

District 7 News

By Anthony DiFlorio III

Petunias at Rizzo Rink



You know when spring is in the air by the welcome annual appearance of the Rizzo Rink petunias. It has been a yearly event for Recreation Leader III Anthony Tomassetti and his RSI's to plant the colorful flowers in the raised bed facing Front Street after Mother's Day. Tony is proud to receive compliments on the display from runners, dog-walkers and riders waiting for the Route 64 bus in front of the rink.

Junior Farmers Program at Rizzo and Shot Tower



The Rizzo/Shot Tower cluster joined forces to host the [Junior Farmers program](#). Garden Educator Clay paid weekly visits to the Rizzo Rink After School Program where he taught junior farmer Qualo T. Gee about plants and gardening. After imbedding seeds in the Rizzo planter, Qualo was amazed to see them sprout in just a week. Then, with the able assistance of the maintenance division, Clay and Qualo planted seeds for various flowers and vegetables in the newly constructed raised beds at the Shot Tower Playground. In just a few weeks, Qualo was harvesting a modest crop of radishes. Clay will be back during summer camp to show the campers how to harvest and prepare vegetables for nutritious meals. If your facility wants to participate in the Junior Farmers program, just email FarmPhilly@phila.gov.

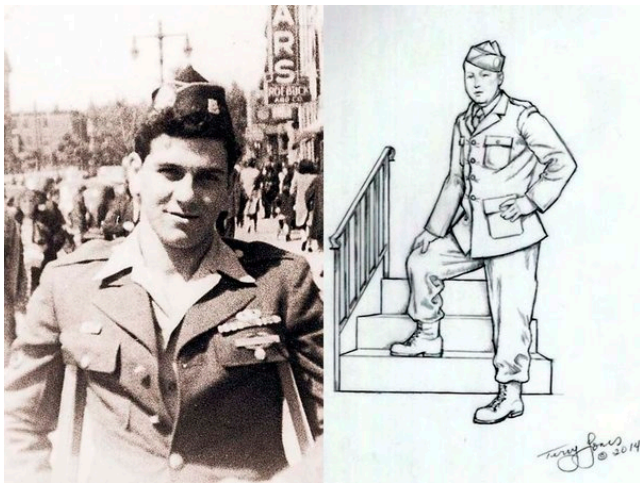
Memorial at Herron Sprayground



Those black metal poles that you see in the Herron Sprayground (part of the Rizzo Cluster in district 7) at 2nd and Reed Street in South Philadelphia are part of the new memorial to honor the late “Band of Brothers” WWII hero Babe Heffron. Babe was born and raised in the Pennsport neighborhood. The statue will be crafted by Terry Jones, who is one of the nation’s foremost historical sculptors. “Babe is a 20-year-old soldier in uniform and getting ready

to ship out,” said Jones, who is working on the figure – standing 5-foot-7 – at his Newtown Square studio. “This could be his last time at home.”

“He’s standing with one foot on South Philly steps with a wrought-iron railing, and he’s looking out at the viewer,” said Jones. “People will be able to walk up to him and put their arm around him.”



Herron resident Dan Stevenson says, “It will take us back in time to see Babe standing on a marble stoop with his duffle bag, preparing to ship out or returning from war with his Army brethren.” He also wants people to always remember Heffron and the sacrifice he made for our country. “Mr. Heffron is a true American Hero, and we want people to see how proud this neighborhood is of him.”

The Heffron statue will be dedicated September 17 at Second and Reed Streets. The bronze will house a heart-shaped vessel in the

chest with some of Heffron's ashen remains. Heffron, who died in 2013 at age 90, will continue to have a presence in his old neighborhood. With his remains inside the statue, "his heart will always be in South Philadelphia," said sculptor Jones.