

## COMMUNITY CALENDER

### Martin Robison Delany Symposium

The Senator John Heinz History Center – the Smithsonian’s home in Pittsburgh – will host the Inaugural Martin Robison Delany Symposium on Aug. 26-27, at the History Center.

The two-day academic conference, presented by the History Center’s African American Program, will feature panel discussions with scholars from across the nation who have studied Martin Delany and his influential life and legacy.

Martin Delany was born in Charles Town, Virginia, to a free mother and an enslaved father and lived under racial oppression. But his activism started in Pittsburgh. He spent his formative years in this city, where his studies of enterprise, medicine, and journalism would set him apart from other abolitionists.

The symposium will begin with a welcome reception from 6-9 p.m. on Friday, Aug. 26 and feature panel discussions and keynote speakers on Saturday, Aug. 27 from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. The Aug. 27 presentations will be available for viewing virtually. The cost is \$50 for in person, \$25 for students, \$10 for History Center members, and \$10 for virtual.

### Kennywood Fall Fantasy parades

Beginning Saturday, August 6, more than 160 marching bands from high schools and colleges throughout Southwestern Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Ohio will fill Kennywood’s midways with live music during parades nightly through Sunday, August 21.

Visitors to Kennywood during this 72nd rendition of Fall Fantasy will enjoy a whimsical adventure with characters and stories from faraway lands. This year’s theme, “Once Upon a Time” offers a Happily Ever After to the summer. Floats designed in-house by Kennywood’s Art Department will depict fairy tale favorites like Hansel & Gretel, Little Red Riding Hood and more, mixed in with each night’s marching bands.

### Soldiers & Sailors Senior Citizens Day

Soldiers & Sailors Memorial Hall & Museum Trust, Inc., announced it will recognize the contributions senior citizens make in communities throughout Pennsylvania by offering FREE admission for all seniors on Friday, August 12, 2022, from 10 am - 4 pm, in honor of National Senior Citizens Day.

In addition to FREE admission, there will be a limited supply of UPMC and Xfinity giveaway items available while supplies last.

On August 12th, all individuals 55 and older are welcome to visit and enjoy the memorial that is dedicated to paying tribute to those women and men of Pennsylvania who unselfishly gave of themselves in serving their country, especially during the American conflicts.

### Local Community Days

- Churchill - September 25, 12 - 4 p.m. at St. John Fisher Church.

- Rankin - August 20, 1 p.m. - 8 p.m. at Hawkins and 4th Street.

- Braddock Hills - September 10, 1 p.m. - 6 p.m. at 1500 Yost Blvd. Propel/Shopping Center parking lot.

- Braddock - August 13, 2022, Noon - 6 p.m. at the Civic Plaza on Braddock Avenue.

- West Homestead - August 13, from 4 p.m. - Dusk, at Calhoun Park. This event will feature fireworks and skating.

- Edgewood - August 27, at 2 p.m., at Koenig Field.

## MUNHALL

# Borough auctioning off municipal owned three-story brick building.

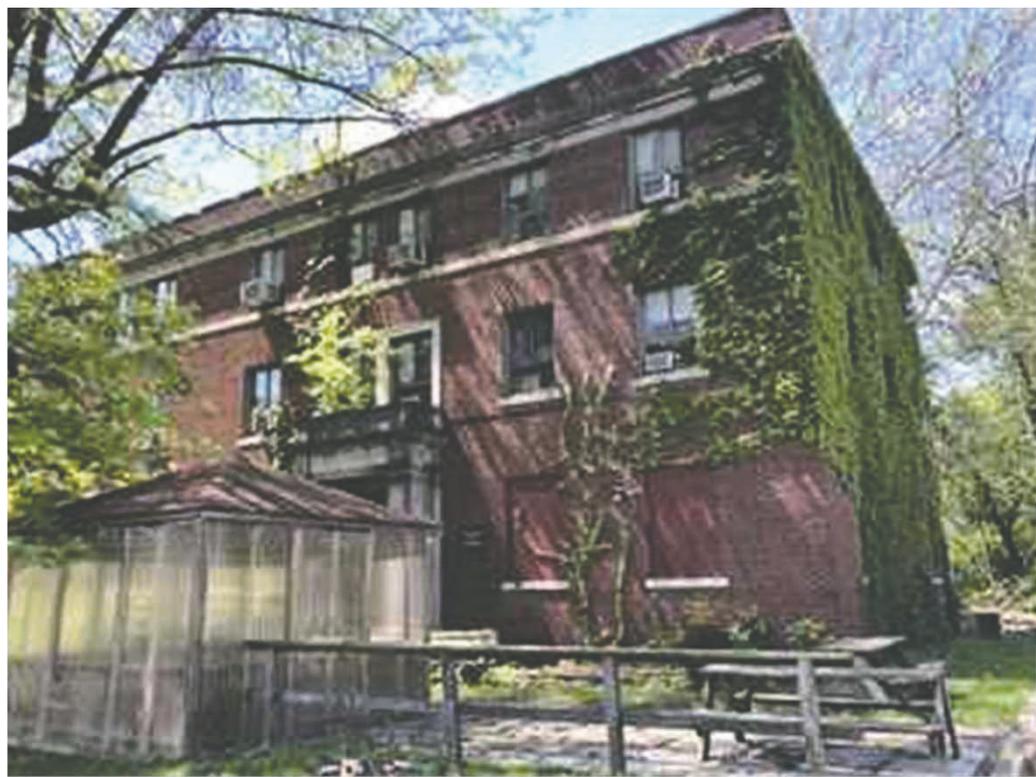
*Proceeds from previous student housing complex to help local community*

The Borough of Munhall is currently auctioning off a 3-story brick building. This online auction is open to the public at municibid.com and ends on Friday, August 12th. Pennsylvania residents are able to bid in this government auction online, 24/7, on Municibid.

Founded in 2006, Municibid, a four-time Inc. 5000 member (2018-2021), serves over 4,000 governments and schools across the US who use Municibid to auction off fire trucks, buses, ambulances, heavy machinery, agricultural equipment, and other surplus goods to the public online.

This auction will help someone get a fantastic deal on a building they can convert for commercial or residential use. Why is this auction important? All of the proceeds from this auction is going right back into improving the Borough of Munhall’s local community. 100 percent of the proceeds from this auction go back to the Borough of Munhall. These funds can be used for road maintenance, setting up local events for residents, community programs, public safety initiatives, and more.

This property is located at 1850 West Street in Munhall, PA. The building was former



Above: Municibid serves over 4,000 schools and governments in selling off property to the general public. Below: The building will need a complete overhaul inside, but the structure of the building is good. Photo by Municibids.

housing and offices for nursing students. The building has been vacant since 2009. The interior is damaged from lack of occupancy, but all structural aspects appear to be intact. This is an excellent investment opportunity for a developer to take advantage of.

The building is currently assessed at \$1.6M, but has been exempt under non-profit and government status. It will need to be reassessed to change the tax rate. The sewer and water are municipal.

Specific dimensions and unit numbers are not available on the listing, but the Allegheny County website lists the lot size as 26,959 sq. feet This building served as a dormitory for students. There are small bedrooms, common bathrooms on each floor, a main kitchen. The Zoning is: R-3 — Multifamily Residential District.

Interested parties can contact the borough for a tour of the building. As of the time of publication, the listing has 100 bids and is at \$164,000.



## NEID: Buy back gets guns out of homes, off streets

*From Page One*

to mention that she read about a successful gun buy-back program in Seattle where over a thousand unwanted firearms were surrendered to law enforcement in exchange for a gift card.”

A gun buy-back is a program used to purchase privately owned firearms. The goal is to reduce the number of guns sold illegally, or in this case to reduce the deaths from gun violence, which is a significant issue that plagues The Mon Valley.

A buy-back program would provide a process whereby civilians can sell their privately owned firearms to the government without risk of prosecution. In most cases, the agents purchasing the guns are local police.

“All the neighbors and just everybody have been amazing,” said Nied of the local area. “So I sat down with my staff, they thought I was going to retire, and said we need to have a gun buy-back.” Nied met with Mayor Deneen Swartzwelder of Swissvale, who helped him coordinate with police from Braddock Hills, Edgewood, and Swissvale.

For Nied, the buy-back has been a bittersweet endeavor. “Someone turned in a handgun that had been used in a suicide,” said Nied during the event. “No one should ever take their own life. It’s the hardest thing for any funeral director to have to deal with,” he said tearfully. Nied says he hasn’t had to deal with as many deaths from guns recently but that there have been many times over his life where these cases have come into his funeral home.

“Most importantly, this makes the town safer. A gun can be stolen and used in a crime, or somebody can hurt themselves. I am not anti-gun. Look, if you don’t need it, turn it in,” said Nied. “People have guns just sitting in a closet. They don’t hunt; they don’t target shoot. One couple showed up and wouldn’t even take a gift certificate. They

said, ‘you’re doing us a favor; we didn’t want to have to deal with it.’”

Gun buy-backs, like the one sponsored by Nied, don’t just get guns off the streets. One benefit of a buy-back is to reduce gun ownership in a community, which in turn reduces gun violence in that area. Decreased rates of gun ownership would increase the difficulty or cost for dangerous persons to obtain weapons. This theory is backed up by decades of empirical data, which show a direct and robust correlation between the rate of gun ownership and the rate of gun deaths in a community.

Another benefit of a gun buy-back is providing an opportunity for the safe disposal of firearms. Such was the case of a local woman named Joanne Beile, who came to the buy-back event after hearing about it at her church, St. Josephs. She inherited the gun after her grandfather died in 1946. He used to be an officer at Edgar Thompson in the 20s. “It’s been sitting in a cedar chest. I just want it out. If something happens to me, I don’t want anybody to have it,” said Beile.

“I have been looking for something like this. I saw [the event] at our church and said I’m gonna do this. Even getting it out and touching it made me nervous,” said Beile, turning in her grandfather’s old service pistol.

The event was well attended, and many of his employees volunteered their time to help with the event. “We are all sick to our bellies when we see terrible things on TV,” Nied said, referring to their reaction to hearing about needless deaths from gun violence on the news. Nied spent \$10,000 of his own money to buy Giant Eagle gift cards in denominations ranging from \$100 down. “All of us local businesses need to give back to the community. We can’t just take.”

Swissvale Chief of Police, Ellis Watson, was handling fire-



Director Charlie Nied grew up in Edgewood, and has been a lifelong resident of the area. He wanted to find a way to give back to the community. Photo by The Valley Mirror.



A decent sized collection of rifles had already been collected within the first 45 minutes of the buy-back. Photo by The Valley Mirror.

arms handed over by the public and taking them to a room inside the funeral home where officers with other departments were checking serial numbers and documenting what came in. “We appreciate Charlie Nied’s funeral home for sponsoring this event. It’s great for the local area. Swissvale, Edgewood, and Braddock Hills are working together to get these guns out of circulation,” said Watson.

“There is a process we have to go through - federal and state laws - to dispose of the guns,” said Watson. If a gun turns out to be stolen, it is reunited with its rightful owner.

Everything else is taken to a special shredder that tears the guns apart.

All told, the buy-back resulted in over 100 guns being taken out of circulation. “This is probably the best thing I am going to do in my career,” said Nied.