

Chestnut Hill Local

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Cresheim Valley Drive reopens



Local dignitaries including, above from right, Streets Department commissioner Clarena Tolson, Councilman at-large Frank Rizzo, 8th District Councilwoman Donna Reed Miller and Cindy Bass, policy advisor to Congressman Chakah Fatah, joined Sen. Arlen Specter aide Susan Segal and business and community leaders for the grand reopening of Cresheim Valley Drive on Thursday, April 28. Fixing the road, which partially collapsed into Cresheim Creek during last September's flooding, involved roadway reconstruction, installing jersey barriers, stabilizing the stream and backfilling the washed-out area, according to a Streets Department press release. The total cost of repairs was \$300,000. (Photos by Jimmy J. Pack Jr.)



Neighbors make their case

A ruling on Woodmere is expected this week

by MICHAEL J. MISHAK

A group of Chestnut Hill residents opposing the expansion plans of Woodmere Art Museum outlined their case before the Philadelphia Zoning Board of Adjustment last week, contending that increased attendance and inadequate parking would ultimately harm their quality of life.

After more than two hours of testimony, the board granted another continuance; it was the fourth since last October. ZBA chairman David Auspitz set a spe-

cial hearing for May 4, one day after the *Local* went to press. At last Wednesday's hearing, Auspitz said he expected the board to rule on the case this week.

For ZBA members, discerning the specific concerns of the North Chestnut Hill Neighbors — a group of about 20 neighboring and adjacent households — has been difficult. In past hearings, Auspitz has repeatedly warned lawyers for both sides to limit the courtroom drama that has contributed to the protracted proceedings.

Last week, as the neighbors (Continued on page 11)

Ex-Miller aide survives a public challenge

by MICHAEL J. MISHAK

A group of activists sought the dismissal of Steven Vaughn last week from his post as president of the Central Germantown Council, an area community development corporation set to receive \$186,000 in city monies this year.

The protest, staged at the council's monthly board meeting last Friday, came three weeks after Vaughn, the former chief of staff to Councilwoman Donna Reed

Miller, pled guilty to mail fraud and conspiracy charges stemming from his role in a racketeering enterprise allegedly headed by Imam Shamsud-din Aii, who is currently standing trial in federal court.

The group, comprised of about eight residents and business owners, delivered a 325-signature petition, asking the board to vote on Vaughn's removal from both the board and any affiliated organizations.

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Panel overturns Stroud defrocking

A Methodist appeals court restored the credentials of the avowed lesbian minister from Germantown

by MICHAEL J. MISHAK

For the congregation of the First United Methodist Church of Germantown (FUMCOG), Sunday was an opportunity to celebrate a different kind of good news.

Beth Stroud, the lesbian pastor who had been defrocked by a church trial court last December for violating her denomination's ban on gay clergy, was again an ordained minister.

After a Wednesday night worship service and a Thursday morning vigil, the congregation found its prayers answered last Friday morning when a United Methodist appeals committee announced its 8-1 decision to restore Stroud's ministerial credentials, overturning the defrocking on procedural grounds.

The ruling resulted from the church's legal errors, namely its use of key language that has never been adequately defined, which ultimately denied Stroud her due-process rights. In its decision, the appeals panel contended that the church could not apply the law that precludes "self-avowed, practicing homosexuals" from being ordained without first defining the terms "practicing homosexual" and "status."

Also, the panel found that the General Conference, the denomination's principal legislative body, had sought to define the Christian position on the practice

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A local vendor shows off his wares at the ninth annual Chestnut Hill Home and Garden Festival, which brought thousands to Germantown Avenue on Sunday for games, music, food, rides and shopping. For more pictures from the festival, see pages 12 and 13. (Photo by Jimmy J. Pack Jr.)

Study points to need for traffic calming

by JAMES STURDIVANT

It doesn't take an expert to know that Chestnut Hill has too many vehicles passing through its streets, but a recently-released traffic study may provide grist for the mill of those looking to find solutions to the problem.

The study, which details the impact of the closure of Cresheim Valley Drive on Willow Grove Avenue and Winston Road, provided a starting point for discussions about traffic calming at a meeting last week between representatives of the Chestnut Hill Community Association and the Streets Department.

Cresheim Valley re-opened to traffic on April 28, nearly nine months after severe flooding undermined the road and forced a detour onto Willow Grove Avenue via Lincoln Drive.

Done by the Streets Department on seven successive days from April 12 to 18, the study measures traffic counts and average speed in hourly increments, taking into account temperature and whether the roads were wet or dry.

Bob Previdi, a CHCA board member and authority on transportation issues, summarized the results of the study at the (Continued on page 14)



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WOOD-BE CABINETMAKER: Ken Marini, 57, a Mt. Airy resident who has a woodworking studio in Germantown, is an accomplished theater director, former professional golfer and outstanding cabinetmaker. The triple-threat localite, whose name is a household word among theater aficionados, is profiled by theater critic Clark Groome on page 25. (Photo by Jimmy J. Pack Jr.)



LEMONS AND LIMES: Cynthia Demaio and daughter Laura Demaio have opened Lemons and Limes at 8127A Germantown Ave. It's a gift shop, but according to our "On the Avenue" columnist, Pat Stokes, it also has a "stimulating, cutting-edge character." Cynthia has 27 years in retail business and is already well known in the area, having worked for other shops on the Hill. See the article on page 26. (Photo by Pat Stokes)

