



Tom Ferrick Jr.

'Go-to guys' are going, going, gone

When he learned last week that Bill Rouse had died of cancer, a dismayed Gov. Rendell wondered out loud: "Who will I go to now?"

It's a good question. Are there any "go-to guys" left in Philadelphia and vicinity?

Let me define what I am talking about: A go-to guy is a person (it doesn't even have to be a guy) you turn to when something absolutely, positively must get done and done right.

In Rouse's case, he specialized in grand civic projects — the Convention Center, the Kimmel Center, his very own Liberty Place, to name three.

Go-to guys don't have to be politically independent, but it helps. They don't have to be accomplished in some field, but that helps, too.

They must be the kind of person (as Rouse was) who is honest, trustworthy, intelligent, creative, and possessed of both a strong will and a strong ego. In short, a leader.

Most important of all, while they don't have to be saints, they must be motivated not by self-interest but by communal interests. At their core, they must be altruistic.

Go-to guys don't have to be pleasant people. Rouse, for instance, had hard edges. So did Nicholas Biddle, a go-to guy of 19th-century Philadelphia.

With that definition in mind, I started to call around and ask: Can you name a go-to guy to replace Rouse?

Question marks

Rendell had already gone on record as saying he was stumped. So were the rest of the folks I talked to on Thursday and Friday.

Some names did surface, but more as questions than answers: uber-lawyer and ex-Rendell aide David L. Cohen? Brian Roberts of Comcast? Developer Ron Rubin? Jim Nevels of the School Reform Commission?

After about a half-dozen calls, I realized I wouldn't come up with a decent list. So, I shed that worthless notion and shifted gears.

My question became: Why don't we have another go-to guy in sight?

Three reasons kept coming up again and again:

One. Philadelphia doesn't have the civic leadership pool it once had.

We have very few companies headquartered here. Most executives aren't CEOs or owners of their own businesses, they are regional vice presidents. They don't have the ties or the time to take on these projects.

As one person I talked to put it: "The banks are gone. The phone company is gone. The utilities are gone. The railroads are gone. We don't have the corporate community we once had."

That's not to say a go-to guy must be a businessperson (think of the Rev. Leon Sullivan). But businesspeople tend to have the connections and political independence needed.

Too many players

Two. Who has the time? Benjamin Franklin, the city's first and greatest go-to guy, retired from his printing business at age 43 to devote himself to public service.

That was then, this is now. People would rather write a check than attend a meeting.

The demands of modern business are consuming. Take two local mahoffs: Roberts of Comcast and John Brennan, chairman of the Vanguard Group.

They have their favorite causes and charities. But they have stockholders to answer to, and board of directors to please. Could they justify taking, say, one week out of every four to oversee a civic project? "They have their own knitting to tend to," was the way one person put it.

Three. Philadelphia is a city of players.

Players don't donate their time, they invest their time. Sit on a board? Sure, if it helps my business in some way — develops contacts; polishes the old resume, brings in clients.

I recall a conversation I had with the head of a local nonprofit. He was having trouble recruiting people to give money and sit on his board.

Why? Because they didn't think it had a high enough "yield."

In this transactional world, altruism is an unaffordable luxury; self-interest trumps communal interests.

That's one reason why the passing of Bill Rouse elicited such dismay. He may have been the last of a breed.

Tom Ferrick's column runs Sunday, Wednesday and Friday. Contact him at 215-854-2714 or tferrick@phillynews.com.

The many spins on skate park

Proposals for other sites have inched along since the closing of LOVE Park to skateboarders. It's now a campaign issue.

By Stephan Salisbury
INQUIRER STAFF WRITER

It's been a year since the city shut down one of the world's best-known public skateboarding venues, LOVE Park — drawing anguished cries from skaters, their supporters, and lovers of urban grit and energy everywhere. Despite well-publicized promises by

Mayor Street to offset the loss of LOVE Park with a dedicated skateboard park, plans for such a site have barely advanced beyond the early planning stage — and no public funds are available for construction anyway.

A site along the Schuylkill behind the Art Museum has been identified by the city Planning Commission as a

likely park area, but the Fairmount Park Commission has not formally reviewed proposals or given approvals. And the president of the park commission is having second thoughts about the river site.

While the park-planning process has been inching along, Councilman Michael A. Nutter has introduced legislation in City Council that calls for a more severe crackdown on skaters. The bill, which increases fines for illegal skating from \$25 to \$75, also ex-

tends antiskating bans to include inline skating and bicycling as well. The bill specifically bars such activities from large plazas in Center City.

But not all has been hostility and complacency in the city's skateboard world.

A movement has emerged to rescind the skating ban at LOVE Park. Advocates are arguing that skateboarding is a "historic activity" at LOVE Park, officially known as JFK. See **SKATE** on B4

"This school really looked like a fortress before we started."

Josey Stamm
Founder of NetworkArts



Josey Stamm, in her floppy hat, works on the mosaic at George Pepper Middle School in Southwest Philadelphia. She has helped 15,000 students create 96 mosaics on the walls of schools and other public buildings across the region.

ERIC MENCHER / Inquirer Staff Photographer

A lesson on nature, applied piece by piece



Michael Vitez
People

Shirley Williams, 14, spreads cement on her tiles as if she's spreading peanut butter on a cracker.

She uses a Popsicle stick to repeatedly pat and shape the cement on her tiles. She wants it neat and even. Shawn Ivery, 13, perhaps because he is a boy and that's the way boys are, just slaps the cement on the tile in a manner free-form and carefree.

Leanda Tun, 14, prefers to dollop. She digs her Popsicle stick into the cement and, with a flip of the wrist, drops a dollop on the back of a tile. And, of course, the application of the tile to the wall is equally individual. Some students smash a tile hard against the wall, cement oozing out like the guts of a much-melted ice cream sandwich squeezed together in the lunchroom.

Others prefer simply to press the tile against the building, give it a gentle tap, and let the cement neatly and quietly do its job out of view.

Josey Stamm, 53, does it differently from all the children.

Josey dabs. Standing outside George Pepper Middle School in



Two students add tiles to the school wall. Before tackling the mosaic, students visited a wildlife refuge, the subject of the mural, and learned about its animals and plants.

Southwest Philadelphia on Thursday, in her floppy hat, with her fingers and sweatshirt covered with dried cement, Josey took a tile in one hand, dabbed it right into the cement puddled on her red plastic plate, and

See **MOSAIC** on B4

Supremo is the third store to try the site. Its first day drew crowds.

N. Phila. grocery opens big

By Chris Gray
INQUIRER STAFF WRITER

Shopping-cart gridlock hit the new Supremo Food Market in the Nicetown-Tioga neighborhood yesterday, 45 minutes into its grand opening.

Throughout the produce section, some patrons stuffed plastic bags with plantains and collard greens while other customers stood six-deep at the deli counter. As the back aisle of the store became impassable with carts, mothers sent children darting through the crowds to retrieve packages of ground beef and bags of turkey necks.

At the front of the store, as the harried cashiers frantically tried to reduce the lines snaking through the



APRIL SAUL / Inquirer Staff Photographer

Most supermarket chains avoid inner-city sites, but Supremo opened a store yesterday on North Broad Street. Shirley Miles (right) waited to check out.

aisles, the Rev. James S. Hall of Triumph Baptist Church watched the chaos unfold and smiled.

"This is the kind of problem we'd like to have here every weekend,"

Hall said.

To do so, the store must confront the ghosts of supermarkets past. The Supremo is the third grocery to try

See **GROCERY** on B4

Pressure builds for decision on slots

The legislature must act on the proposal by June 30, spurring hopes for a rushed approval or a swift death.

By Amy Worden
INQUIRER HARRISBURG BUREAU

HARRISBURG — With the clock ticking toward summer recess, the legislature returns tomorrow facing growing pressure to act on a controversial proposal to allow slot machines at racetracks.

Gambling supporters are betting heavily on swift passage, while opponents are hopeful an array of fresh obstacles will kill the bill before the General Assembly breaks for the summer on June 30.

A Senate vote on the primary slots bill, sponsored by Bucks County Republican Robert "Tommy" Tomlinson, was blocked in mid-May.

Tomlinson could not generate enough support for the bill among Republicans, so the 21 Senate Democrats — in a rare twist in the Republican-led chamber — found themselves in control of the bill. The Democrats wanted more time to study it and propose amendments.

But roadblocks have emerged — notably a proposal to auction slots licenses and the sudden appearance of an Oklahoma Indian tribe that claimed rights to land near Easton and the right to build a casino in Pennsylvania.

Then the state received a federal windfall of \$900 million, as part of the tax-cut legislation signed by President Bush, enough some say to eliminate the need for gambling revenues to fill a budget deficit. "The proposal's weight is starting to tip it," said Tom Grey, executive director of the National Coalition Against Legalized Gambling, who has been campaigning against the slots proposal in Pennsylvania.

Grey said the momentum building in legislatures nationwide was against gambling. In neighboring Maryland, Gov. See **SLOTS** on B7

Rendell expects the Senate Democrats to devise a slots bill that will pass.

Aid windfall may bypass N.J. counties

It's unclear how Pa. will use the homeland security funds.

By Jennifer Lin
INQUIRER STAFF WRITER

Last month, the federal government awarded the Philadelphia region a windfall of \$14.2 million in new money for homeland security, tripling the pool for local grants.

Now comes the tricky part: Define Philadelphia region.

The money from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security will pass to Pennsylvania, which will control how it is spent.

But whether Pennsylvania will share any of that money with South Jersey is unclear.

David Sanko, director of the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA), said the homeland See **SECURITY** on B4

On park for skateboarders, the many spins

SKATE from B1

Plaza.

And now the issue has entered the mayoral campaign, with Republican candidate Sam Katz calling for an end to the skateboarding ban at the park.

"To see the issue come to light like this — it's amazing," said Brian Nugent, a skateboarder and designer who has been fighting the LOVE Park ban for more than a year. "This is huge. It's as big as we always said it was."

Maxine Griffith, executive director of the city Planning Commission, said that once the Schuylkill site had been identified last summer, Logan Square residents raised objections. Meetings were held to address concerns, largely centering on the safety of pedestrians and skaters.

Donna Ferrari, president of the Logan Square Neighborhood Association, said the Plan-

ning Commission "did a remarkable job of providing information" about the proposed site.

"They did such a good job, we voted unanimously to support the park," Ferrari said.

Once community fears were allayed, a conceptual design of the park, which would be perhaps twice as large as LOVE Park, was worked out.

"The city is committed to funding the next step of the design," Griffith said. [That figure would be roughly \$30,000, skateboarders said.]

In July, the Planning Commission will bring in a professional skateboard-park designer "to sit down with all the parties" and come up with essential design elements, Griffith said.

"I won't say the devil — God is in the details every step of the way," she said. "Fairmount Park, the Recreation Department, all have to be comfortable."

Not to mention skateboarders and residents.

"Skateboarders want a world-class park and why do a park in Center City unless it's a great one?" Griffith said.

That said, Griffith declined to put a price tag on a park.

"It's all predicated on the skateboard community being able to raise the funds," Griffith said.

Skateboarders have begun organizing toward that end, they said. Whether they could raise the amounts needed — various estimates have ranged from \$500,000 to \$2,000,000 — remains to be seen.

Meanwhile, the Fairmount Park Commission has received details of the riverside park, but has not taken action. Last week, Robert N.C. Nix III, president of the commission, said he was not sure the Schuylkill site was the best choice.

"We haven't moved on it, but we're looking at two sites," Nix said. The second site is Franklin Square, Sixth and Race Streets. Nix declined to elaborate.

Nutter, who introduced the

antiskating bill in Council last week, said he supported construction of a skateboard park in Center City. His opposition to skaters centered on the property damage they allegedly cause.

The bill, which bans skating, in-line skating and biking in large private city plazas, is supported by owners and managers of Center City's biggest buildings — Commerce Square, the Bell Atlantic tower, 11 Penn Center, and other powerful real estate interests.

"I'm not against skateboarding," Nutter said. "I'm against property destruction."

That line of argument was dismissed as "hokey" by former city planning chief Edmund Bacon, 93, who conceived JFK Plaza and its columnar fountain. Bacon has emerged as a vocal skateboarding supporter. He attended a LOVE Park news conference Friday in which Katz called for an end to the skate ban

there.

Standing in the park (before falling off a skateboard in a game — and illegal — effort to provide a photo op), Katz said that lifting the skating ban would enliven the park and send a positive message to young people. He also noted that constructing skate parks and recreation facilities offered opportunities for public-private partnerships.

Christine Ottaw, a spokeswoman for Street, said there were no plans to reopen LOVE Park to skaters. The mayor, she said, remained committed to building a skating park in Center City.

Katz said property damage supposedly caused by skating could be addressed with proper engineering.

But Bacon dismissed with contempt the claim that skating causes any appreciable damage.

"It's a cooked-up issue, a big

lie," Bacon said. "How in heck could a young person with a little board and [small] wheels damage a granite bench?"

Banning skaters, he said, treats young people "as criminals" and slams the city's door in their faces.

That view also underlines the position of the Independence Hall Association, an organization normally focused on issues related to the historic district and Independence National Historical Park. But the association has decided that skateboarding is "historic" in LOVE Park. It wants to bring it back.

"People in the city don't realize that the reach of LOVE Park as an icon of skateboarding and the city of Philadelphia is global," said Douglas Heller, a member of the association's board, whose son is working on a book with Bacon.

"To the youth of America," Heller said, "LOVE Park is a more resonant icon than the Liberty Bell."

A site along the Schuylkill has been identified by the Planning Commission. But no plans have been reviewed.

Skateboarders have begun organizing to raise funds — \$500,000 to \$2,000,000 — for a new venue.

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Piecing together a nature lesson to create artwork

MOSAIC from B1

then stuck it on the wall.

"I don't allow the children to dab," Josey said. "I don't trust them dabbing. I'm afraid they won't get enough cement on the tile."

Josey trusts the children to do everything else. In 10 years, she has helped 15,000 area students place millions of tiles. She has helped create 96 giant, glorious and gorgeous mosaics on the walls of schools, community centers, and other drab public buildings across the region.

"This school really looked like a fortress before we started," Josey said. "The idea that kids can come to school in the morning and see this burst of color — it has to be uplifting."

But these mosaics — up to 100 feet across, and 10 feet high — are just the end product, "the artifact," as Josey says.

The transformation of the children is even more dramatic.

At the Pepper school, for instance, the subject of the mosaic is the John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge at Tinicum, a 1,000-acre freshwater wetland just three-tenths of a mile from the school.

Many children in the school didn't know it was there. Few

had ever been there. Josey, as she does with every mosaic, first wrote a curriculum. Then she took students to Tinicum on a field trip.

"They saw snapping turtles, cormorants and barn swallows," said Kathryn Haywood, a science teacher at Pepper who worked closely with Josey. "We had so many kids, we weren't silent. But the diversity was so great. We saw so many things."

Each eighth grader did a report on an animal or plant found at Tinicum and drew pictures. She used their reports and artwork as the basis for drawing the mosaic — which the students then completed with tiles.

Students also molded clay models of more than 100 birds and other animals. Josey fired them in the two kilns in the basement of her Wyncote home, and most of them are now cemented into the mosaic.

The children studied bird migration, the role of wetlands, and how wetlands are disappearing.

Now they brim with knowledge and pride.

"Did you know that most birds migrate at night because the winds are stronger?" asked Shawn Ivory.

"I want to be a zoologist," said



ERIC MENCHER / Inquirer Staff Photographer

"The goal is to get kids to love nature and be advocates for the environment. If you really understand something about nature, you will care for it," says Josey Stamm. Behind her, eighth graders Sheena Simpson (left) and Shirley Williams work on the mural at George Pepper Middle School.

Cydney Randall, 14.

"I will come back to this wall," said Leanda Tun, "and bring my kids."

Every mosaic has a theme — often environmental — and an educational purpose.

"The goal is to get kids to love nature and be advocates for the environment," said Josey. "If you really understand something about nature, you will care for it."

Josey came to her life's work gradually. She majored in geology in college, got a law degree at Temple, and, six years later, went back to school at the Philadelphia College of Art.

About 10 years ago, working in community arts, she realized that mosaics were a wonderful, hands-on education tool — a way to teach children and create something beautiful and lasting.

Her organization is called NetworkArts. Most of her projects today cost about \$15,000 and are funded with corporate grants. PNC Bank, for instance, underwrote the project at Pepper, and, in the process, qualified for a Pennsylvania Educational Improvement Tax Credit of 75 percent.

NetworkArts now has a staff of four — including Josey's husband, Earl.

Earl and Josey met in law school. He was a Philadelphia lawyer for 25 years — until 2000, when his car was hit late one night by a street sweeper as he was driving to visit his parents. He suffered 11 broken bones, including a broken skull.

Josey and Earl have long had a private way of expressing affection. They lock their pinky

fingers together. When Earl first opened his eyes after the accident, at 4 a.m. in Abington Hospital, Josey was there. She reached out her pinky, and he reached back. She knew he'd be OK.

Earl decided after the accident to join NetworkArts, and his skills complement his wife's. He has no artistic talent, for instance, but is good at climbing a ladder and reaching the highest spots on the mosaics.

Josey and Earl are now working seven days a week finishing three projects, including the one at Pepper, and they have a waiting list.

"I've never been happier," said Josey.

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N. Phila. market opens to big crowd

GROCERY from B1

its hand at the location on Broad Street and Wingohocking Avenue since 1998, when the church's community development corporation bought the site.

The original purchase, Hall said, was made to give neighborhood residents a convenient alternative to stores outside the area. For too long, supermarket chains have eschewed urban locations, forcing lower-income and elderly shoppers to rely on public transportation or family members to buy their groceries, he said.

"After saving souls, we have to deal with the total man," Hall said.

The site's first two incarnations, both Thriftway supermarkets, had promising beginnings. But as clean floors turned dingy and bargain prices rose, the convenience of the store's location wasn't enough to keep the customers coming, Hall said.

Eddie Trujillo, president of Supremo, promises his store will be different. The Plainfield, N.J., chain of six stores had been looking for a Philadelphia site.

"If we give them a clean store, a great product, and a great price, they will shop here," Trujillo said. In particular, the store's offerings have been geared toward its African American and Hispanic clientele, Trujillo said.

The church, which has invested \$6.5 million in developing the North Philadelphia store, will primarily help Supremo with public relations, Hall said. Besides promoting the store from the pulpit to his 5,000-member congregation, Hall has approached local pastors and held a private tour for community leaders on Friday.

"I'm very optimistic, but I have to have faith," Hall said.

So do the store's potential customers, who stood in a block-long line yesterday waiting for the doors to open. Opening-day sales, plus a Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program license that provides food vouchers to low-income families, added to the store's attractiveness.

After the Thriftway closed, Nicetown resident Loretta Butler was forced to take SEPTA or a taxi to get her groceries. Now the 50-year-old can walk four blocks to find what she needs.

"This was long overdue," she said.

Most patrons left satisfied, albeit a little shell-shocked by the crowds.

"I've been praying for another store to come into the area," Karen Crippen said, as she wheeled a full personal cart out of the store toward her home. "And these prices are good for the next two weeks!"

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Security windfall may bypass South Jersey

SECURITY from B1

security office has not announced its final rules and guidelines for awarding urban grants. And until it does, he said he can't say how the money will be divided up.

"I've been told different things on different days, and I'm not willing to guess anymore," Sanko said.

He said the Pennsylvania suburbs of Philadelphia are guaranteed a slice of the funding.

And South Jersey? "We need to see the guidelines," Sanko said.

Emergency planners in South Jersey are miffed by the possibility of a Pennsylvania bias to the Philadelphia grant. The counties of Burlington, Camden, Gloucester and Salem account for a quarter of the population in the nine-county metropolitan region.

"We're only a nine-iron and driver shot away from South Philly," said Thomas Butts, the emergency management coordinator for Gloucester County, using a golf analogy. "We're going to be impacted if anything happens in the city."

For New Jersey planners who are paid to think through worst-case scenarios, the biggest fear is a terrorist incident in Center City that sends thousands fleeing. To where? New Jersey.

"We'll be stuck sheltering a quarter of a million people if they come over here," Butts said.

There is more at stake here than regional pride.

Since 9/11, local communities

have been saddled with unexpected costs relating to emergency preparedness. Community police, fire and emergency medical units, as well as emergency management coordinators, have a mandate to prepare for new types of terrorism-related disasters — but not necessarily the funds to do so.

The emergency grant for Philadelphia is not the only federal money going to Pennsylvania or New Jersey for homeland security. But it's an extra dollop of millions that will help to jumpstart efforts to improve the region's ability to manage terrorism disasters, local officials say.

For this year, New Jersey will receive a total of \$63 million from the homeland security department, while Pennsylvania will get \$89 million, including the money allotted for Philadelphia.

In addition, both states, along with Delaware, will share in additional federal funds of \$6.4 million for port facilities along the Delaware River.

Details for the port grants are still being worked out. But the homeland security department said the money could be used to cover costs stemming from the Code Orange alert during the war in Iraq, as well as for security systems, equipment, training and planning. In other targeted funding, the homeland security department recently earmarked \$3.4 million for SEPTA.

James Whitaker, a SEPTA spokesman, said the transit au-

U.S. Department of Homeland Security Emergency Grants for Major Cities

Rank	Amount of grant
1. New York	\$125 million
2. Washington	42.4 million
3. Chicago	30 million
4. Houston	23.8 million
5. Los Angeles	18.9 million
6. San Francisco	18.6 million
7. Seattle	18.2 million
8. Boston	16.7 million
9. Denver	15.6 million
10. Philadelphia	14.2 million

The Philadelphia Inquirer

thority would use the funds to improve the communication system for transit police, as well as to acquire equipment for detecting chemical or biological weapons.

Philadelphia was one of 30 cities to receive special funding last month.

"We're happy to see the spigot coming on," said Philip R. Goldsmith, Philadelphia's managing director.

Goldsmith said he doesn't begrudge any of the surrounding counties getting part of the urban grant — just so long as the city gets a bigger share.

"If you look at the disproportionate number of potential targets in the city and our population density, they add to what we think our needs are," Goldsmith said.

The Southeastern Pennsylvania

Counter-Terrorism Task Force is expected to play a lead role in identifying projects for funding. The four-year-old group, which works with PEMA, includes officials from Philadelphia and the counties of Bucks, Montgomery, Chester and Delaware.

Since 9/11, emergency planners from South Jersey have been in task force meetings.

"We need this money too," said Roger Shatzkin, a spokesman for the counterterrorism unit in the New Jersey Attorney General's Office. "Security and counterterrorism have to be looked at regionally."

In the city and suburbs, one of the most urgent issues is paying for police protection during periods of heightened alert for homeland security.

Goldsmith said Philadelphia spent about \$1.5 million in emergency funds during the Iraq war, with most covering overtime for the 7,000-person police force.

Smaller suburban police forces also are stretched.

"Right now we have overtime details that we're funding out of our own municipal budgets," said Chris Ferrari, president of the Camden County Police Chiefs Association.

John D. Dougherty Jr., chairman of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Counter-Terrorism Task Force, said the group has not had a chance to discuss how it may want to spend the extra funding for Philadelphia.

But one of its priorities is assembling and equipping rapid response teams of 100 emergency workers for each county. The teams could be deployed in any part of the region in the event of a terrorist incident.

He said the task force also sees a need for more heavy rescue equipment in the suburbs to handle emergencies such as building collapses. It also wants to build up a surveillance system for hospitals to monitor for illnesses linked to biological or chemical weapons. Before the news about the new funding for Philadelphia, the task force only expected to have \$3.5 million for homeland security spending in this region, he said.

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