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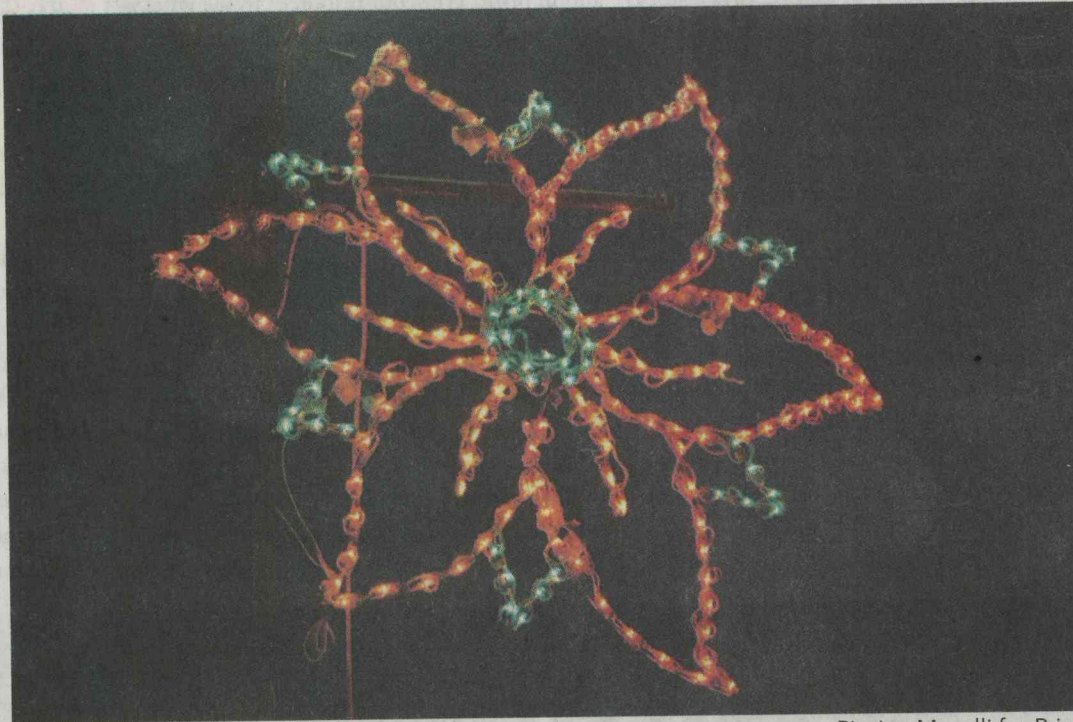
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Pierina Morelli for Print

Poinsettias in lights line Reynolds Street in Point Breeze. They were the visual focus of Point Breeze Light Up Night on Saturday, Dec. 5.

Point Breeze Light Up Night brings hundreds out to celebrate Bonding with neighbors is the real draw of the annual holiday event

By Ann Belser

"Beautiful December evening" may sound oxymoronic, but it perfectly describes Saturday night when hundreds of people turned out to the block of Reynolds Street between Gettysburg and Hastings streets in Point Breeze to celebrate Pittsburgh's smallest light up night.

With temperatures in the mid-40s it was chilly enough to enjoy standing next to the chiminea at one end of the street or the kettle fire at the other while listening to Christmas Carols sung by three singers who call themselves Friends in Harmony.

There were none of the traffic jams, impenetrable crowds or fireworks that mark Downtown's Light Up Night. And there wasn't the ice storm that marred a previous Point Breeze

Light Up Night.

Instead, at the appointed hour -- which was when Larry Gerson of the Point Breeze Organization decided the time was right -- City Councilman Dan Gilman, with the help of the crowd, counted down to give Gerson the cue to plug the lights in. Suddenly the street lights were ablaze with renditions of poinsettias. Then the lights went out, so Gerson plugged them in again and this time they stayed lit.

There were cheers all around.

This low-tech light up night brought out parents, children and dogs who had been dressed up by their owners.

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Photo courtesy of LAGI

At the Art + Energy Summer Camp in Homewood, students helped to design art that now generates power for the Homewood Renaissance Community Center.

Land Art Generator Initiative recognized for work from Homewood to Copenhagen

By Elizabeth Lepro

Elizabeth Monoian and Robert Ferry's idea for

people from all ages and fields of study.

From a park in New York City to a shipyard

500 gather around East End Cooperative Ministry in a candlelight vigil dedicated to peace

By Danielle Levsky

Two days after the most recent mass shooting in the United States, roughly 500 people, tired of the violence, gathered along Station Street in the East End on the evening of Dec. 4 and called for overall peace.

Called "Let Peace Shine," the hundreds huddled together with their candles lit. Some of them stood near the East End's Cooperative Ministry's headquarters, an East Liberty organization that provides programs for homeless adults and at-risk youth through its member congregations.

They closed their eyes, heads facing down towards the flickering lights in their hands. Standing side by side in the 33 degree air, parents shushed their children, smiling at the other friends and activists while relighting candles and drawing closer together. Participants were offered purple ribbons to wear as a symbol of peace. Children and adults alike helped light each other's candles, cupping their hands around flickering flames.

Two weeks ago, EECM Executive Director



Danielle Levsky for Print

Shambhala Center member Susan Peak stayed after the official vigil was over in East Liberty on Friday, Dec. 4, to continue to spend time with other marchers.

Michael J. Mingrone drafted the idea for the vigil to respond to the increasing violence experienced locally and globally. Clergy leaders from various faiths, including Judaism, Islam, Christianity and Buddhism, led a brief prayer followed by a silent reflection.

"The vision of this event is peace," the Rev Kellie Wild, a program director at EECM said "It's not to talk about the Bible but to talk about peace in your home, neighborhood, nation and world."

Though Mingrone planned the vigil two weeks ago, the event came two days after the San Bernardino, Calif., shootings at a center for people with developmental disabilities, and eight days after a Muslim taxi driver was shot in Hazelwood in what has been described as a hate crime. This year alone, the East End has had 150 recorded incidents of aggravated and simple assault according to data from the Pittsburgh

Point Breeze Light Up Night brings hundreds out to celebrate

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Children, such as Ellie Smith, 7, decorated paper snowflakes at the craft table.

Her mother, Becky Smith, said the family moved to Point Breeze just six months ago and they love the small-town feel of the city neighborhood. She said they walk everywhere. Ellie walks to school at St. Bede School. They walk to Frick Park Market and walked to light up night, as did most of the other attendees, eliminating the traffic problem.

"You run into the same people everywhere you go," Becky Smith said.

Russ and Mary Brignano of Point Breeze stumbled upon light up night after having dinner at Point Brugge Cafe and said they were happy they did because they ran into a neighbor whom they had not seen in months.

Pino's Contemporary Italian Restaurant provided spiced pumpkin soup, served by Katrina and Angelina Mico, 16 and 14 respectively, and Italian fried doughnuts. Make Your Mark Artspace and Coffeehouse was pouring hot chocolate.

But the real draw for the event was the neighbors, who were chatting all along the block, admiring kids and dogs.

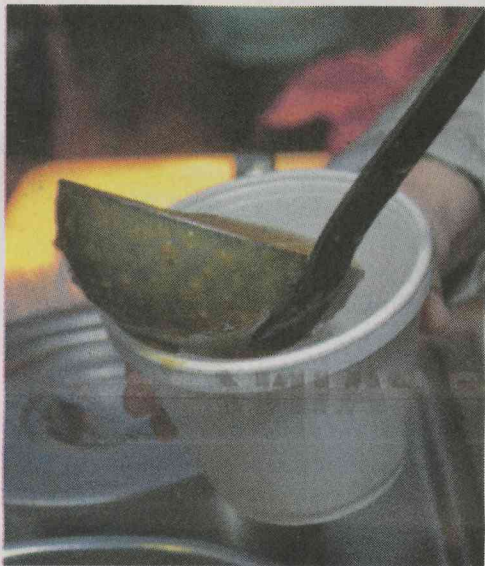
After the lights were lit, three judges declared that the winner of the Best Dressed Dog Contest was Jake, a year and a half old multi-poo, owned by Kathy Connor of Forest Hills. Jake, who is all white, was wearing a scarf, a black top hat and black buttons reminiscent of a flurry snowman.

By the time the judging began, however, many of the nattily attired canines had already gone home for a nap.



Ella Regan-Organist, left, and Lorelei Myers decorated paper snowflakes at the craft table during Point Breeze Light Up Night.

Photos by Pierina Morelli for Print



Pino's Contemporary Italian Restaurant provided spiced pumpkin soup to help keep attendees warm at light up night.



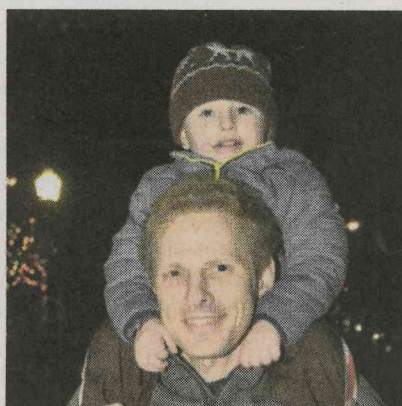
Peter Jhon brought his 5-year-old son James and 2-year-old daughter Romy to Point Breeze Light Up Night on Reynolds Street.



Laura McCann, left, and Caley Nunnally showed off Dyson as Olaf from "Frozen" and Tully with a Christmas tree hat and sweater. They left before the Best Dressed Dog Contest.



Friends in Harmony (from left) Marty Sivitz, Ceinwen King-Smith and Sherry Goldman perform at Point Breeze Light Up Night.



Laird Cooper gives his son Arlo, 5 years old, a boost at Point Breeze Light Up Night.