

# Your Walking Papers

## PhillyWalks

Fall 2001

Volume 2, Issue 3

### PhillyWalks

Presents

### Seniors on Foot: Safety & Hazards

### A Public Forum

October 17, 2001  
3:00 PM – 5:00 PM

1<sup>st</sup> Floor Dining Room of the  
**Philadelphia Senior Center**  
509 S. Broad Street  
(Between Lombard & South Streets)  
Center City Philadelphia

#### Panelists:

- **Michael Nutter**, Member, Philadelphia City Council
- **Estelle Richman**, Director, Philadelphia Social Services
  - **Marie Birnbaum**, Bicycle/Pedestrian Safety Advocate, U. S. Department of Transportation (Retired)
  - **Dr. Peter Hecht**, Moderator, PhillyWalks President

Refreshments will follow the Panel Discussion & Questions  
Courtesy of Center City Food Rite, 15<sup>th</sup> & Spruce Streets

PhillyWalks is a Project of Clean Air Council  
215.567.4004, x233

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## Message from the PhillyWalks President

By Peter Hecht

It is often easier to spot the high points as well as the lows of your own town when traveling. While I was in Belgium this summer it was particularly true.

The problems we walkers have in Philadelphia with construction sites does not exist in Belgium. Construction sites in Brussels were very meticulous in maintaining the pedestrian's right of way during construction. Even in small construction projects (like the



Pedestrian Detour Sign

one in the picture), there is a clear and safe path through or beside the construction site. In the case pictured, part of the roadway has been taken for pedestrians.

In other locations, covered walkways were provided, sometimes on the sidewalk and at other places in the roadway, but always clearly marked and physically separated from the roadway for cars. It sure beats playing

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# The Storming of Fort Wellington

By Janet Heller

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Bastille Day was celebrated in Philadelphia in several ways--notably by closing off one block of Samson Street for a French-style street fair sponsored by the French owned Sofitel Hotel and the annual re-enactment of the storming of the Bastille at the Eastern State Penitentiary on Fairmount Avenue. Pedestrians from the greater Philadelphia area thoroughly enjoyed these street events.

The storming of Fort Wellington, however, has not been limited to a single commemorative event. Fort Wellington, a.k.a. the Wellington Building, is located at 135 South 19th Street, between Samson and Walnut. It has been subject to an "attack" that has been going on for many months under the benign aegis of the Philadelphia Bureau of Licensing.

The disruption is caused by the scaffolding in front of and to the side of Fort Wellington. Because of the way the scaffolding was erected by Safeway Steel Products of Folcroft, pedestrian access is totally denied on South 19th Street between Walnut and Samson, causing pedestrians either to walk in the street along the curb or to cross over to the west side of the street. The repair work on the building's facade is being done by Joseph Dugan, Inc., Masonry and Restoration.

The permit to place scaffolding for facial work on Fort Wellington was originally issued from October 13 to November 18, 2000, with extensions granted to January 15, then to January 31, then to March 31. The most recent permit is dated from December 18, 2000 to December 15, 2001.

A letter to John M. Cunningham, the City Hall functionary responsible for granting and renewing building permits, from a representative of Philly Walks, was unacknowledged. How many more extensions will be required before the facial work on Fort Wellington is completed, the unsightly and inconvenient scaffolding removed, and the sidewalks returned to their rightful users, the pedestrians of Philadelphia?



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## Message From the President, Continued

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*(Continued from page 1)*

hopscotch with motor vehicles on S. 19th St. and N. 3rd St. these days.



The "No Pooping" Sign

On the other hand, Philadelphia seems a lot cleaner than most of Belgium with respect to dog litter. Clean

up after your dog signs and rules have as much impact in Belgium as traffic laws do in Philadelphia. There are even "no pooping" signs set into the sidewalk (see picture). It is nice to see that in some small respect we care for our community environment.

Yielding to pedestrians takes on new meaning in Belgium. Rather than having to play chicken with everything that has a motor in it, drivers do yield. You do have to endure occasional screeching brakes when they round corners too quickly as you are crossing on foot.

However, even pedestrians must yield to mass transit. This sign at an intersection warns pedestrians that trol-

leys have priority over pedestrians as they have over cars as well.



Translation: Pedestrian Yield Sign

# PhillyWalks

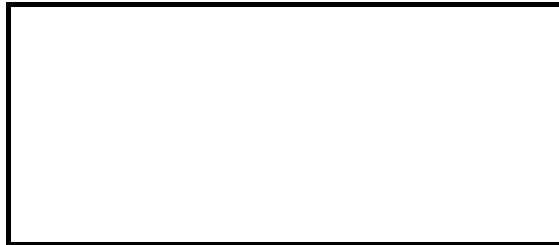
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The Voice of Walkers in Philadelphia

## RSVP Now for Dinner Dance Fundraiser!

The Mae Davidow Chapter of the Pennsylvania Council of the Blind is hosting a dinner dance on Saturday, October 13th at Romano's, 1523 Castor Avenue, from 6:00 PM until 10:00 PM. In observance of White Cane Safety Day, the theme is *Pedestrian Safety: Window of Opportunity*.

Join us for an evening of dinner, dancing, and a special presentation of the Mae Davidow Chapter's Community Service Award. Tickets must be purchased in advance at a cost of \$32.00. For further information, call the Mae Davidow Chapter information line (215) 748-3556.



## Kids Walk-to-School — New Program in the Works!

PhillyWalks is exploring the possibility of sponsoring a Kids Walk-to-School Program in Philadelphia. This national program is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity.

In short, the Federal Government, along with many other agencies, nutritionists, and health care professionals, are deeply concerned about our children and their lack of exercise--and the subsequent harmful effects on their general health.

The Kids Walk-to-School Program takes many forms. PhillyWalks is interested in recruiting parents, teachers, and other interested adults

to organize and implement the program by arousing interest in a few elementary schools, where students live a mile or less from the school building. Adults, working on a staggered schedule, would pick up elementary school children, at designated "walk stops" and accompany the group to their school.

Anyone interested in helping to organize this kind of healthy and helpful activity should call Janet Heller at 215/568-0410 for additional information.

**LATE BULLETIN!** Governor Tom Ridge has appointed PhillyWalks President Peter Hecht to represent pedestrians on the state's Pedestrian & Pedacycle Advisory Committee. Congratulations, Dr. Hecht!