



FORT GREENE ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

HISTORIC FORT GREENE BROOKLYN

FEBRUARY 2006

The Fort Greene Association is devoted to historic preservation, neighborhood and park enhancement, as well as cultural, economic, and housing advancement. To find out more, to become a member, or to volunteer, visit us on the web at www.HistoricFortGreene.org

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**LEE SOLOMON
AND BROWN
HARRIS STEVENS
ARE PROUD TO
UNDERWRITE
THIS ISSUE OF
THE FGA
NEWSLETTER.**

Next FGA Meeting,
February 27, 7:30pm

Your House -Your
Insurance - Your Tax

Do you have the right
coverage?

How to program a
policy to adequately
cover your losses.

How to calculate
adequate coverage for
contents.

Speakers: Chris
Lehman and Ralph
Fiumefreddo from
The Brownstone
Agency

Is my property tax too
high? How can I tell?
What can I do?

Speaker: Glenn
Newman President of
NYC Tax
Commission and
President of NYC
Tax Appeal Tribunal

Location:
Community Room of
the Lafayette Avenue
Presbyterian Church,
85 S. Oxford Street,
Fort Greene,
Brooklyn

Right Back at You

This is going to be an exciting year. To start with, planning is in the final stages for an amazing Fort Greene House Tour. It will be like no other tour the FGA – or for that matter, any other civic organization - has ever put together. Check out the accompanying article in this newsletter, and save the date: Sunday, May 7, from Noon-5pm. Also different this year: the FGA is embarking on some exciting (and necessary) ways to increase the funds raised during the House Tour event – all without raising ticket prices! The funds typically raised during the House Tour are simply not enough to accomplish all that's on the FGA's plate. So, volunteers from the neighborhood with experience in Public Relations, Corporate Sponsorships, Web Design, Advertising and other professions are all donating their time – along with the House Tour planners, the generous homeowners, businesses and hundreds of volunteers - to pull off an event that, first and foremost, shows off Fort Greene in all its glory. Secondly, the event will raise funds that will go right back into the Fort Greene community through the advocacy and programs of the Fort Greene Association. Having the resources to pull off some very ambitious goals is something any all-volunteer, non-profit organization dreams of. This year, with your help, we plan to make it a reality.
Phillip Kellogg
Chair

House Tour 2006

Excitement is already building for the 28th Fort Greene House Tour being held on Sunday, May 7th

Those who do make the trip this spring will, as in 2004, enjoy an eclectic array of homes, from classic brownstones evoking Fort Greene's rich past to more modern homes at the cutting edge of taste and style. In addition to Fort Greene's houses, tour goers will also have the opportunity to explore some of our local businesses and a fascinating exhibit that details the modern architecture of this wonderful neighborhood.

For more information on House Tour, be sure to visit www.HistoricFortGreene.org.

Oh, by the way, we're looking for "house sitters", for further information on becoming one; please contact Fred Lasker 718.875.1856.

Graffiti Initiative

By Lt. Pena 88th PCT

As many Fort Greene residents know, the NYPD, in conjunction with the Mayor's Office, has stepped up its anti-graffiti campaign for over a year now. This response is comprised of three main components; Enforcement, Education and Clean-Up.

The first component is Enforcement. Officers in the 88th Precinct routinely inspect stores that sell spray paint and broad tip markers to ensure that they are in compliance with regulations. Business owners are reminded to "Card" teenagers attempting to purchase these items as it is a viola-

tion for them to sell to anyone under twenty-one years of age. Officers have also made numerous arrests and have entered the information and identities obtained into a database used to monitor vandalism and identify patterns. Vigilant residents are essential and they are also part of this important step. Reporting graffiti vandals to 911 as the crime is being committed allows rapid response of Police personnel to make an arrest. Once an arrest is made, the caller becomes eligible to claim a \$500 reward through the Mayor's Anti-Graffiti Reward Program. The caller need not identify him/herself. The reward will be given via a confidential serial number.

The second component involves Education. Our Precinct Youth Officers speak to students at schools of the ill effects that tagging a wall, light pole, mailbox, etc., has on a community. Youth groups are also invited to participate to help the community in the clean-up effort.

The third component in combating graffiti involves clean-up. The Mayor's Office Community Assistance Unit offers a free-of-charge painting and power-washing service to owners of residential and commercial properties who seek help. Owners of properties only need to contact the local Precinct and fill out a consent form and a waiver of liability form. In time, the Community Assistance Unit sends a crew to clean or paint-over the graffiti. The Community Assistance Unit also provides paint through the 88th Precinct to community volunteers who wish to help paint over any graffiti defacing the buildings in their neighborhood. This would be done with the owner's consent, of course.

Throughout the city, during early spring and through summer, the Department will be soliciting community groups, block associations and similar community based entities to organize and carry out these clean-up efforts freeing our resources to concentrate on our enforcement efforts. The 88th Precinct will be seeking out volunteers who wish to organize a "Clean-Up Day" with community residents and/or organizations. Block associations, business owners, youth groups, college students and residents are encouraged and welcome to contact the 88th Precinct to volunteer and help keep Fort Greene clean and free of graffiti.

Keeping the community graffiti free takes a concerted effort from many fronts: educating our youth, enforcing our laws, arresting vandals and cleaning up, all come together to accomplish this goal.

I Rent, Therefore I am

It is disheartening, but understandable, to hear somebody ask if a "renter" can join the FGA. For years the FGA has been known for its work in preserving and protecting rows of brownstone homes. But the truth is the FGA is about that, and so much more. Improved subway service, safer streets, better schools, political dialog and enhanced parks benefit everyone. That goes for renters and homeowners alike...

whether they live within the boundaries of an historic district - or not. The Fort Greene Association is open to all Fort Greeners. And we need all of you reading this newsletter to help spread that message.



And the Lucky Winner Is!

Over 200 merry revelers assembled on December 2nd, at the beautiful home of Amy Bennett and Jason Richelson for the annual FGA Holiday Party. Neighborhood merchants were featured in the Grand Prize of a "raffle tree" with gift certificates to 21 neighborhood shops - guaranteeing much local holiday shopping! The big winner: Liz Adam of Washington Park who, in the spirit of the season, merrily gave four of her gift certificates to some lucky children. Thanks to all who made this event possible, especially Roslyn Heubener, who chaired the committee that made it happen.

Preserving the Past, Planning the Future

Join the FGA and the Historic Districts Council [HDC] for a panel discussion of: Neighborhood Preservation in Brooklyn, Preserving the Past, Planning the future. Hear directly from the City agencies responsible for preserving neighborhood character, including the City Planning commission, on how the historic district designation and preservation process works. Learn from neighborhood activists in Brooklyn about different ways of preserving community character and historic resources, from landmark designation to rezoning initiatives to public awareness campaigns. The event is free to the public and is taking place here in Fort Greene. Tuesday, February 21, 2006 from 6:30-8:00pm at the Brooklyn Music School, 126 Saint Felix Street. Contact the HDC at 212.614.9107 for more information.

Evolution

Wow, the FGA Newsletter has a new look. Well that is just the beginning. As Fort Greene continues to evolve so does the FGA with new community programs, events, and meeting speakers that are relevant to our lives in Fort Greene. We owe our new look to Fort Greene resident and graphic designer Diana Morrow. **Brava, Diana!** Stay tuned for more and as always your comments are welcome and needed. Let us know how we are doing.

A Message from PUPS

By Kath Hansen, President, PUPS
and Nancy Peterson, Secretary, PUPS

We've received some complaints recently about dogs being off-leash in Fort Greene Park during on-leash hours and the situation has led to an increase in tickets being issued by the Parks Department and NYPD to off-leash violators. Fort Greene Park Users and Pets Society (PUPS) would like to remind dog owners and dog walkers that despite what you may have heard, off-leash hours have not changed. Dogs may be off-leash between the hours of 9:00 PM and 9:00 AM only. You must leash your dog at all other times and you risk a \$100 (per dog) fine for violation of this courtesy rule. And please do not allow your dog on the tennis courts. Dog nails scratch the surface and under no circumstance should they be allowed on the courts.

If you want to let your dog off-leash during other hours you may want to visit Brooklyn Heights, where there are two 24/7 dog runs. Another alternative is Prospect Park, where the hours for off-leash recreation have been extended. Visit the PUPS website (www.fortgreene pups.org) for more information regarding these alternatives.

And please remember, off-leash time is a privilege, it's not the law, only responsible dog ownership will guarantee continued off-leash rights.

Pitbull Partnership

A letter to the editor from Moratisisa Banks

What does it mean to form a great partnership? There are essential elements that make it great! First, the desire to work as a team with a supply of willing participants, second a team and community that demands you do it right over and over again. The most compelling elements needed are the dreamer and the doer. Both those elements have been created through the Brooklyn Pitbulls (a Pop

Warner Youth International Football program) Community outreach Program and the support from the Fort Greene Community in Commodore Barry Park. While coach Lloyd Rodriguez of the Brooklyn Pitbulls dreams of an awesome team and a place to house them, the Coach's wife Lisa Steadwell does magic to make the team work. Along with the doing help of Parents and the awesome Commodore Barry Park staff, we are all able to look forward to a great Football season.

Commodore Barry Park is quietly located at the foot of the BQE downtown Tillary Street exit on the Park Avenue side. We play the best football in Brooklyn on this field and want to have many more years cultivating this program and our commitment to partnership in this diverse community, therefore the upkeep of the park is important to all involved. During the summer months the field is taken over by youth of all ages; cheering Families and Football Teams from Westchester, Eastchester, Connecticut, and other parts of the tri-state area. Each year the team and Coach Lloyd are a part of the Partnership for Parks Program to clean up the park and keep it clean during the most used months of the year. This helps the park to maintain a clean balance and it helps keep kids off the streets.

Although the location of the park is great, some of the problems with the park are obvious. The lack of lights prevents us from having evening summer games and causes an unsafe environment for the children and parents at night.

The poor lighting is a safety problem when entering and exiting the park, even to walk a pet or toss a ball after dusk. This park is an awesome place for Families. Because there are Football Games in the park there has been a growing use of the Park for other sports like adult soccer, baseball and youth band practice. So, the park is in dire need of seating, bleachers and social benches. During the 4th of July the park is utilized for the African Street Fes-

tival and the space is really very well used for that event. We believe that the partnership with the Commodore Barry Park and the Brooklyn Pitbulls lends more than just another group using the park because we truly care about this Park. We know that we give more to this community than just another summer program, because coach Rodriguez is a mentor, lending his time and attention to Kids who are disruptive in area schools during the school year. The schools that support this Pitbulls program are Benjamin Banneker and The Susan S. McKinney School. We look forward to expanding this program. In the future the dreamer sees a building that houses the Brooklyn Pitbulls community Program, additional sports and recreation for youth, and a haven for learning. We can't do it without the park. Excerpt from the Pitbull MISSION STATEMENT: "Youth sports while being competitive should also be a fun experience for the coaches as well as the players. It should also be a progressive learning experience, as many of the youth do dream of someday becoming a High School, College, or even a professional athlete. The objective of this program is to keep the youth away from the streets and in school, while giving them a venue to maybe someday obtain those goals. Our football program is a community based organization with the objective of focusing on the developmental needs of the children served.

I believe that the purpose of a community park is in our mission statement. Kids should be proud of their community. We want this park to be a great reflection of our partnership! With the help of the doing Fort Greene - Commodore Barry Park community and the Dreaming Brooklyn Pitbulls Community outreach Program anything is possible!

OUR SYMPATHY - To Estella Greene, long time business owner at 106 South Oxford, on the recent death of her husband after a long illness. We wish her comfort.
To Susan Butler, neighbor and FGA board member, whose father died last month. We wish her happy memories.

Lee Solomon and Brown Harris Stevens are proud to underwrite this issue of the FGA Newsletter.



FORT GREENE ASSOCIATION

HISTORIC FORT GREENE BROOKLYN

Box 170563, Brooklyn, NY 11217-0563

Your House - Your Insurance - Your Tax Next FGA Meeting, February 27, 7:30pm

Do you have the right coverage?

How to program a policy to adequately cover your losses.

How to calculate adequate coverage for contents.

Speakers: Chris Lehman and Ralph Fiumefreddo from The Brownstone Agency

Is my property tax too high? How can I tell? What can I do?

Speaker: Glenn Newman President of NYC Tax Commission and President of NYC Tax Appeal Tribunal

www.HistoricFortGreene.org

GOINGS ON MEETINGS

FORT GREENE ASSOCIATION - Meets Mondays at 7:30 pm, Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church, 85 South Oxford Street, Fort Greene. February 27, March 20, April 17, May 22. Participate in our OPEN FORUM.

COMMUNITY BOARD 2 - Meets 2nd Wednesday of the month, 6 pm. Call CB2 office, 718.596.5410, for location. Attend.

88TH PRECINCT - 3rd Tuesday of each month, 7:30. Call 718.636.6511 ext 526x for location.

BROOKLYN ARTISTS BREAKFAST - 3rd Wednesday of the month, 9am, BODEGAS restaurant, 868 Fulton Street at Clinton Ave (open for breakfast at 8am). Questions: 718.624.5719.

NEWSCENES

PEACE of MIND Bookstore - 112 S. Oxford Street, between Lafayette and Fulton. 718.855.0787 Friday & Saturday 1-7 pm; Sunday 12 noon-5pm. Proprietor is Clinton resident Dwana M. Hope. Books on Meditation, Prayer, Yoga and more. Stop by and ask her about this new enterprise.

HEAD OVER HEELS - 366 Myrtle Avenue. 718.237.8880. Owner Dane Huggins. High-end shoe boutique. No need to tip-toe --step right in and enjoy the selection.

TRES ELEGANT - Well known and popular fashion studio - relocated to different spot on the Avenue... now at 386 Myrtle Avenue. Owner Amadou Gueye still creating his imaginative designs.

H&R BLOCK - 405 Myrtle Avenue. 718.935.1639. Monica Baptiste. Tax preparation and classes. You had forgotten April 15 approaches?

CLINTON HILL HARDWARE - 452 Myrtle Avenue. 718 237-7827. Owner Gustavo Mendez, long-time Adami Hardware employee. We wish him much success as he continues the tradition of hardware on Myrtle, following the closing of Adami.

RUTHIE'S AUTHENTIC SOUL FOOD RESTAURANT - 560 Myrtle Avenue. 718.399.2400 John Monroe. A new location but those delicious dishes are no strangers to the Fort Greene/Clinton Hill neighborhood. Best of luck!

IN FLUX

LIQUORS restaurant on Dekalb is closed during renovation -- will reopen in the spring.

GIA restaurant on Lafayette is closed. Owner Ian Grant will take a new direction beginning this summer when his handsome space becomes a private club.



LEE SOLOMON

Fort Greene's Real Estate Specialist

(718) 399-4105

BROWN HARRIS STEVENS

Established 1873

LEE SOLOMON AND BROWN HARRIS STEVENS ARE PROUD TO UNDERWRITE THIS ISSUE OF THE FORT GREENE ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER.



AFTER MOVING TO FORT GREENE IN 1986 TO WORK FOR SPIKE LEE, I fell in love with the neighborhood. And what a wonderful neighborhood it is! Thanks in large part to the hard work and devotion of the members of the Fort Greene Association. I am proud to live in such a vibrant community. And I am thrilled to be able to introduce so many new people to our neighborhood through the work that I do in residential sales and rentals. If you are thinking of selling your home please contact me to schedule a free market analysis of your property. Call 718-399-4105, or send me an e-mail at: lsolomon@bhsusa.com

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