

Fall is here. Denial is useless. For the next three months we are easily distracted by football games, hot cocoa, cuddly sweaters, fireplaces, spicy apple cider, and preparations for Thanksgiving and Christmas. October is the beginning of a three month holiday extravaganza making it easier to overlook the chill in the air, the cold rain and the first snow flurries. This month begins with Eid al-Fitr marking the end of Ramadan, the Islamic holy month of fasting. A week later is the most solemn of the Jewish holidays, Yom Kippur. Columbus Day heralds the midmonth, and we end with Halloween. What a cultural swing!

That seems appropriate for a month that begins warm and has been known to end with the first flurries of snow. October charms us with her colors and lures us with her scents. The vibrant colors of summer pale to the deep warm earth-tones of fall - bronze, gold, deep orange and burgundy red. The air is fragrant with the scent of burning firewood instead of summer blooms. An almost primal urge to make and consume hot vegetable soup, beef stew or chicken with dumplings emerges in even the healthy salad crowd. Thank goodness for the colors of October. We will need a reason to put on a jacket and leave the warmth of our cozy den to take a walk!

- The Editor

GEEKADROME

534 Brookline Blvd.
Pittsburgh, PA 15226
Website: geekadrome.livejournal.com

Hours: Mon-Sat 11AM to 11PM
Sunday: 12PM to 8PM
Phone: 412-344-2494

"If someone calls you a "geek," and you're offended, then you aren't a geek," explains **Mitchell Holt**, co-owner of **Geekadrome** with **Paul Drabick**. Today being a geek is a badge of honor, and the **Geekadrome** is where geeks gather to network, socialize and play games. If you are thinking computer games, think again. There's not a computer in sight. Think Battleship and Clue for the new millennium. Gamers actually talk to each other at the **Geekadrome**.

One of the games you will find in progress at the **Geekadrome** is Magic the Gathering. Magic has been around for 15 years. Tournaments are held every Friday with entrants ranging in age from 10 to 40. Recently Mitchell realized that Paul was the player who eliminated him from a Magic tournament seven years ago.

As with any group the amount of violence in a game depends on the players. "We try to keep a PG rating here because of the age of the children," Paul says nodding to a couple of young boys playing nearby.

The walls of **Geekadrome** are lined with games like Lord of the Rings and Warhammer. A boy and his father were perusing the rack of comic books which included Captain America, Spiderman and Fantastic Four. **Geekadrome** carries Geek Monthly, of course, and some Japanese Anime and Manga comics as well.

For anyone who is not part of the Steeler nation, and we recognize that is a difficult concept to grasp, **Geekadrome** is the only hobby shop in the area open on Sunday. When the kids complain that there's nothing to do, suggest that they try playing a game at **Geekadrome**.

-Pamela Grabowski



Left: Mitchell Holt Right: Paul Drabick



Photos by Caria Alencar



The members of the Brookline Chamber of Commerce (BCC) have heard your concerns about the appearance of the Christmas lighting on the Boulevard over the last few years. Several members of the BCC are sprucing up the current wreaths with new large multi-colored lights with the hopes that they last until new Christmas pole decorations are purchased. A fund-raising event will be unveiled shortly to raise money in the community for these new decorations. Three separate ways will be available for you to participate in the eventual purchase, hopefully for the 2010 Christmas season. They are:

- CHRISTMAS MEMORY TREE – Which will be lit with large lights purchased in memory or honor of a loved one. The lights decorating the tree will be available for a \$10.00 donation.
- DONATION CANS – Located inside several businesses on the Boulevard.
- MAIL DONATIONS – Any time between now and the end of the campaign in 2010.

Also located on the Boulevard will be a large poster depicting the North Pole which will indicate the progress of the fund raising event. Names of donors of \$100.00 or more will be noted near the Progress Poster. Additional flyers are available at **A Boss**.

-Linda Boss

South Pittsburgh Development Corp.

The September **Chamber of Commerce** meeting segued into the **SPDC** meeting. The focal point of both meetings was a review of the merger report.

In addition, a motion was made and approved to apply for a \$20,000 grant through the state with **Senator Fontana's** support to help fund holiday lighting on the Boulevard. This grant will **help** fund the holiday lighting. Contributions are still needed.

Amy Fisher is setting up the "brookline-pghPA" group. The site will enable residents to receive the newsletter, as well as updates on community issues, and residents can post their views. More info to come.

Brookline Block Watch

Do you know that Brookline residents have a reputation for not calling 911, just complaining? If you see a crime or know of criminal activity CALL 911. We know you're going to tell us that the police don't show up. **Dottie Grant** visited the new 911 command center and confirmed what we have been telling the residents. The police respond based on the urgency of the call. Your damaged car is not as critical as a shooting, but the police WILL follow up with you. Call 911! You've heard the saying about the squeaky wheel...

Dear Santa...

We know this letter is early, but we want to beat the rush. Santa, we have been really good this year. In fact, the residents tell us we are doing a great job, and the merchants really like our newsletter. So we have a list, Santa.

- We want to extend our distribution to merchants beyond Brookline Boulevard for the convenience of the residents.
- We want to make the merchants happy and accept their advertising.
- We want to grow from four pages to six, maybe eight. The residents and merchants have sent us so many pictures and great ideas for articles.

Santa we are a VERY small staff, but we know we could achieve these goals with some help. If you could send us some volunteers, we would be REALLY grateful. Please don't wait until Christmas; we will gladly accept our present early. You don't have to deliver them either, Santa. Just have them email us at mnp.grabowski@verizon.net or call us at 412-343-2859. Please help us turn **The Brookline** into a stellar publication.



What do you mean you haven't stopped at **Michael Whitlinger Designs** yet? The Mad Bags (above left) are hand sewn, hand crafted—no two are alike. The jewelry (at right) is also hand-crafted. No one else is going to be wearing the same earrings at the party!



Photos by Catia Alencar

BROOKLINE SHOPPER OF THE MONTH IS

TERRI DAVIS

- The Very Small Staff of **The Brookline**



Photos by Michael Grabowski

Above: **John Blumen** beside Lady of the Lake.
Inset above: The illustration Beauty.

John Blumen's illustration, Lady of the Lake greets visitors to his second floor Brookline studio. She is stunning, ethereal and mesmerizing. She is also the image of **John Blumen's** daughter. His two sons and his daughter along with some of their friends have been his models. They dress in costumes **Blumen** has collected over the years and pose for him.

Google Mystical Dragon Magick and you will see a **John Blumen** book cover. A book cover might take him about 80 hours from start to finish. He's been an illustrator for the last 20 years and has had a career in advertising for 34 years. Currently, he is working on illustrations for 72 Tarot Cards for Llewellyn Worldwide.

His studio walls are covered with his collection of fantasy illustrations. He points to two illustrations, "These were done when I was still learning the software." While the two early illustrations lack the fine-line definition of his current work, they reminded this observer of a watercolor painting.

Some of the most interesting pieces in the studio are the objects that his models use or wear like the helmet of Sauron, the Dark Lord from *The Lord of the Rings*. It sits on a display table at the entrance to the studio. Blumen says he always enjoyed fantasy and science fiction as a child, and now his work is enriching the lives of another generation.

-Pamela Grabowski

A Reader Asks

"I have a question about **Madalyn Murray O'Hair**, the deceased atheist who usually is given credit or discredit for removing prayer from American schools. The WQED website [Pittsburghers of the Century: December 1999] asserts **Madalyn Murray O'Hair** was from Brookline. The Wikipedia website (which isn't always 100% accurate) asserts her childhood name was **Madalyn May** and she was from Beechview. Is there an expert who knows the true story of Madalyn? This is all news to me. I always thought she was from Baltimore."

-Don Sayenga, Tucson, AZ

If you can help Don, please contact us. We will print the responses in next month's issue. **We want to hear from you.** If you have questions about Brookline, maybe we can help you get answers. We welcome your comments. Send your questions or comments by email, phone or mail.

Email: mnp.grabowski@verizon.net
Telephone: 412-343-2859

Mail: **The Brookline c/o SPDC, PO Box 9606, Pittsburgh, PA 15226.**

Chamber of Commerce

The Election Committee reported the tally of votes and the following officers were elected for another year: Ken Bucher - President, Patricia Ruby - Vice-President and Lee Herbermann - Treasurer. New Board members are: Amy Fisher, Jack Stanizzo and Michael Whitlinger. The new officer's term runs until September of 2009.

-Bob Beiler

Fall Clean-Up

South Pittsburgh Development Corporation will be joining 80 other Clean Pittsburgh neighborhoods in a fall clean-up of Brookline.

Please join us in helping keep our neighborhood beautiful!

Date, Time and Duration: Saturday, October 11th, starting at 9 AM, finishing at 1 PM

Meeting place: 9:00 AM at 755 Brookline Blvd, rear patio area (home of organizer **Keith Knecht**).

Contact Person: **Keith Knecht** 412-561-4482 home
412-391-6036 work
KEK33@verizon.net

A delicious lunch will be provided at **Antonio's Pizzeria** (across the street from meeting place) afterward as a reward for our hard workers.

If you know of an area in Brookline that needs attention, please let us know!

-Amy Fisher

EVENTS CALENDAR

THIS MONTH

October 3

4th Annual Autumn Car Cruise 5:30 PM-dark at 1400 Brookline Blvd.

October 13

Chamber of Commerce Meeting 6:00 PM at Magistrate Charles McLaughlin's office 736 Brookline Blvd.

October 13

South Pittsburgh Development Corp Meeting 7:00 PM at Magistrate Charles McLaughlin's office 736 Brookline Blvd.

October 14

Brookline Block Watch Meeting 7:00 PM at Magistrate Charles McLaughlin's office 736 Brookline Blvd.

October 25

Halloween Parade on Brookline Blvd. at 2:00 PM

October 27

Brookline Area Community Council will host members of the Pittsburgh School Board at 7:30 PM St Mark's Church Corner of Brookline Blvd. and Glenarm Ave.

\$\$\$ \$30 BROOKLINE BUCKS \$\$\$

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone#: _____

Email: _____

FILL OUT THE ENTRY BLANK.
DROP IN CONTEST BOX AT TAKE TWO

DEADLINE: OCTOBER 12, 2008



South Pittsburgh
Development Corporation
P.O. Box 9606
Pittsburgh, PA 15226

Funding for newsletter by Pennsylvania Department of
Community & Economic Development

ONGOING

JUNE 11—NOVEMBER 12

Seton Center Brookline Flea & Farmer's Market 1900 Pioneer Ave. Wednesdays from 11:00 AM to -6:00 PM

The Brookline by Email

Get **The Brookline** in COLOR! Send your email address to mnp.grabowski@verizon.net. Put "The Brookline" in the subject line. We are rolling out a great new way to receive the email edition of the newsletter in November.



Above: **Michelle Underwood** beside her mother Mickey's red Fiero. Mickey is director at Brookline Recreation Center. Right: **Clint Burton**, Recreation Leader at Brookline Recreation Center beside an eye-catching yellow Barracuda.



Photos by Mickey Underwood

The Brookline by Subscription

Do you know someone who would enjoy a subscription to **The Brookline**?

SPDC Members \$15 a year (12 issues)
Non Members \$30 a year (12 issues)

Send their name and address along with a check or money order payable to "SPDC" to the following address:
South Pittsburgh Development Corporation
P.O. Box 9606

Pittsburgh, PA 15226
Attn: The Brookline

Pick up **The Brookline** at a Boulevard merchant. Look for "**The Brookline Available Here**" sign in the window.

A BRIGHTER CHRISTMAS FOR BROOKLINE BOULEVARD

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MAIL DONATIONS – Any time between now and the end of the campaign in 2010.

Also located on the Boulevard will be a large poster depicting the North Pole which will indicate the progress of the fund raising event. Names of donors of \$100.00 or more will be noted near the Progress Poster.

Please use this portion to mail your donation.

Make check payable to the Brookline Chamber of Commerce and mail to:
P O Box 9610, Pittsburgh, PA 15226

If you choose to remember a loved one with a Memory Tree donation, please indicate the name of the person (s) you want remembered. The cost is \$10.00 per person.

TOTAL MEMORY TREE DONATION \$ _____
TOTAL DONATION \$ _____
TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

Be a part of making the Brookline business district shine brightly in 2010 and beyond!