Time Marches On. Here in February we have just passed Groundhog Day, which celebrates the halfway point between the Winter Solstice and the Spring Equinox. We also are marking six months since the HVAC project began. In the past half-year, we have:

- Installed new pumps and controls in all the mechanical rooms of all the towers.
- Installed new hydronic separators to balance our systems and magnetic filters in all but the south tower (coming this spring).
- Installed new valves that allow us to shut off water one riser at a time rather than shutting down the entire building as before.
- Replaced all 11 sets of risers, fan coil units (FCUs) and horizontal pipes and enclosures in the upper floors of the north tower.

To be sure, we have encountered problems that we had not foreseen, as this is a very complex project. Among them have been clogs and resulting shutdowns, difficulty in installing new electric receptacles to replace broken ones, and a myriad of fit and finish problems. Although SageWater, our installer, is well experienced in this work, every building is different and with each unit completed we are learning more about this one.

We have now named Assistant to the General Manager Brett Scioli “Project Manager in the Field” and he will be taking a hands-on approach to avoiding and following up on problems. We have also implemented new “punch list” procedures which provide for an in depth inspection by SageWater and Brett of every completed unit and a meeting (when possible) with the unit owner. If we find items that haven’t been completed properly, we schedule them for repair, immediately whenever possible. Still, some difficulties have been either hard to sort out or have recurred. We will keep going back and fixing them as often as necessary in order to give you a job that is as perfect as possible. We have now begun work on the lower floors of the north tower and believe that this piece of the project will go more smoothly based on what we have learned and procedures that we have modified. Incidentally, it is possible that we will complete the north tower and move to the west tower as early as this April!

As you may know, Punxsutawney Phil did not see his shadow this year, which means an early arrival of spring and maybe a swift and uneventful completion of our project.

On a related subject, we need to have a little chat about the topic of mold (ugh). The good news is that we haven’t found any in the systems that have been replaced so far. The bad news is that we have found many examples where custom convector covers are causing mold on the tops of the convector and/or undersides of the custom convector covers. We strongly advise you not to use such covers, especially once your system has been replaced. There are several reasons for this. First is the obvious one…none of us wants mold growing in our homes. Once your convector has been replaced, the Towers staff will no longer remove or clean up mold resulting from the use of custom covers. Second, we have been advised by the manufacturer of the FCUs that the use of custom covers restricts airflow and may void the warranty on units where they are used. Shortly we will circulate a waiver for those of you who still wish to use custom convector covers. It will acknowledge the above and make you solely responsible for resulting mold removal or problems where use of the cover has voided the warranty, including the cost of mold remediation and/or repairs to, or replacement of, damaged FCUs. We are sure you agree that neighbors should not be financially responsible for the results of a resident going against our advice and causing damage. Sorry, but it is a distasteful topic all around.

As I write this in mid-February, the situation regarding One Dock Tower is rather fluid. We were not successful with our appeal at the Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA). That body takes a very narrow look at the project and is not a court of law that can rule on the legal arguments that both sides advanced. We will evaluate different ways of proceeding, all the while bearing in mind the cost of this endeavor both in terms of money and distraction.

On the brighter side of things, as you look through this bulletin, you will find more great Society Hill Towers-wide events than we’ve had before and opportunities for you to take in programs that can enrich your life at Society Hill Towers. And, best of all, it’s only about 110 more days until the pool opens!

Bruce Holberg
President SHTOA
The movie group had a great year. Four of the films it discussed were nominees in at least one category for Academy Awards: *If Beale Street Could Talk*, *Roma*, *Can You Ever Forgive Me?*, and *First Reformed*.

The meetings, attended by 20-30 residents typically, produced spirited discussions, not just about the directing and acting, but about the music, cinematography and how many elements can be combined to produce great films.

The group won’t meet in February, but plans to resume meeting on Thursday, March 28, at 7:30 p.m. in the Community Room.

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On Wednesday, February 20, at 7:30pm in the Community Room there will be a speakers’ series event — Let’s Talk! — Society Hill Towers Speaker Series.

Please join Betty Reynolds, a Towers neighbor, as she talks about how her life as a Philadelphia advertising art director was upended when her husband’s career took them first to Singapore for three years, then on to Tokyo where they lived for seven more years.

Betty’s bafflement with all things Japanese led to her sketching on the streets of Tokyo, filling sketchbook after sketchbook with all of the mysteries around her. Those drawings became the inspiration for five subsequent books on Japanese culture. *Clueless in Tokyo* and its sequel, *Still Clueless in Tokyo* contain paintings of all the weird and wonderful things Betty confronted as a typical tourist in Japan. They have become cult classics.

*Squeamish about Sushi* is a useful and entertaining primer for anyone interested in Japanese cuisine. Her first children’s book, *Tokyo Friends* was inspired by watching children play in a local park, near the International School. In *Japanese Celebrations* Betty wanted to show children the many ways Japanese celebrate the four seasons.

Please note: No preregistration is needed for this free event. Light refreshments will be served.

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We are making plans for holding a Crafters Marketplace in May. Call or email Donna in the Management Office at 215-923-4105 if you’d like to participate.

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On Monday mornings, an exercise group lead by Donna Cotzen meets in the Community Room between 9:30 and 10:30 a.m. The session includes stretching and toning. Light weights are used with a plan to include exercise bands. Bring a mat and light weights. Drop in and try it!
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Sue’s Produce Market is a family business founded 1976.
Dining Club at Buc Chon

Hot, New, and Around the Block

With the Christmas season beginning at Thanksgiving (at retail around Halloween), many of us in the Society Hill Towers Dining Club needed a respite from the egg nog and sweets, so December 11th was a perfect time to take a break and visit the brand new Buk Chon at 132 Chestnut. It is a really interesting Korean restaurant. Not a BBQ, but a bit more contemporary and wide ranging. Goodness knows, we were served almost everything on the menu and it uniformly was delicious.

We started with a couple of cold appetizers and a collection of small plates of Korean salads and marinated vegetables called Banchan, the highlight of which was fermented cabbage called kimchi, an ingredient that finds its way into other dishes such as the scallion pancake that we also enjoyed. That led the parade of no fewer than three hot appetizers including a fabulous pork bun. Main dishes were ordered individually, so we again had lots to sample. Notable were the bulgogi, marinated grilled beef (the name means “Fire Meat”), galbi (short ribs) and several types of bibimbop. The latter is rice, vegetables, pepper paste, protein and an egg in a very hot stone bowl. We had a variety of desserts too. Congenial chef/owner Chris Chung took a break from the kitchen and spent some time with us. The food was excellent, and so was the company. The Dining Club has shared the table at sixteen dinners now, and about two-thirds of the guests are “regulars.” That means, though, that a third aren’t. There always are new folks who join the fold, and we welcome them. Keep an eye open for Dinner #17 coming soon!

Thank You, Staff, for Everything You Do!

Many Staff members were recognized for their contributions to maintaining our high standards of living at the Towers during the 2018 Staff Holiday party. Please join in with a few words of thanks when you seem them hard at work on the job.
Affordable Accommodations Are Expanding

Book the Guest Suite

Are friends and family planning to visit our fair City of Philadelphia? Why not book the Guest Suite on the sixth floor of the West Tower? The room sleeps four, with four-star furnishings and a fully functioning kitchen, for only $90 to $100 per night (prices vary according to the day of the week and the date throughout the year). Your guests can rest and relax in complete comfort.

Best of all, they’ll only be minutes away, so you can get the most out of any short visit. For details or to make reservations call Donna in the Management Office at 215-923-4105.

Coming Soon...

This spring we will have a second space for guests, a two-bedroom, one-bath apartment. For more details call Donna at 215-923-4105.

Let’s Talk

Speaker Series Relaunched

The “Let’s Talk” speaker series, which features Towers residents sharing their experiences and expertise, was re-launched with great success on November 15, 2018, when Peter Conn, Executive Director of the Athenaeum of Philadelphia, gave a fascinating presentation about the history and role of libraries. Then, on December 6, Jo Holz, former head of research for Sesame Street, spoke to an enthusiastic group about her recent book on the history of children’s television, *Kids’ TV Grows Up.*

The next “Let’s Talk” presentation is scheduled for Wednesday, February 20, at 7:30 p.m., when Towers resident Betty Reynolds will talk about how her life as an advertising art director was upended when her husband’s career took them to Singapore and then on to Tokyo, where they lived for seven years. See page 2 for more information about this upcoming lecture.

Jo Holz is part of a small committee organizing the programs for “Let’s Talk.” If you’d like to help or if you have suggestions for possible speakers, contact Jo at joholz123@gmail.com.
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Two Great Causes in One Day

Red Cross Blood Drive an Impressive Success

On Tuesday, January 29th, the Society Hill Towers residents and our neighbors displayed their giving community spirit by kicking off 2019 with a Towers “first” — our debut Red Cross Blood Drive. Over 55 donors signed up for appointments, which resulted in **43 pints of whole blood collected**. And of those 43, 27 of them were first-time donors! Most impressive!

From the initial proposal on September 25th, so well-received and roundly supported by the Activities Committee, to the weeks of preparation and day of execution, it was an exciting and gratifying journey. This could not have been accomplished without the contributions and hard work of many enthusiastic champions.

Harriette Mishkin and Terry Conn reinforced our strong relationships with key neighborhood organizations — Penn’s Village and the Society Hill Civic Association — that became our co-sponsors for the event. Terry and Harriette coordinated the release of the drive information with these groups and ensured timely reminders to their members, resulting in robust neighborhood backing and participation.

While the online donation site was logging appointments, our own army of amazing residents raised their hands and volunteered their time to welcome neighbors and new friends to our Community Room on drive day. Harriette Mishkin, Joyce Darrow, Lynne Rubinstein, Pat Malunis, Christine McBrien and Jo Holz brought their own brand of sunshine, greeting each donor with warm smiles and getting them checked in to start the process. After donating, each guest was treated to refreshments before they continued their day — adorned with a “Be nice to me, I gave blood today!” sticker.

Teamwork was widely evident throughout the Towers. Many thanks to Beverly Sherman and Brett Scioli who provided some terrific guidance and lots of help in kicking off the initial interest survey. Additional thanks to Lou Crescenzo and his ace Garage Staff, as well as Elijah Weinberg and his dedicated Housekeeping Team. Major kudos as well to the Towers Security Force who were key in shepherding the Red Cross Team in and out of the Community Room throughout the day. A special thanks to the gracious and invaluable help provided by our own Administrative Team of Annemarie Carraquillo, Donnamarie D’Alicandro and Mary Donohue who displayed bottomless patience with daily interruptions of endless requests.

Using the Blood Drive as a convenient drop off site, a last-minute appeal for non-perishables for the Federal Employees at the Coast Guard Station on Columbus Boulevard went out and resulted in an overwhelming response! Your generosity resulted in two overflowing shopping carts of donations that were delivered the next day to grateful, smiling young men and women! Two great causes all in one day!

In summary, this squad of amazing people has much to be proud of! Please take a bow for what you have accomplished. As a result of this impressive outcome, the Towers is scheduled for our next drive, set for May 9th — the Thursday before Mother’s Day! Save the date!
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Reminders for Residents

- Schedule large deliveries and pickups with the Management Office, including drop-off and pickup of supplies belonging to caterers and contractors.
- Schedule the moving in and out of large household items with the Management Office. If you can’t fit it into a shopping cart, call to reserve a freight elevator.
- Schedule all moves well in advance with the Management Office.
- Contractors must complete paperwork (along with the unit owner) and submit insurance documents. Once approved, contracting jobs must be scheduled with the Management Office prior to starting work.

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- 27B West
- 22AH West
- 5B North
- 19A North
- 4G North
- 31C West
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