounded by Marianne's family in her kitchen, Joe asked for her hand in marriage and to spend their lives together. Marianne happily said yes and the two married less than a year later at St. Joseph's Church in Verona on September 15th, 1979. This year marks 42 years since the couple said their 'I do's.

The couple settled in Joe's hometown of Oakmont and lived there for the first 16 years of their marriage. They were blessed with a beautiful baby girl named Emilee on September 11, 1995. The family relocated to Springdale, where Emilee went to school. The couple loves Verona, Oakmont and the surrounding communities, and their family, friends and jobs have kept them in the area. Presently, the couple likes to come to Verona and stop at Inner Groove Brewing to enjoy a beer. To this day, Joe proudly tells anyone who asks about his and Marianne's relationship that it was love at first sight. Marianne happily shared with me that “Joe is the best husband, father and is my best friend.” Both Joe and Marianne exclaim how they “were so glad we were in the right place at the same time and wouldn't change a thing!”



The couple celebrated 50 years together by attending Verona's Sesquicentennial (150th) Celebration on September 18, 2021, at Community Days at Railroad Park! It was a pleasure to meet this lovely couple in person and take a picture to commemorate the love that has endured by a chance encounter at a street fair 50 years ago! We appreciate Marianne and Joe sharing their love story with the Verona Community Group in recognition of Verona's momentous celebration of 150 years as a town! We can only imagine what other connections will be made this year that could last the next 50!



RCAC NEWS

Hours of Operation and Scheduled Classes


by Mary Margaret Fisher
RCAC Program Coordinator

- I. **RCAC is open Monday thru Friday from 8am - 4pm.**
 - The winter months are here so tune into KDKA TV for RCAC closings and delays, this would include the RCAC bus. If Pittsburgh Public Schools are closed OPT/ACCESS transportation does not run.
- II. **Fitness Classes at RCAC***
 - **Chair Yoga** – Monday 10:30 am
 - **Tai Chi** - Monday 1:30 pm
 - **Let's Get Movin'** – Tuesday 10:30 am
 - **Line Dancing** – Friday 10:00 am

*All Classes are \$3 per session.
- III. **Grab 'n Go Meals**
 - RCAC is offering Grab 'n Go meals for people 60 or older.

Meals are sent to the Center in 5-day packs that must be picked up on Monday. Meals come with fruit juice and cheese sticks. We can also add milk at your request. The meals are frozen and can be heated in the oven or microwave. Order the meals by noon the Thursday prior. 412-828-1062. Suggested donation \$1.25 per meal.

Jim O'Malley
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“GONE YET NOT FORGOTTEN”

by Frank W. Santucci

Our beloved Borough of Verona, which was established in 1871 remains basically the same with the exception of the separation of the Second Ward (now Oakmont) in 1889.

Over the years, some nearby communities have changed dramatically, or just completely faded away.

Back In the early 1900's, traveling 5 miles east from Verona, was a mining community called Clarksville. It

was said that because of the workers excellent work ethic, in 1902 the Carnegie Illinois Steel Company purchased 224 acres adjacent to Clarksville, building a large factory to produce cement, naming this business the Universal Cement Company. The population of Clarksville grew rapidly and some of the plant workers were residents of Verona. This company was very good to its workers and to the townspeople as a whole. They built a schoolhouse – cement of course – and donated it to the town. That cement school building still stands today but is no longer in use. A great love affair existed between Universal Cement Company and the town. Tennis courts, football and baseball fields were built and maintained by the Company. Family picnic areas were even developed.

In 1930 the Atlas Company took over the rights for cement making and changed their name to Atlas Universal Cement Company becoming the largest cement manufacturing company in the United States. Since the village workers and the company enjoyed such an intense friendship, the Clarksville residents voted to officially change its town name to Universal, as it is still known today. By 1970 the plant became outdated, and it shut down for good.

Going further east towards Monroeville, 11 miles from Verona, was a huge automobile amusement park whose parking lot could hold over 1,000 automobiles. Initiated in 1930 by two brothers this park was called Burke Glen. While the eastern communities enjoyed the trolley parks, the need for an automobile venue became a reality because of the availability and affordability of the gas driven vehicles. Its moniker was, “The Seashore at your Door.” Burke Glen Park was located where the Levin Furniture currently has its store on Route 22 East.

444 Acres was transformed into a destination weekend park. A 100-foot boardwalk was built by an adjoining bubbly creek. Nearby a large commu-

nity swimming pool was built featuring springboards and slides, in addition to small rides for children; and a super roller coaster called, “The Speed Hound.” An 18-hole golf course was on the outskirts of the park. Located in the middle of the park was a huge coffee urn, where they sold coffee for 5 cents a cup. An outside open air dance hall was filled to capacity every Saturday night (\$.50 per person). Donkey baseball was played every Sunday. On peak weekends, it was noted that close to 5,000 residents were enjoying the park activities. Burke Glen flourished over the next ten years, until November 1940 when construction began for the new Route 22 disturbing its very essence. Interest diminished substantially during the following years and the park closed in 1970.

Close to Worthington on Route 422 you'll find a community named Yellow Dog, located 28 miles north of Verona. Pittsburgh Limestone Company had a mine and during 1910-1920 on 32 acres near their mine, they built a small community of houses suitable for family liv-

ing and grocery stores. The workers could live in these homes at a reasonable rental rate on the condition they would not entertain any union activities. Workers in the United States during this era who did agree to sign the non-union papers were called “Yellow Dogs” thus creating the name.... Yellow Dog Town. Wages were good and all was well until the water from a spring that supplied this town became contaminated in 1930. The demise of Yellow Dog town began when a mining accident occurred, and the National Depression began.

In 1935 Moonlight Mushroom Company bought the mine and continued business there for 15 years. In 1952 the mine was shuttered for good. The houses remained intact but in need of repair and vandalism occurred. Residents abandoned so quickly even leaving all of their own personal belongings behind.

In 2014 a retired history school-teacher bought the property and the 20

buildings for \$220,000. His dream was to form an artisan type of community – painters, writers, re-naming it “Shadyside Village.” Not much to see now for these forgotten 21 acres, but its history is interesting. Buffalo Creek runs along the side of the town and this creek is contaminated. As of this writing, the only known person currently residing there is the retired history teacher with a dream.

Within our immediate area of Verona there are many interesting places to investigate, in person or by Goggle. Other places such as the Barking Mine with twin conveyor tunnels going back and forth underneath the Allegheny River; the Thunderbird Boatel in the Montrose area of Blawnox; Dark Hollow Park; the Canoe clubs of Sylvan; the Verona Boy Scout Hut in Point Breeze; and Wildwood planned community by Nadine Road.

A poplar place now to visit is Randyland, an incredibly unique part of the North Side of Pittsburgh. Check it out.



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LET'S BE HEALTHY NATURALLY

By Sylvia Provenza, Director of *Freedom of Choice in Health and Nutrition*

SUPPORT YOUR LUNGS

Breathe Easier with Herbal Health

The ability to inhale deeply is something we take for granted – until it doesn't come easily.

Most of us experience at least short-term shortness of breath at some point in our lives because of common respiratory infections.

As many as fifty-million Americans struggle daily with conditions such as asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), which includes chronic bronchitis, and emphysema. Shortness of breath is also a classic symptom of both acute and long-hauled Covid-19.

Difficulty breathing generally requires immediate medical attention and regular or acute use of prescription drugs such as inhalers may be necessary. However, many natural remedies offer supportive respiratory benefits.

Top Herbs for Lung Support

When choosing herbal remedies, we often combine a few herbs that seem particularly well suited for the individual situation. Here are some of the favorite lung tonics.

Mullein leaf is classically used to soothe and open airways while also easing spasm and cough. It can be combined with soothing marshmallow root or marshmallow leaf in tea or syrup, especially if the respiratory system feels dry. Strain well to remove mullein's irritating hairs. As an alternative, you may use a tincture.

Wild Cherry Bark has such a long tradition for easing coughs and opening the lungs that cherry flavoring remains popular in conventional cough drops and syrups even though it lacks cherry's medicinal action.

The dried bark makes an excellent tincture, syrup, or tea to be used solo or combined with other herbs and honey. Its specific for dry, irritated, unproductive coughs and helps to relax spasms and tightness.

In contrast horehound leaf is popular for thick, wet, mucousy coughs, to help thin and expectorate the mucus. Commercial herbal – cough- drop formulas often contain horehound.

Lung Tonic Tea Blend

This tea combines general antimicrobial activity with lung-opening and soothing properties. There are many ways to make it. The favorite ingredients are listed first, but even though they are easy to grow in the garden, some are hard to find commercially, so I list alternative options.

1 Tsp. Bee Balm (or oregano and/or thyme)- for respiratory infections.

1 Tsp. Korean licorice mint (or anise hyssop, fennel seed, or licorice root)

1 Tsp. peppermint leaf

1 Tsp. marshmallow leaf (or mallow leaf, or marshmallow root)

1 Tsp. mullein leaf (strain hairs well through a tightly woven cloth or coffee filter) OPTIONAL

1 Tsp. plantain leaf, OPTIONAL

1. Steep herbs in 12-16 oz. hot water for 15 min. or longer. (Inhale the steam as it steeps.)

2. Strain and sweeten, with honey, if desired.

General Lung Support

It's important to eat a whole foods diet, move regularly, get quality sleep, and manage stress. For reducing inflammation, consider foods rich in bioflavonoids and other antioxidants, including berries, deeply hued vegetables, spices such as turmeric and green tea. Limit or avoid refined foods, sugar, alcohol, and anything your sensitive or allergic to – dairy and gluten may be irritants. Daily vitamin D and Omega-3, fish oil may be supportive.

In many cases natural remedies can be used alongside conventional care. Always check with your health care provider and pharmacists for herb-drug interactions, and consider seeking the guidance of a skilled, holistic practitioner in complicated cases.

With Winter knocking on our doors, I hope you find this article interesting and informative.

Stay well, stay warm, and wishing you all a Happy and Healthy New Year!

Disclaimer: This column is for educational purposes only. It is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease. If you have any health concerns, see your healthcare provider.

Twin Boro's Health Ministries

by Shirley Davis

All Events Scheduled from January 1st through March 31st

I. COMMUNITY DINNERS

Dinners are held at the VERONA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

• DECEMBER Dinner...

Wednesday, December 29, 2021... 4:30 pm until 6:30 pm
Sponsored and hosted by the Verona United Methodist Church

• JANUARY Dinner...

Wednesday, January 26, 2022... 4:30 pm until 6:30 pm
Sponsored and hosted by Oakmont Presbyterian Senior Care

• FEBRUARY Dinner...

Wednesday, February 23, 2022... 4:30 pm until 6:30 pm
Sponsored and hosted by Longwood of Oakmont

• MARCH Dinner...

Wednesday, March 30, 2022... 4:30 pm until 6:30 pm
Sponsored and hosted by the Riverside Community Church

****Anyone in need of food should call Judy Myers at 412-828-7394 at the United Methodist Church**

II. SPECIAL THANK YOU(S) TO...

... **John Henry**, proprietor of *Verona News* for his donation of twenty-five turkeys along with ALL the trimmings given to families at the Verona Food Bank,

... **Vince Flotta** and **Tim Long** of the *Lower Valley Athletic Association* for sponsoring a Toy Drive to help make Christmas special for children in our area,

... **Administrators, teachers, and students** at *Verner Elementary School*, in Verona for their generous donations of hats, gloves, and socks,

... **Verona Eagles** for their fund-raising efforts ... to **Riverside Community Church** and the **Oakmont Methodist Church** ... **Joy Barnes and Friends**

III. VERONA SOUP SALE

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IV. UPCOMING EVENTS

To be held at the VERONA METHODIST CHURCH

PUPPET MAKING WORKSHOP...

Saturday, February 5, 2022

Workshop conducted by puppeteers **Dave English** and **Jode Wos**


Call Shirley at 412-828-3412 for details and to register.



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"A DESTINATION, not JUST a Location"

Green Guidance: Brown is the New Green

by Rhea Homa

The question in this, the Winter Issue of the VNL, comes from a friend, and involves a topic that I've been studying rather fervently:

Dear Rhea Sunshine,

I passed your house recently and noticed that you haven't deadheaded your native garden. When is the best time to cut back native plants?

Flower-minded on Fourth St

Hi Flower-minded,

Thanks for your question. In short, I will cut most of my native plants in my yard back (allowing 8-20" of "stem stubble" to remain intact) in early spring after the birds eat the winter seeds and before native bees begin to lay eggs. Allowing vegetation to remain intact throughout the winter has many benefits that I discuss below.

Native plants allowed to naturally cycle through the winter untouched

(without being cut back or deadheaded) provide food and shelter for birds and pollinators in all seasons as they have for many ages before humans became involved. Native plants transform with each season and are just as important in the fall and winter when they are brown and full of seeds as they are in the spring and summer when they are vibrant and lush. And a wonderful bonus is the abundance of bird and pollinator life that it supports. Life is abundant in a winter garden, it's just more subtle.

There are many benefits when native plants remain intact throughout the winter:

1. Seed heads are an important food source for birds throughout the winter when insects (another primary food source) become dormant and sparse. I love watching the neighborhood goldfinches in my winter garden, fluttering between plants, and pecking seeds of my New England asters. Seeds of a host plant like asters provide better nutrition for a bird (as they evolved together for mutual benefit) compared to seeds that may fill a bird feeder.

2. Stalks and stems provide important shelter for native bees and other beneficial insects. Removing these stems too early or too late can demolish native bees' habitat during a vulnerable life transition. 30% of native bees nest above ground, often in dead stems and stalks of plants, like asters, ironweed, and elderberry. Lady bugs (who eat destructive aphids) and spiders also use these tubes as shelter.

Unfortunately, vegetation that has been removed and placed in a brush pile does not provide the same habitat as those remaining attached to the plant. Stalks removed and placed in piles tend to rot more quickly and become inhabited by ants and other insects.

When dead stalks are trimmed back in the spring, leaving the debris next to the host plant is a good practice. This serves as a weed barrier and allows nesting opportunities for other insects next to the host plant.

3. More plant matter means more insects that feed birds. 96% of terrestrial birds eat insects which are an important component of their diet as they are extraordinarily high in protein.

4. In addition to allowing plant stalks to naturally overwinter in place, allowing leaf litter from trees and bushes to overwinter is equally important.

Countless animals use the cover of leaves to overwinter, including larvae, pupae, and imagoes of butterflies, bees, and fireflies, as well as toads, and salamanders (who can eat up to 144 mosquito larvae each day). Wildlife in these dormant stages is very vulnerable to being disrupted when raked, trampled, or otherwise disturbed.

Not only do leaf litter and plant debris on the ground serve as nesting grounds and habitat, but they can also serve as a weed barrier and alternative to mulch. Leaf and plant debris create great habitat, forming a looser material that is easier for bees and insects to excavate below the ground, saves money

compared to bought mulch, and does not introduce invasive insects like mulch can.

5. Lastly, **resist raking, tilling, mowing, or otherwise disturbing your lawn** until April or May. This allows vulnerable wildlife hibernating in leaves or underground to safely reemerge in the Spring.

Following these principles will go a long way towards ensuring well-fed winter birds, a good crop of important pollinators, and lots of caterpillars for baby birds to eat in the spring. Since we've begun shedding the practice of fall cleanup 2 years ago, we've watched more bird friends in our yard, more butterflies, bees, and even a toad this year. We love our overwintering yard and the diverse life that it nurtures for all to enjoy.

Special thanks to a Verona neighbor for this helpful question! If you have any questions regarding living low waste, the importance of native plants, or other topics related to sustainability, please send an email to rhea.sunshine.pgh@gmail.com. Your question and corresponding answer could be chosen for a future column.

'Tis a Little Inner Groove

by Kelly Melle
Inner Groove Brewing
751 East Railroad Street

Before you settle down for a long winter's snooze, head out to Inner Groove you have nothing to lose.

The taproom is bustling with holiday cheer, there is something for everyone, events, and great beer.

Musicians are singing a few times each week, check our social media for a genre you seek.

You can gather a team and show off your smarts, Thursday has Radical Trivia with 7:00 starts.

Get Lit with Santa is the 8th of December, it's always a riot, a night to remember.

If decision making is something you lack, coming your way is a mixed Christmas 4pack.

Making dinner but your cupboards are bare, six nights a week there is food truck fare.

We have merchandise making gift-giving a snap, hoodies, blankets, maybe even a cap.

So come in from the bone chilling wintery storm, into Inner Groove Brewing where it's always cozy and warm.

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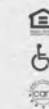
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Volunteers Sow Seeds for a Greener Verona

by Rhea Homa

In early October, community volunteers gathered to landscape a steep shale bank on Seldon Ave on either side of the veteran's mural steps. Work spanned three days as 17 volunteers provided 70 hours of people power, removing black tarps (used to smother unwanted vegetation), laying erosion control materials, seeding seeds, planting plugs, and covering with a thin layer of straw. Within days the cover crop had already begun growing and will help hold the more slowly germinating native species seeds in place. Next Spring, more new growth is expected to fill the hillside with purple and yellow flowers blooming from June through October for many years to come.

More work is scheduled for next year to continue improving the space including plans for educational opportunities.

This project is being led by Verona's Sustainability Group with assistance from Verona Garden Club and Lower Valley Athletic Foundation. If you like seeing projects like this in Verona, consider letting us know what other sustainability topics interest you at <http://bit.ly/SEEGreenSurvey>.



<http://bit.ly/SEEGreenSurvey>

And/or join us for our next meeting via zoom on Wednesday, January 12th at 6pm at this link: <http://bit.ly/veronaseegreen>. All are welcome!



<http://bit.ly/veronaseegreen>

Spotlight on Trees: The Ginkgo (Ginkgo biloba)

by Laura Jacko

I recently visited the Carnegie Museum with my child, and as we were walking around, admiring the fossils and dinosaurs, part of the exhibit reminded me that we have a very special "living fossil" right here in Verona. Anyone can visit this amazing specimen for free, and you may pass it every day without knowing how interesting it is. Our little piece of natural history is the ginkgo tree, which can be found along the main streets of the business district.

While I love the ginkgo for its gorgeous fan shaped leaves and the spectacular golden shade it turns in the autumn, it also boasts an interesting history. The earliest leaf fossils of this particular tree date from 270 million years ago. That means that when you look at the ginkgo, you are seeing the same type of plant that a dinosaur would have looked at millions of years ago! Few organisms on earth remain unchanged for millennia like this tree, and it is a blessing to be able to continually enjoy them in our town.

Ginkgo trees are remarkably long lived, growing for as long as 3,000 years. The trees originated in China and were brought to North America in the 1700s. They are tolerant of heat, air pollution, and soil salt, making them good specimens for street trees in our area. It is a dioecious plant, which means that it has both male and female varieties. Typically, the male plants are preferred in street and ornamental plantings, as they do not produce the sometimes-smelly fruits that female trees make.

The next time you are walking around Verona's business district, keep an eye out for a free fossil show by looking for a ginkgo tree!

Laura Jacko
Shade Tree Commission President

Information sourced from www.arborday.org. Consider donating to support their mission of protecting trees.



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Helen Davis, October 1, 2021
Robert "Duke" Jones, October 1, 2021
Paul Lingeris, October 4, 2021
Emilia Riggio, October 5, 2021
Kirk Hinman, October 13, 2021
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Tate, Frances M. September 21, 2021
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Dowd, Norma, September 24, 2021
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Matijak, Nancy L. (Mento), September 28, 2021
Cooper, Calvin D., September 30, 2021
Taylor, Doris E., October 01, 2021
Tarasi, Raymond J., October 01, 2021
Gentilcore, Dolores, October 02, 2021
Vita, James J., October 04, 2021
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Wallace, Walter M. (Sonny), November 04, 2021
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