



# FITLER SQUARE IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION, INC. NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2009

## A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF EDWIN HENRY FITLER

**W**hen Edwin Henry Fitler (1825-1896) was laid to rest at Laurel Hill Cemetery, the honorary pallbearers were made up of the governor of Pennsylvania, the mayor of Philadelphia, an ex-mayor of Philadelphia, the Provost of the University of Pennsylvania, and some of the leading businessmen of Philadelphia. Mourners were plentiful and had the names of Elkins, Widener, Biddle, and Singerly, names famous in Philadelphia's history. Who was Edwin H. Fitler? And why was this Kensingtonian so respected?

You may have heard of Center City's neighborhood of Fitler Square, but do you know the man it is named after? Edwin H. Fitler was the son of a leather merchant who lived at 2nd & Otter (Wildey) Streets, in the old District of Kensington. In 1846, after studying law briefly, Fitler entered the cordage factory of George J. Weaver, at Germantown Avenue and 10th Street. In two years time he became so knowledgeable that he was invited into the business as a full partner, the firm changing its name to George J. Weaver & Co. An 1857 advertisement had this to say about Fitler's establishment:

Messrs. Weaver, Fitler & Co. are proprietors of the Fairhill Steam Cordage Works, manufacturing every style of Manilla, Tarrred and Italian Ropes, Tow Lines for canal boats, all the various styles of Carpet and seine Twine, &c. This is the largest manufacturing establishment in this business in Philadelphia. They do an exclusive wholesale business, and merchants throughout the country can find no better establishment to order and make purchases from than Weaver, Fitler & Co., [They] Have constantly on hand, a full assortment of Ropes, &c; Anchors and Chains of Of all Sizes; American, Italian and Russian Hemp Ropes of any size or description Made to order on short notice

In 1859, Fitler bought out Weaver and changed the company's name to Edwin H. Fitler & Co. Eventually Fitler's two sons (Edwin & William) would enter the business. The offices of the company were located downtown on Water Street, on the Delaware River waterfront, near their wharf. About 1880 the old works at 10th & Germantown was seen as inadequate and a new works was built in Bridesburg.

Fitler eventually moved to the 1600 block of Walnut Street, only a short walk from the Manufacturer's Club, where he became active and served for a time as the

Vice President. He was also elected the president of the American Cordage Manufacturers' Association. During the Civil War Fitler organized and equipped a company of men from his cordage works, as well he was an early member of the Union League and a one time president of that organization. He served in many other capacities on various philanthropic institutions' boards.



Edwin H. Fitler

In 1876 Fitler was a Republican Presidential Elector for Pennsylvania. His abilities in business and finance were so great that he was sought out as the Republican choice to be mayor of Philadelphia in 1887 and he won by 30,000 votes. As the first mayor under the new City-Charter, Fitler's duties were immense. "The whole city administration needed to be organized, competent heads of departments appointed, and methods of action devised for which there was no precedent in the history of the city. He fulfilled these duties to the general satisfaction of the public and left a thoroughly organized system of municipal government to his successors." He was so well respected that his name was presented at Chicago by Philadelphia delegates as their choice for President of the United States. While not seeking the office, he did nevertheless appreciate the honor by the mere mention of his name in that capacity.

While Fitler moved up and out of Kensington, he never forgot where he came from. He was active as an officer and as a benefactor to the Kensington Soup Society. During the rise of Fitler's ropewalk career, he also took in another Kensingtonian to help run the business. Conrad F. Clothier (1829-1886), associated with the First Presbyterian Church of Kensington, a church where he is honored with one of the stain glass windows dedicated to him, became the bookkeeper for Fitler's company. When Edwin H. Fitler bought out his partner George J. Weaver and took over the company, he invited Clothier to become a partner in the new firm that was created. The year before joining the Weaver &

*(Continued on page 3)*

### REMINDER:



### FITLER SQUARE SPRING FAIR

FRIDAY,  
MAY 8TH  
10AM - 6PM  
AND  
SATURDAY,  
MAY 9TH  
10AM - 4PM

**FITLER SQUARE  
IMPROVEMENT  
ASSOCIATION  
BOARD OF  
DIRECTORS**

**Honorary Director**

Anne Rowland  
(Fitler relative)

**President**

Judy Romano  
Zimering

**Vice-President**

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**Treasurer**

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**Membership  
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Pat Henningsen  
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Lolly LaGreca  
Lenore Millhollen  
George Rhodes  
Margaret Tobin  
Connie Williams  
Mark Willie

**Newsletter  
Ad Rates**

Full page \$100.00  
1/2 page \$ 50.00  
1/4 page \$ 25.00

For information  
and deadlines,  
please email Amy at  
AmeliaRiley@  
yahoo.com

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

*My Dear Friends and Neighbors:*

*It seems like yesterday I was writing the fall newsletter, but we are now in the busy season of spring running full steam ahead at Fitler Square. The first crocuses have sprouted and the trees are beginning to bloom; the fountain is on, and our little neighborhood park never looked so beautiful.*

*We had lovely weather this past week for our 8th annual Easter Egg Hunt, which brought out over 100 children (who said you can't raise kids in Center City). Our holiday tree lighting was on a frigid night in December, but the cold didn't keep the neighbors away and we were fortunate to have The Philadelphia School chorus lead the carolling. Thanks to all our friends who come out and support us for these events.*

*Last Saturday, we hosted our "Spring Into Your Park" cleanup, sponsored by Philadelphia Green, which is a wonderful organization committed to developing and maintaining parks and open space in our City. There were about 40 people on hand to help clean up the park. A big thank you to everyone who volunteered!!*

*Of course, no public space is not without its problems and Fitler Square is no exception. We have had a continuing issue of people using our green space for their dog's bathroom and playground. Please help us curtail this. It is bad for the new grass, flowers and trees we planted and unhealthy for the toddlers who have a safe place to play in our park. You may want to remind them there is a dog run a mere two blocks away.*

*Our 48th Annual Spring Fair will be held Friday and Saturday, May 8 and 9, RAIN or SHINE. The hours are 9am to 5pm-ish (or whenever our energy runs out). All proceeds from the Fair will support the ongoing maintenance of our park.*

*The Fair will feature our nine booths inside the park where ALL of the profits support Fitler Square. The periphery of the park space is filled with antique dealers and local crafters who have more interesting items for purchase every year.*

*Our Kids' Corner features gently used clothing and toys. We regret to say, due to insurance purposes we are unable to accept used strollers, swings, cribs or highchairs. Please do not bring them to the park. On Saturday we will have a moon bounce, balloon lady, and face painters for the children. Thanks once again to the Philadelphia Federal Credit Union for sponsoring our face painters. Don't forget to stop by the Kids' Games booth, too.*

*Our Flower Booth is a great way to support our Square. We will have all your favorite annuals just in time for planting, and Mother's Day.*

*Our Book Booth and White Elephant Booth are always looking for donations. Due to a shortage of storage space, we ask that you bring your donations to the appropriate booth on Friday morning. Of course, donations will be accepted on Saturday morning as well.*

*Our Bake Booth always showcases the best of our neighborhood bakers and we will continually be looking for donations prior to the Fair, so please bring over your items on Friday and/or Saturday.*

*Make sure you stop by the Raffle table and purchase some chances for donated dinners and specials from local establishments, and our Logo table for "Fitler Square" memorabilia.*

*Our Food Booth is "old school" where our resident cooks Pat Henningsen and Marlene Blume will be serving up homemade lunch for all to enjoy at our umbrella-topped tables.*

*The Philadelphia School a capella choir will perform at the Fair on Friday at 4 pm, rain or shine, and we will have musical entertainment throughout the two days.*

*Anyone who wishes to volunteer in any way, please contact me at [judyro1957@aim.com](mailto:judyro1957@aim.com).*

*Now more than ever, we need the support of our friends and neighbors. If you have not renewed your membership, or if you are joining for the first time, please return the attached form. Your donations and membership proceeds will help keep our Square the lovely space it is, and you will be contributing to your community. Please include your email address for membership purposes. We will not share your information with any other organization.*

*Once again, thank you for your support and we hope to see you at the Fair!*

*Judy Romano Zimering*

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## A NEIGHBORHOOD GEM: CAFE LUTECIA



### Cafe Lutecia

On the corner of 23rd and Lombard, with its bright blue awnings and sunny yellow paint, the colors of Provence, Cafe Lutecia is situated. Walking into the cafe is like walking into a corner cafe in any French arrondissement. (The name “Lutecia” was the original name of Paris circa 52 BC, when it was part of Gaul in the Roman Empire.)

Valerie and John Blum opened the cafe in 1990 and have been serving

authentic French cuisine ever since. Open for breakfast and lunch, Valerie rises at the crack of dawn and bakes all the croissants, scones and muffins, makes all the soups and quiches she serves, and cuts fresh ingredients for her salads daily. Craig LeBan has called her Croque Monsieur the “essence of any French neighborhood cafe”.

John, who grew up just outside Philadelphia, met Valerie in the early 80s at a kibbutz in Israel. In 1982 she came to the U.S. to visit John, but when her visa expired and she had to return, he accompanied her, and their oldest child Julia was born in France. In 1985 they returned to Philadelphia and settled in the Fitler Square neighborhood, and their second child Jordan was born.

Valerie grew up in the hospitality business. Her family owned camping ground resorts in France with eating establishments and stores, and she worked in the family business so this line of work comes as a second nature to her.

The Blums just celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary and we are very fortunate they have found a home in Fitler Square for their family and their cafe.



Valerie Blum

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(Continued from page 1)

Fitler firm, Clothier married in 1854, Mary Victoria Byerly, a member of a well-known local Kensington shipbuilding family who was also related to the famed shipbuilder William Cramp.

Edwin H. Fitler died on May 31st, 1896 and was buried at Laurel Hill Cemetery. He was a local Kensington boy who became one of Philadelphia’s richest citizens, its mayor, and its choice for President of the United States.

### Brief biography of Edwin Henry Fitler (1825-1896)

© Ken Milano (2007), from a collection of articles published as ‘The Rest is History’ in the Star Newspaper (Philadelphia), and at [www.kennethmilano.com](http://www.kennethmilano.com)

### ABOUT THE FITLER SQUARE IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION

Twice praised by *Philadelphia Magazine* as the “best neighborhood park” in the City, Fitler Square continues William Penn’s vision of creating a “greene countrie towne” in his new city of Philadelphia. The half-acre Square is now 113 years old and needs constant care. The Fitler Square Improvement Association was created in 1962 to maintain and enhance Fitler Square. The Association is a group of neighborhood volunteers committed to maintain and improve Fitler Square with funds raised by the organization.

## 2008 Volunteer of the Year Award



presented to  
**Judy Zimering,**  
**President of the Fitler Square  
Improvement Association**

by Philadelphia Green, an adjunct to the  
Pennsylvania Horticultural Society The award  
Banquet was held at Galdo’s Restaurant,  
December 2008

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**We would like to thank all of our 2008 Benefactors, Patrons, Businesses, Sponsors and Members.**

**BENEFACTORS**

Paul and Constance Dry

**PATRONS**

Dr. and Mrs. Arthur Asbury  
Marlene & Joe Blume  
Sandy Cadwalader  
Chris and Pat Henningsen  
Richard and Susan Huffman  
Chris Kohles & Jennifer Taggart  
The Lanchoney Family  
Arthur and Kathy Miller  
Cathy Nino  
Roxanne Rawson  
Amelia Riley  
Anne Rowland  
Donald and Hether Smith  
James & Nancy Steele  
Ken and Jami Young  
Eric and Judy Zimering

**BUSINESS/SPONSORS**

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Patricia Kimmelman  
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Bill & Lenore Millhollen  
Leonard & Virginia Nalencz  
OCF Realty LLC  
Emily Riley  
Dr. Leslie & Roberts Saltzman &  
Women's Wellness Center

Michi Tashjian  
Trinity Play Group  
Chris Zearfoss

**MEMBERS**

Donna Baker & Jamie Walker  
Alva Barozzi  
Eric Berger & Melissa Lerman  
Doug and Donna Cosgrove  
Jerold Crowley & The Window Box  
Mrs. John De Waele  
Sharon Dietrich  
Daniel Drecksage & Leslie Sudock  
Suzanne Eagleson  
William Fisher & Ken George  
Shelby and Travis Fraser  
Monica Fread  
Kathleen Frederico  
Derek Freres  
Edward Friedman & Judy Heller  
John H. Frisk  
Nicole Galli & Charles Goodwin  
Kenneth G. Gardner  
William Gilmour  
Deborah Goldberg  
Benson & Hope Goldberger  
Suki and Steve Griffin  
Karen Guss & Lewis Rosman  
Elizabeth Henningsen  
Paul and Terry Hirshorn  
Paul and Helen Hoyer  
Roby Jacobs  
Amanda Johnson  
Elkan and Linda Katz  
Thelma and Bob Kavash  
Suki Kazahaya  
Jerry Kuncio & Tracy Yeomans

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Pat and Scott Malay  
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Brett Mandel & Laura Weinbaum  
Blake Marshall  
Gerald McGeehan  
Ed and Barbara McGinley  
Christie McGovern & Ben Hussa  
Adelaida and Frankie Medlock  
Janet Milkman  
Kathleen Modano  
Peter and Eleanor Nalle  
Charles and Annette Penniman  
Ian Optenberg  
John & Bonnie Raines  
Suzanne Reichwein  
John J. Robinson  
Stefanie Rotta  
Jude and Lisa Scarpello  
Joan and Irvins Shapiro  
Ann P. Shine  
Sandra Shuman  
Sabrina Smith & Aaron Barber  
Norman and Carol L. Snyder  
David and Maria Traub  
Francis and Mary Ann Tucker  
Bill Veltre & Matthew Nelson  
Dennis Winters  
Charles Young

*\* The information above was collected from the membership form you submitted. If you have any changes, corrections or additions, please email them to AmeliaRiley@yahoo.com*

**Would you like to contribute to this newsletter?**

We are in need of people to write articles for our newsletter. If you are interesting in writing an article or would like to submit photos of the Square, please contact Amy Riley at AmeliaRiley@yahoo.com.

**Child care  Elder care**

I recently left corporate life and am available for babysitting, elder care and companionship or just running errands. I've lived in our neighborhood my entire life and have excellent references and experience. I am dependable, compassionate and reliable.

**Patty Fox**  
267-303-0252 or 215-985-1792

**SECURITY ISSUES**

We are all concerned about the growing population of homeless people that congregate in the Park. Please dial 911 if anyone is loud, lewd, drinking or using drugs. Please do not hesitate to call 911 or if you have access to the internet, use the Philadelphia Police "Roll Call Complaint" website. This website can be used to report chronic neighborhood problems: the complaints are read during police roll calls for fifteen days. These are non-emergency issues but are issues that patrolling officers should be aware of when making their rounds. The website is [www.ppdonline.org/rpts/rpts\\_rollcall.php](http://www.ppdonline.org/rpts/rpts_rollcall.php)



# Welcome!!

We would like to welcome the recent additions to the neighborhood:

## **Deluxe Hair Salon**

2209 South Street  
(215) 732-3602

## **Meme**

2012 Sansom Street  
(215) 735-4900

## **Good Karma Cafe**

331 S. 22nd Street  
(215) 546-1479

## **Pub & Kitchen**

1946 Lombard Street  
(215) 545-0350

*"We Live in this neighborhood. We Love this neighborhood."*

# Avist<sub>LLC</sub>

Your home improvement team

Involved in:

***2200 Pine Street & 415 S. Van Pelt Street***  
***Maybe you came to our Open House!***

From Multi-Unit Apartment Buildings to Single Family Homes, We Meet all of your Remodeling needs. Now Specializing in "GREEN BUILDING" and Clean Energy Solutions

## **215-866-8968**

**"With thanks to the Fidler Square Improvement Association,  
the jewel of our neighborhood continues to sparkle."**

# THIS YEAR'S EASTER EGG HUNT...





## “SPRING INTO YOUR PARK” DAY IN FITLER SQUARE



**ocf**  
**realty**  
LLC

FULL SERVICE PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

FULL SERVICE LICENSED  
BROKERAGE SERVICES

LEASING

\*BUILDING MAINTENANCE & MANAGEMENT\*  
SALES

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THE 32 UNITS AT VAN PELT SQUARE

**215.735.7368**

[www.ocfrealty.com](http://www.ocfrealty.com)

"WE ARE PROUD TO BE MEMBERS OF THE  
FITLER SQUARE IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION."

## BUSINESS CONTRIBUTORS TO THE 2008 FAIR

Please patronize the following businesses that generously supported the 2008 Fair.

Bacchus	L2 Restaurant	Scarlett Fiorella Boutique
Bally's Total Fitness	Mama Palma	Seafood Unlimited
Cafe Lutecia	Maryann Conheim	Sophisticated Seconds
Deluxe Hair Salon	Oggi Salon and Spa	South Square Market
Dimitri's	Pooch's Choice	SWEAT Gym
Famulus Books	Pure Design Florist	TasteBuds Market
Friday, Saturday, Sunday	Dr. George Rhodes, Chiropractor	The Windowbox Flowers
Giovanni & Peleggi	Rim's Cleaners	Woven Treasures
Gusto Pizzeria	Rittenhouse Square Fitness Club	

### WE NEED YOUR HELP AT THE FAIR

Would you like to donate something or volunteer at the Fair? Please contact the following committee members:

**Fair Chairs:** Judy Zimering 546-3644 or Judyro1957@aim.com and George Malcomson 665-1123

**Baked Goods booth:** Patty Fox at 267-303-0252 or at PattyLFox@msn.com

**Book Booth:** Mark and Missy Willie 735-8365

**Kid's Activities:** Judy Zimering 546-3644 or Judyro1957@aim.com

**Flower booth:** Judy Zimering 546-3644 or Judyro1957@aim.com

**Food booth:** Pat Henningsen 732-8942 or Croskey.too@verizon.net

**Raffle and Silent Auction:** Amy Riley 732-1864 or AmeliaRiley@yahoo.com

**White Elephant booth:** Cathy Nino 735-2577 or cnino@pfcu.com

**Craft/Antique vendors:** Phil Frank and Cliff Eyler 790-9604 or ceyley@bellatlantic.net

**Maintenance and Clean-up:** Jim Kenkelen 731-9608 or jimken@comcast.net



**We would like to thank the following for their individual contributions to the success of the 2008 Spring Fair:**

**Suzanne Eagleson**, for being a volunteer at the White Elephant Booth for over 25 years.

**Dan Yucha**, another great local artist, created and donated paintings to the Silent Auction booth.

**South Square Market** has generously donated hot dogs and condiments for our food booth.

**Woven Treasures** who graciously donated a beautiful oriental carpet to our silent auction booth.

**Lance Brusilow** who graciously donated Philadelphia Eagles pre-season tickets.

**Philadelphia Federal Credit Union** who sponsored the face painters.



## FSIA MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

If you would like to become a member of the Fidler Square Improvement Association, please fill out the form below. The organization has two primary sources of funds: revenue from the Spring Fair and membership dues.

The membership underwrites the cost of major park improvements and takes an active role in the planting and preservation activities needed to improve its appearance. Association funds provide for professional care for the trees and grass areas, planting of seasonal flowers, replacing shrubs, installation and care of a sprinkler system, general maintenance, custodial supervision, an annual Christmas tree lighting ceremony with gifts for neighborhood children, and an Easter Egg Hunt. Visit our website at [www.FidlerSquare.org](http://www.FidlerSquare.org) to learn more.

### MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES:

Individual membership.....	\$25
Family membership.....	\$35
Business/Sponsor membership.....	\$50
Patron membership.....	\$100
Benefactor membership.....	\$500

We thank you very much in advance for becoming a member of the Fidler Square Improvement Association!!

*The Fidler Square Improvement Association is a 501-c3 non-profit organization. All membership fees and donations, including those made in-kind, are tax-deductible.*

### MEMBER INFORMATION

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

*(Help us stay in touch with you - our email notices keep you informed of events and campaigns)*

Enclosed is \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Renewal \_\_\_\_\_

New member \_\_\_\_\_

General donation \_\_\_\_\_

### PLEASE HELP US HELP YOUR PARK!

\_\_\_\_\_ I WANT TO HELP WITH UPCOMING EVENTS (SPRING FAIR, ETC)

\_\_\_\_\_ I WANT TO HELP WITH MAINTENANCE (PLANTING, TRIMMING, ETC)

WHAT I MOST ENJOY ABOUT THE SQUARE IS:

\_\_\_\_\_

WHAT WOULD MAKE THE SQUARE MORE ENJOYABLE TO ME IS:

\_\_\_\_\_

*(Business members contributing at the BUSINESS level or above are featured on the Fidler Square website)*

PLEASE COMPLETE THIS FORM AND SEND IT WITH YOUR CHECK TO:

**FITLER SQUARE IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION, INC.  
400 SOUTH CROSKEY STREET, PHILADELPHIA, PA 19146**

[www.fitlersquare.org](http://www.fitlersquare.org)

## IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS TO REMEMBER

### **GAS LEAKS**

Philadelphia Gas Works  
215-235-1212  
[www.pgworks.com](http://www.pgworks.com)

### **GRAFFITI**

Center City District  
215-440-5500  
[www.centercityphila.org](http://www.centercityphila.org)

### **HOMELESS ISSUES**

Outreach Coordination Center  
215-232-1984 or  
Center City District  
215-440-5500  
[www.centercityphila.org](http://www.centercityphila.org)

### **MAILBOXES**

USPS Maintenance  
215-895-9113

### **PARKING METERS**

Phila. Parking Authority  
215-683-9600  
[www.phila.gov/parking/](http://www.phila.gov/parking/)

### **POTHoles/SIDEWALKS**

Street Department  
215-685-5560  
[www.phila.gov/streets/potholes.html](http://www.phila.gov/streets/potholes.html)

### **SIGNS**

Center City District  
215-440-5500  
[www.centercityphila.org](http://www.centercityphila.org)

### **WATER/SEWAGE ISSUES**

Water Department  
215-685-6300  
[www.phila.gov/water/contacts.html](http://www.phila.gov/water/contacts.html)

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

### IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER IN '10s:

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#### APRIL

Easter Egg Hunt  
Spring Cleanup day

#### MAY

Spring Fair

#### OCTOBER

Halloween  
Pumpkin Hunt

#### DECEMBER

Christmas Tree Lighting

