

Newsletter

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We need your help!

If you love gardens and flowers and have a few hours to spare, the Flower Booth at the Fitler Square Fair could use your help. We need volunteers to help us sell the flowers and herbs that we stock to our community. A "shift" of as little as two hours would be a great help. You do not need to know about gardening. The Fair is 10am to 6pm on Friday and 10am to 4pm on Saturday. If you can, please email Lynn Schwartz at lynnw46@comcast.net.

Do you like to bake?

We are looking for donations for our popular Bake booth. Feel free to bake your favorite goodies and drop them off at the Bake booth both Friday and Saturday mornings.

Schedule of events

- Friday**
- 1 - 3pm STAR Band
 - 4 - 4:30pm The Phila School a cappella singers
- Saturday**
- 9:30am - 12:30pm City Lights Band
 - 12:30pm Performance by Phila Dance Academy
 - 3:00pm Silent auction closes and Raffle winners picked
 - 2 - 4:00pm DJ Patty Pat

Booths: Books, Plants and flowers, Children's gently used clothes and toys, White elephant, Food and Baked goods and Children's games.*

Antique vendors surround the Square selling all sorts of valuables, keepsakes and surprises.

**moon bounce on Saturday 10am-2pm*

The mission of FSIA is to preserve, protect and beautify Fitler Square and we work in partnership with Philadelphia Department of Parks and Recreation.

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Message from our President

Dear Friends and Neighbors:

The transition from winter to spring brings a lot of changes to our park; the leaves are turning green, the sun is shining bright, and people are spending more time outside, one of the reasons green spaces like Fitler Square are so important in our City. Philadelphia actually has over 100 Friends of parks groups of varying capacity, like FSIA, that work in close relationship with Philadelphia Parks and Recreation to create community spaces at the neighborhood level, with more groups tending to new green spaces in their neighborhoods every day. (Please read my article about the Triangle at Grays Ferry, or what I have come to learn is actually Catharine Thorn Park).

Because the creation of Fitler Square Improvement Association predates the creation of the actual Friends groups by Philadelphia Parks and Recreation, we have retained our name, but FSIA is recognized as the Friends of Fitler Square and our group represents Fitler Square at various park stewardship meetings and forums presented by PPR.

The City parks vary in so many ways, including, of course, size and location, with many large parks in disadvantaged neighborhoods, and I am in awe of the local Friends groups that are tackling the daunting tasks of maintaining community gardens and rec centers while struggling with drug dealers and vandalism.

We at FSIA realize how lucky we are to have generous neighbors who support our Square through membership dues and the annual Spring Fair, and we do not ask for City funding that we believe is needed in less fortunate areas, but we also need your help maintaining Fitler Square in other ways. Please try to reduce your carbon footprint while using the park; take all trash including food items with you: we do not have daily trash pickup. Please do not use the two containers for household trash. This creates a serious rodent problem that affects all of us. Dogs are permitted on walkways only. These little things can make a big difference.

Under Mayor Kenney, our present Administration realizes how important green spaces are to our City and has proposed \$56 million in the budget to repay part of a \$300 million proposed bond for rebuilding parks, recreation centers, and libraries, more than any Administration in the past, dependent on the soda tax being passed into law. With so much attention being paid to parks and recreation, this is an exciting time for our green spaces in Philadelphia.

Once again, thank you for your support,

Regards,
Judy Romano Zimering

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Biography of Edwin H. Fitler

Edwin Henry Fitler (Dec. 2, 1825 - May 31, 1896), was born in Philadelphia, Pa., the son of William and Elizabeth (Wonderly) Fitler. His father was a prosperous leather merchant and tanner. Since his parents were in easy circumstances, young Fitler received an excellent academic education.

Planning to adopt the law as a profession, he entered the office of Charles E. Lex, a prominent lawyer of Philadelphia, but after four years of legal study he decided that his natural tastes were for mechanical pursuits. Accordingly, he abandoned law for a more congenial occupation, and obtaining a position in the cordage house of his brother-in-law, George J. Weaver, began to lay the foundation of his life-work.

Two years later, at the age of twenty-three, he was admitted to partnership in the firm, known first as George J. Weaver & Company and later as Weaver, Fitler & Company (Philadelphia Cordage Works). Under his management labor-saving machinery was introduced, much of it being of his own invention. These inventions were not patented but were freely offered to the trade and many were adopted by other cordage manufacturers. By 1870 he had purchased the interests of most of his other partners and the firm name was changed to Edwin H. Fitler & Company. At the time of his death, the factory, situated in the Bridesburg section of Philadelphia, was one of the largest cordage works in the United States.

Fitler was one of the most successful and best-known business men of his time. He was noted for his keen perceptions and the rapidity and correctness of his decisions. His position in the trade is attested by the fact that he was repeatedly elected president of the American Cordage Manufacturers Association. His relations with his employees were of the most cordial character. It is said that he never had labor troubles in his plant. He was intensely patriotic and at the outbreak of the Civil War threw the whole weight of his influence into the Union cause, and personally outfitted a company from among his employees. He took an active part in the work of projecting and organizing the Centennial Exposition and in 1875-76 was a member of its board of finance. He was also one of the founders of the Philadelphia Art Club.

Until 1887 he successfully avoided public office, but in that year was prevailed upon to run for mayor of the City of Philadelphia and was elected by nearly 30,000 majority. He was the first mayor under the new city

charter and during his administration many reforms were instituted and many improvements were made in all branches of the city government. Rigidly adhering to his own ideas and his own policies regardless of political or other pressure, he won the confidence of the whole community. At the Republican National Convention held at Chicago in 1888 he received the vote of the entire Philadelphia delegation, also of several delegates from other parts of Pennsylvania and a few from other states, as their choice for president of the United States. After his retirement from the mayoralty in 1891 he again devoted himself to his business. He was a director of the National Bank of the Northern Liberties and served as both vice-president and president of the Union League. He died, after a long illness, at his country estate near Philadelphia. His wife, whom he married in 1850, was Josephine R. Baker.

[from THE DICTIONARY OF AMERICAN BIOGRAPHY, edited by Allen Johnson and Dumas Malone, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1931 Volume 3, Part 2, pages 431 - 432]



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Your membership dollars go a long way...

As you know, the Fidler Square Improvement Association preserves, protects, and beautifies Fidler Square, leading all efforts for major improvements to and continual maintenance of Fidler Square.

A few of our accomplishments over the past several years funded by your donations include:

- Transforming the central fountain to recirculate water. Now instead of consuming a million gallons of water per year, the fountain requires only a few thousand.
- Restoring fencing surrounding the Square in 2013 at a cost of close to \$20,000.
- Overhauling the East and West Gardens, purchasing many new plants and contracting on an ongoing basis to maintain these community gems.
- Holding our many children and family events, including our Easter egg hunt, Christmas Tree Lighting, Halloween event and Spring Fair.
- Investing thousands of dollars into our urban forest, planting and caring for trees.
- Improving the brick and block pathways.

- Contracting for path and square cleaning year-round and snow removal in the winter.
- Improving our irrigation system, conducting a major overhaul in 2013 costing close to \$10,000.
- Replacing all of the Square benches in 2014 with funds directed by Councilman Kenyatta Johnson.
- Transforming the Square lighting and reducing electrical costs by upgrading to be 100% LED.
- Renovating the central fountain plantings in 2015 to enhance the Square's central feature.

Your support now will enable us to continue our programs and improvements in 2016. This year, we will improve the irrigation system, take care of the trees and gardens, improve our lawns, hold events and much more.

We hope you will join us to ensure that the vision of an improved and maintained Fidler Square continues to be realized well into the future. It only takes one person to make a difference in Fidler Square. It is our hope that you will be that person by making a tax deductible contribution today.



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“Lora handled the sale of our property in Fitler Square last April. Throughout the different phases of the sale she proved herself to be a wonderful professional. We valued her counsel and knowledge of the market. We recommend her most highly.”

Recently Sold/Rented in Fitler Square

2014 Pine	222 S Bonsall C	2212 Lombard	625 S 26 th	600 S 24 th #406
2419 Pine	2412 Lombard	626 S Bambrey	628 S 26 th	2609 Naudain
2421 Pine		411 S Taney		2507 Naudain

**Board Members Profile:
 Phil Frank and Cliff Eyler**

It's almost impossible to talk about Phil Frank or Cliff Eyler separately, as they have been partners for over 30 years, having met while both were volunteering at Giovanni's Room, the country's oldest LGBT bookstore. Longtime residents of Center City, Cliff moved here to attend Temple Grad School in 1979, and Phil had arrived in 1973 after graduating from Carnegie Mellon.

They have been residents of the Fitler Square neighborhood since moving to Pemberton Street in 1989. Before then, they had been volunteers and/or worked at the Youth Hostel at historic Chamounix Mansion in Fairmount Park and had lived in one of the neighboring residences, enjoying the beautiful surroundings.

Moving to Center City, Phil missed the ability to garden, so he began to volunteer in the gardens at Fitler Square, pruning and planting, and of course, Cliff began to help as well. Not long after, then-FSIA president Connie Williams tapped Phil and Cliff to help at the annual Spring Fair. They started volunteering at the Fair, working in the many different booths,



helping where needed and bringing a fresh approach to some of the antiquated customs engrained in the long-running fair.

Of course, it was inevitable they were asked to join the Board of Fitler Square, Phil in 1992, and Cliff in 1993. With most of the then-Board not well versed in computer technology, Phil convinced them to start a database for our membership, and he gathered 20 years of information to start our first database. Shortly thereafter, Phil and Cliff began to write and

(Continued on page 1)

**One of our Neighboring Parks:
 Catharine Thorn Park at the Grays Ferry Triangle**

On a sunny afternoon or lovely evening it's not unusual to see many of our neighbors sitting in the triangular section of 23rd and South, also known as Catharine Thorn Park. This charming area was named after the woman who bequeathed the funds to the PSPCA for the granite fountain located there, originally meant for horses and dogs. It has become one more outside space to enjoy in our area; and if SOSNA (South of South Neighborhood Association) and SouthxSchuylkill (a joint committee of neighboring organizations) have their way, the triangular spaces that line Grays Ferry Avenue southward will be improved as well.

I contacted Jim Campbell, who along with many other volunteers, was at its inception, somewhat stalled by their diverted efforts to redesign and build a more pedestrian and bike friendly South Street Bridge in 2012. The SouthxSchuylkill committee enlisted a Penn Design Studio to study the impact of what the new and improved bridge would mean in our neighborhood and its surroundings. One of the investments projected in the study was improvements of the Triangles.

As Jim put it, "change never comes without some

concerns," but as the process slowly built support with a vision for what could be a "village center",

and with the support of Councilman Kenyatta Johnson, Steve Cobb his legislative assistant, plus the business community and local leaders, a temporary reuse of the main Triangle at South and 23rd was able to be conceived and permitted on a trial basis.

Jim says because it has been so successful, the Triangles committee is looking for ways to get funding to make the improvements to the main Triangle permanent and properly maintained, as well as looking for ways to improve the safety and appearance of the other Triangles that march down Grays Ferry. Fortunately, there are many in the neighborhood who see great value in continuing the improvements of all the Triangles so we expect that there will be continued successes as the years also go by.



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Meet DJ Patt-Pat...

Patty-Pat Kozlowski is the Director of Parks Stewardship at Philadelphia Parks & Recreation and has been deemed the "Commissioner of Fun & Games" by Managing Director Michael DiBerardinis and Commissioner Kathryn Ott Lovell.

But Parks & Recreation wasn't her starting point in public service. She began working as a constituent service representative and media aide to State Representative Marie Lederer who covered the Philadelphia riverwards of Fishtown, Port Richmond and Bridesburg. From there, she was hired by the late City Councilwoman Joan Krajewski and worked in City Hall for 10 years doing constituent service and community engagement for residents in Northeast Philadelphia. When Krajewski retired, Patty-Pat became an Assistant Managing Director at Parks & Recreation.

Assigned to work in Parks Stewardship and collaborate with the Park Friends Group citywide, Patty-Pat said she hit the jackpot working with Ed Fagan, Barbara McCabe and the Park Stewardship Team. In 2015, she became the Director of Park Stewardship and oversees 111 (and still growing) Park Friends Groups.

Born and raised in Port Richmond, PP attended St. George R.C. School and headed to the Philadelphia

High School for the Creative & Performing Arts (CAPA) where she majored in Creative Writing. She studied journalism and broadcasting at Arcadia University and the Art Institute of Philadelphia.

Right out of college, she began writing for the community newspaper The Star, which covered the riverwards of Philadelphia. She has won several awards from the Keystone Newspaper Guild for her editorial writing and can also be found on the Op/Ed pages of the Philadelphia Daily News.

She's been DJ-ing for over a decade and has played such venues as Spruce Street Harbor, The Oval, The Philadelphia Flower Show, Philadelphia Mummies Parade, LOVE Park, Taney Dragons Championship Parade, Penn's Landing River Rink and provides music and dancing for park events all across the City of Philadelphia.

So how did she get the name, Patty-Pat? She was a stand up comedian who was doing open mic nights and the MC of the shows could never pronounce her Polish last name. "One night he stuttered my first name in fear of the last name and called me Patty-Pat." The name stuck and helped her in her comedy, writing and DJ career.

(Continued from page 9)

set the annual newsletter, another invaluable asset to the Association. They also continued to work at the Fair every year, and in 2008 took over the complex task of renting the spaces on the park periphery to private vendors during the Fair, a profitable asset to our fundraiser.

Obviously, volunteering comes second nature to both Cliff and Phil, and in 2009 they also joined the Board of the fledgling Julian Abele Park at 22nd and Carpenter, where their experience and enthusiasm were sorely needed. It was at their encouragement that Fitler Square finally acquiesced to the now-popular Farmers' Market, and they want to establish a Farmers' Market at Julian Abele as well.

When asked what their favorite time of year in Fitler Square is, Phil says he prefers this time of year, where the trees have not yet bloomed but spring is in the air and the neighborhood has a pastel look to it. Cliff prefers the fall, when the leaves begin to change and the returning college students bring new energy to the neighborhood.

They both cite the convenient location, easy transportation, the many green spaces, and the nice mix of commercial and long-time residential buildings as being their reasons to live in Fitler Square. As their neighbors, we are most fortunate for that and they are indeed an inspiration to us for the commitment to their community.

Event Permit Notice!

Please be aware that if you plan to host an event in any city park in Philadelphia, including Fitler Square, you will need a permit.

Please contact the City to obtain that permit. Thank you!