

# The CENTER



A newsletter from Mt. Oliver Borough



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



@MtOliverBorough



@MtOliverPgh



## Manager's Minute

Greetings, everyone! We are kicking off 2021 with some really exciting news to share. In the last issue, I talked a little bit about a state tax credit program that the HEDC, our local community development group, had applied for. I've been involved in this organization since 2011, and it was created by the Borough to assist in the revitalization of the Brownsville Road business district and neighborhoods. Being a registered 501(c)3 nonprofit, the HEDC can also access grant funds that local government entities such as Mt. Oliver Borough cannot. This state tax credit program is one of those programs that requires a 501(c)3 applicant. How it works is corporations with high state tax liability can sponsor a local nonprofit for community development activities and in return, they receive tax credits. I want to stress, this is not a dollar-for-dollar credit, it's more of an incentive, so we are incredibly grateful to the companies that choose to support communities by participating in this program. That's the background in a nutshell. The exciting news is we received word just before Christmas that the HEDC was awarded \$175,000 for the 2021 program year for housing stabilization and community services to help mitigate the impacts of COVID-19. The HEDC has tapped into these funds before, which is how a lot of the recent improvements along Brownsville Road were funded, at least in part. However, this is the first time the HEDC was the sole applicant, which speaks to the confidence that our partners, as well as the state, have in our revitalization plan and our ability to execute. You can read more about the program, our sponsors, and our partners on page 4.

Another program I've reported on in the past is the Allegheny Together program. As a refresher, this is a program designed to codify the community's vision for the business district into actionable strategies and provide multiyear implementation assistance on priority projects. After a little over a year, pivoting for several months due to the pandemic, the plan is finally completed. I want to thank our steering committee made up of largely Borough businesses for all of their hard work throughout this entire process. Three-hour virtual meetings can seem daunting, but wow were they lively with lots of input and ideas generated. The full plan is available on our website at [www.mtoliver.com/economic-development](http://www.mtoliver.com/economic-development), as well as a summarized version. I'm currently working with the HEDC and the Hilltop Alliance on securing additional resources and support to help implement the plan, including staff support and funding for specific business development programs and infrastructure projects identified.

While those pieces are in motion, we're not wasting any time trying to create that buzz on Brownsville. The "Fridays on Main" series is returning this summer, with live music on The Deck every Friday night in June, July, and August. Be sure to follow our social media channels for news and announcements on specific artists. You may have also noticed the Borough Building is undergoing a face lift. It was prompted by the failing parapet wall and the most cost-effective option was to remove it rather than replace it. The product is a more crisp, clean, and modern look that complements The Deck and the newly painted light poles quite nicely.



Similarly, thanks to HEDC's façade improvement program and generous support from the PNC Foundation, seven other Brownsville Road buildings are under contract for their own upgrades. These include 100, 101, 102, 104, 156, and 221, & 225 Brownsville Road. Just imagine all of these storefront renovations occurring at one time. It's going to make such a huge splash on Brownsville Road, especially with how clustered some of these projects are. Now, we just need to fill some of these storefronts and we're in business! Seriously though, if you have a passion for business development, fundraising, or just want to see your community thrive, we need you on our team!

With that, I hope to see everyone out and about with the warmer weather - maybe at one of our events, in the neighborhood, or supporting a local business.



**Rick Hopkinson**

Borough Manager  
Mt. Oliver Borough



## Upcoming Trash Collection

The following dates are upcoming trash collection dates and changes due to holidays:

<b>Mar 16</b>	Regular Collection	<b>May 4</b>	Regular Collection
<b>Mar 23</b>	Regular Collection	<b>May 11</b>	Regular Collection
<b>Mar 30</b>	Regular Collection	<b>May 18</b>	Regular Collection
<b>Apr 6</b>	Regular Collection	<b>May 26</b>	<b>Holiday Collection</b>
<b>Apr 13</b>	Regular Collection	<b>Jun 1</b>	Regular Collection
<b>Apr 20</b>	Regular Collection	<b>Jun 8</b>	Regular Collection
<b>Apr 27</b>	Regular Collection		

Trash must be placed curbside between 6:00 p.m. the day before and 6:00 a.m. the day of scheduled pick-up. Residents may put out up to 15 bags and no more than 2 bulky items. **Holidays include New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas.** For specific questions or service issues, please contact Waste Management at 1-800-866-4460.

**Please note that TVs and other electronics are never accepted.** For these and other hard to dispose of items, contact Evolution E-Cycling at 412-390-3450.

## SELL YOUR HOUSE "AS IS"

If you would like a quick, no hassle CASH sale, without making any repairs, at a fair price, please call or text

**412-542-5006**



**PALMDALE GROUP LLC**  
**www.PalmdaleGroup.com**

**We pay a \$500 referral fee  
if we buy a house you referred**



## Small Business Spotlight

### Local Artist Breathes New Life into former Flower Shop

The windows of 100 Brownsville Road, known for decades as Plants & Flowers by Lisa, are once again adorned and full of life as we so fondly remember. It was these big, beautiful windows that attracted April Minech, local artist and Arlington native, to open up her storefront - The Art House Online Pgh - in the Mt. Oliver business district. That, and the fact she spent so much time in Mt. Oliver growing up. You'll notice that much of her art is inspired by animals. "I've always been an artist," says April, "but it wasn't until I found my connection with animals that I was inspired to really start creating art by combining my two loves." In fact, half of her proceeds are donated to local animal shelters and rescues. April also really enjoys 'upcycling' which involves taking things that are now obsolete and turning them into something new and valued again. She currently paints furniture and purses that she acquires from estate sales or thrift stores. She is also working on some really spectacular antique jewelry that's coming soon. Because of the pandemic, April currently does most of her sales online through her Etsy shop @LadybugDelightz. However, the Art House is open for walk-ins two days a week on Tuesdays from 11am to 7pm and Saturdays from 10am to 6pm. In case you were wondering, custom work is available! Stop by and give a warm welcome to April or follow her on facebook @ArtHouseOnlinePGH - you won't be disappointed!







## Other Business News



### Mt. Oliver Gyros Launches Small Batch Hummus

Millions of Americans have never heard of hummus. If you fit into this category, then you're in luck because here's a crash course. Hummus is a Mediterranean dip or spread made from chickpeas, olive oil, tahini, and often lemon juice and garlic. It's super delicious and super nutritious. Think Greek Guac. You can dip with warm pita bread or pita chips. For a healthier option try celery, carrots, or bell peppers. You can even spread it on a chicken wrap.

If you're already a hummus fan and looking for the best hummus around, look no further. Mt. Oliver Gyros makes the best small batch hummus every Friday. They currently feature their traditional hummus and also a course black pepper variety for those who like a little more spice. There's really no reason to eat store-bought again. Call and order yours today for a weekend treat or gameday snack!



### Return of the Rona Bunny

TC Candy has confirmed their infamous Rona Bunny, a solid milk chocolate bunny with a mask, will be returning this Easter. Last year, their clever creation stirred up national attention, shipping to more than 22 different states. Supplies are limited, so be sure to call and order yours today, before they're \*hopefully\* gone for good! 412-488-MELT (6358)



### Get a Jump on Spring with Miller Hardware

Planning your next DIY home improvement project? Your friendly neighborhood hardware store has got you covered! And if you're a frequent flyer like so many people are, running back out to the store two, even three times mid-project to grab something you forgot, or that tool that you misplaced, it's so convenient to have Miller Hardware practically right up the road – no matter where you live in Mt. Oliver. Staying true to their moto, everyone there is always so helpful, so you can get in, get out, and get back to your project.



2400 Arlington Ave.

*"A locally owned café serving  
fine tea, coffee, and baked  
goods."*

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## Trending in MTO

### HEDC Awarded \$175,000 SPP for Housing Stabilization & Community Services



The Hilltop Economic Development Corporation (HEDC), in collaboration with the Hilltop Alliance and the Brashear Association, has been awarded a one-year \$175,000 Neighborhood Assistance Program (NAP) tax credit award to provide much-needed housing stabilization and community services to residents of the Borough of Mt. Oliver and the Pittsburgh neighborhood of Knoxville.

The tax credits are awarded under the NAP's one-year Special Program Priorities (SPP), meant to "target specific problems and projects the state has designated as priorities," according to the Pennsylvania Department of

Community and Economic Development. The 2020-2021 Mt. Oliver-Knoxville SPP is funded by Northwest Bank, Fragasso Financial Advisors, and United Concordia Insurance Company (a Highmark Inc. company), made possible by the tax credits awarded from the Department of Community and Economic Development.

The SPP action plan will target economic and social challenges facing Mt. Oliver Borough and Knoxville that have been aggravated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically, the HEDC has partnered with the Hilltop Alliance and the Brashear Association to work to improve the quality of the housing stock, ensuring residents remain in their homes, while helping individuals find employment through training, education, and support services leading to self-sufficiency.

"This infusion of funds through the SPP provides resources to an area that has been trying very hard to redevelop and build community capacity and wealth," explained HEDC President Ruthann Omer. "The HEDC is pleased to facilitate this partnership, and we are beyond grateful for our partners and sponsors who believe in these areas enough to assist us."

The HEDC is an all-volunteer, non-profit community development corporation serving the Borough of Mt. Oliver and the Pittsburgh neighborhood of Knoxville. The HEDC is also a member organization of the Hilltop Alliance.

## MT. OLIVER SPRING CLEAN-UP

[www.MtOliver.com](http://www.MtOliver.com) [@MtOliverBorough](https://www.facebook.com/MtOliverBorough) [@MtOliverPgh](https://www.instagram.com/MtOliverPgh)

**Saturday, April 10**  
9 am to 12 pm

Join us for a community spring clean-up event. Pick up your supplies, work at your own pace, and drop your bags at an intersection. We'll be around afterwards to pick them up!

Trash bags and gloves will be available for pick up at the Borough Building on Friday 4/9 from 8:00 am to 3:30 pm, and also on the day of the event.

**REGISTER ONLINE**  
Select your streets online at [Bit.ly/MTOcleanup2021](https://bit.ly/MTOcleanup2021)



## MT. OLIVER SUMMER EVENTS

# ON MAIN

**LIVE MUSIC  
FRIDAY NIGHTS**  
6:00 - 9:00 PM  
JUNE THROUGH AUGUST

**@ THE DECK**  
NEXT TO 150 BROWNSVILLE ROAD  
FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA FOR  
ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPDATES







## Meet Your Representative

Hello Neighbors,

I'm your newly elected state representative, replacing retiring Representative Harry Readshaw. It's a great honor to represent the people of the 36th legislative district, and I'm eager to get to work on creating legislation that's rooted in viable and responsible solutions for our families, bringing opportunity for everyone.

My legislative platform priorities include:

- Fixing the unemployment system.
- Increasing access to the COVID-19 vaccine.
- Healthcare affordability.
- Fighting for rights of workers/raising minimum wage.
- Protecting the environment.
- Investing in infrastructure.
- Fair education funding so the burden isn't on local property owners.

Since the beginning my term, I've introduced nine pieces of legislation on topics like education, civil rights, fair wages and healthcare. I've also signed on as a co-sponsor to numerous bills that would bring relief to businesses and families struggling from the impact of COVID-19. Together with my colleagues, we passed a bipartisan bill that allocated \$150 million dollars to our restaurants and half a billion dollars to rental assistance.

The past year has been one of great loss, challenge and frustration, but there is a promise of a brighter future now that testing is more readily available and vaccination is underway. However, the vaccine roll-out process has been inefficient, frustrating and confusing. I'm working hard with my colleagues to push for a statewide vaccine waitlist so that you have a one-stop-shop to reserve your place in line for a vaccine. I also am urging our federal government to increase the supply of vaccines to Pennsylvania.

My district office is located at 1810 Brownsville Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15210. I encourage you to please feel free to reach out to me via email at [RepBenham@pahouse.net](mailto:RepBenham@pahouse.net) or by phone at 412-881-4208. I also encourage you to visit my website at [www.pahouse.com/benham](http://www.pahouse.com/benham) to sign up for my regular email updates and follow me @RepBenham on facebook and twitter.



**Jessica Benham**

36<sup>th</sup> legislative district representative





## Upcoming Events

### Council Meetings

3rd Monday of every month at 7:30 PM  
Borough Building - 150 Brownsville Road

### Fish Fry

Every Friday during Lent, 3:00 to 7:30 pm  
Fire Hall - 120 Brownsville Road (take-out only)  
Call (412) 431-5210

### Spring Clean-up

Saturday, April 10 from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM  
Register online at [Bit.ly/MTOcleanup2021](https://bit.ly/MTOcleanup2021)

### Summer Fridays on Main

Live Music every Friday, June - August, 6:00 to 9:00 PM  
The Deck - Next to 150 Brownsville Road



## Advertise with Us!

Business Card = \$85      Quarter Page = \$165  
Contact 412-431-8107 x106 or [rick.hopkinson@mtoliver.com](mailto:rick.hopkinson@mtoliver.com)

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150 Brownsville Road  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15210

**Mt. OLIVER**

