

# THE BROAD STREET JOURNAL

Messiah College Philadelphia Campus

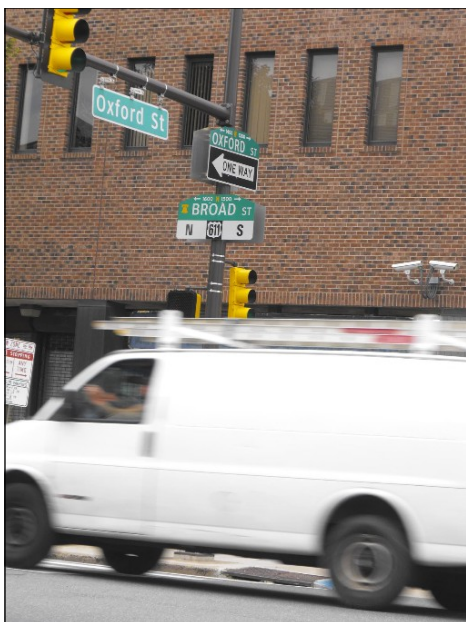
## Nuances

By Tricia Demmers, Student Editor

I am ecstatic to announce (drum roll please) the beginning of BSJ. We begin afresh, anew and abounding into the fall semester here at MCPC. Each of us making new friends, getting to know the city, and falling in love with a different style of life.

The definition of nuance is a subtle or slight degree of difference, as in meaning, feeling or tone; The appreciation of subtle shades of meaning in different aspects of every day life. As we live and grow here at MCPC '09 we are experiencing the subtle changes in our lives, the slight degrees of differences that form who we are. Our lives here in Philadelphia are a slight degree of difference.

The vibrant noises we hear outside of our windows are sirens and the slight sound of the crosswalk beeper. A nuance that some of us have now come to recognize as welcoming and comforting.



The diversity that we see here in a city is a nuance. I hope to capture these in the Broad Street Journal. I hope that it will bring to life the day-to-day happenings that occur here in our lives, document the things that we learn and grow from. We hope to bring out the beauty of the city by sharing them. My hope is also that it will allow readers to see other people from a different viewpoint. How is that for cliché?

So this is the very first issue of the Broad Street Journal for the 2009 Fall Semester. The beginning of documentation and the sharing of the nuances that we are experiencing here in Philadelphia.

## Have they gotten to you yet?

By Lauren McCardel

The questions. The suggestions. The kindly commissions to “go here” and “see this” and be sure “not to miss that.” We’re told so many things we should take part in as students newly arrived in Philadelphia.

And yes, I am sure we would be remiss to miss out on the many opportunities afforded to us here. But how do we sort through all that’s offered to find something really worth seeing, or hearing...or learning?



*Photo on left and right taken by Katie Ogden*

At the risk of adding my two cents to an already overflowing jar of well-intentioned change, I have a few ideas of my own about some things I believe should not be missed during our time here, from little heard of eateries to ways to spend a free afternoon. If you don’t think you need any more ideas about how to spend your time, by all means, skip ahead to the next story. But if you’re interested, even a little...

Let’s start where many grand and ambitious adventures often begin—the subway. Close your eyes and imagine for a moment the thick, sticky atmosphere peculiar to the underground, and the unique fusion of the smells of greasy food, cigarettes, and body odor. There’s a smattering of people on the platform, all carefully avoiding each other’s eyes, as if they are denying anyone the slightest access to their own personal lives. The arrival of the train brings a whoosh of air and an almost tangible relief. People board and sink into seats as far from each other as possible.

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## Gotten to you yet...

The automated female voice on the intercom alerts passengers of the next station, then the next, and so on. With each stop there is an influx and an out flux of people, a steady flow of movement, like blood cells streaming through the beating heart of a strange mechanical beast.

Italo Calvino wrote in one of his books, "To fly is the opposite of traveling: you cross a gap in space, you vanish into the void, you accept not being in a place for a duration that is itself a kind of void in time; then you reappear, in a place and in a moment with no relation to the where and when in which you vanished." Traveling on the subway is similar to Calvino's description of flying; you can get on a train in one part of the city and later emerge from beneath the ground in a totally separate world, almost like you crossed a wrinkle in space. This afternoon I surface onto Walnut Street and begin making my way to Rittenhouse Square.

For those who haven't been here, the Square is a small park on one block in a busy section of Center City, between 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Streets. It's like a bite-sized version of Central Park or the Boston Commons, and despite its small size, it's very well suited for an outdoor lunch or people-watching. There are a few small farm stands set up on the sidewalk selling flowers, fruit, and vegetables; they seem oddly juxtaposed against the pulsating city life beyond the park. A middle aged man plays his flute as though to the pigeons who flock around him more readily than the less interested human passers-by. There are business people on their lunch breaks, students reading (or more likely napping), friends sharing an afternoon together in the shade.

There are elderly couples sitting together in the comfortable silence that comes with ultimate knowledge of another person. There are children laughing and dogs walking and music drifting, and I find myself wishing I had more time to simply sit here and soak in the humming sense of movement and *life* I am surrounded by. There is something supremely comforting in being just another face in a sea of unfa-

miliarity. Like a voice whispering in your ear, *The world really does go on, you know...on and on, always*, and knowing that not everything is in your control, and it doesn't have to be. I think that's what I love about living in cities; there are always the arms of that all-surrounding web of life to catch you if you start to feel insecure for some reason. And there's always something to remind you not to take life too seriously, because there's too much you might miss if you do.

So this is my personal commission to you, newly transplanted Philadelphian: go outside. Go out on your own for a little while, take a train, end up somewhere new, spend a day by yourself, watch others live and maybe learn how to live a little more adventurously yourself. Find your own ways to get to know the quirks of where we live. I promise you won't regret it.

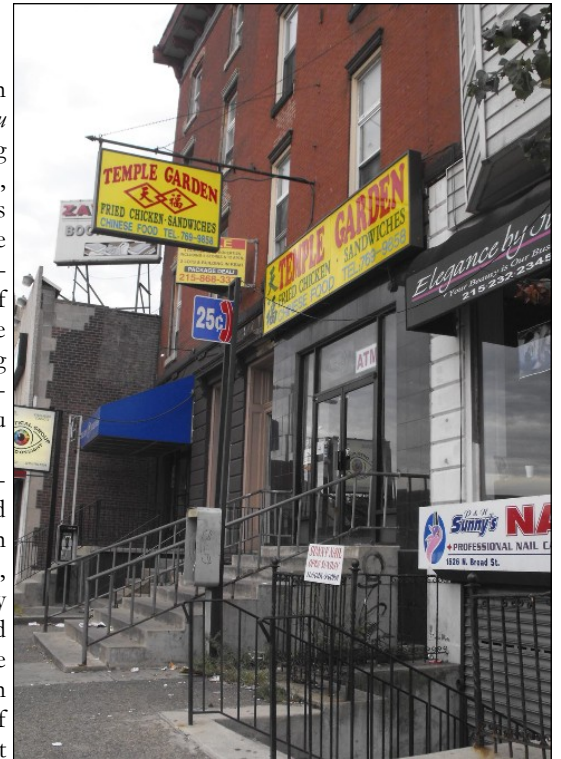


Photo taken by Katie Odgen

## Let Your Taste Buds Do the Walking

By Cara Thomas

Philadelphia is a very multicultural city full of festivals, exhibits, concerts, and best of all, food! You can explore Ethiopian, Cuban, Thai, Mediterranean, Japanese, Mexican, and Greek cui-

sines right in your own city and not very far away!

Consider Burmese food. What country is Burmese food from anyway? No one had heard of it before.

Rangoon is a restaurant located in Chinatown. It serves authentic lunches and dinners from the country of Burma. Not only is the food amazing, but the service is great as well. It has an enjoyable atmosphere and allows the diners to get a 'taste' for Burma, supplying them with fun information about their country right in the menu. The menu is full of variety, serving everything from soups and salads to rice, chicken, pork, and seafood. Although many items on the menu are labeled spicy, the chefs at Rangoon add the perfect amount of kick to every plate. I advise to go to Rangoon with a group of friends and order an assortment of dishes



Plate at Rangoon, Photo courtesy of Google images

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## Taste Buds...

to share. Rangoon is reasonably priced and the portions are very generous. Don't be afraid to try new things, everything tastes spectacular!

If that amazing Burmese food doesn't completely fill your stomach, Philadelphia has many locations for tasty sweets as well. You can find ice-cream venues, gelato cafes, and many people's favorite—chocolate.

Naked Chocolate Cafe sounds mouthwatering by its name alone, yet it becomes even more appealing after entering the store. Chocolate, chocolate and more chocolate. A long glass counter holds the chocolate treasures within and makes the choice absolutely impossible. They have everything from lollipops to chocolate covered strawberries, and candy bars to brownies. They also have an enormous beverage menu! A friend of mine ordered hot chocolate and described it as "thick milk chocolate melted in a glass."



*Photo of Naked Chocolate courtesy of Google Images*

## Eden on Uber Street

By Tricia Demmers, Student Editor

Skip Wiener, the founder and executive director of Urban Tree Connection (UTC), sighs through the telephone and hesitates before saying, "It started when I lost my job and then began to search for ways to work with children."

The non-profit organization began in 1989 with hopes to take kids off the streets and give them a constructive activity that also allows them to learn about the environment.

On Uber Street in North Philadelphia, a small piece of land exists where Wiener works to transform an overgrown field into an organic garden.

It is surrounded by a chain-linked fence, and trees stand on the outside of each corner. Tall red flowers grow in tiers and line the fence to the entrance.

Inside, old tree logs surround the separate beds of fruits and vegetables.

"It's amazing what you can learn

in the garden. For example, I know that if I plant black bean plants beside tomato plants then certain pests are less likely to harm the plants," says Hussain Abdul-Haqq, a community gardener with UTC who created the garden here in North Philadelphia.

The mission of UTC is to help urban, low-income communities, "revitalize their neighborhoods by transforming abandoned open spaces into safe and functional places that inspire and promote positive human interaction."

Each student was working diligently on different aspects of the garden. Each was enjoying the creation of a little Eden here in the city.

During orientation weekend, MCPC students worked together to weed, clean-up, and distribute mulch throughout the garden.

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*Messiah students working in the Uber Street Garden, Photo taken by Katie Ogden*

# Broad Street Symphony

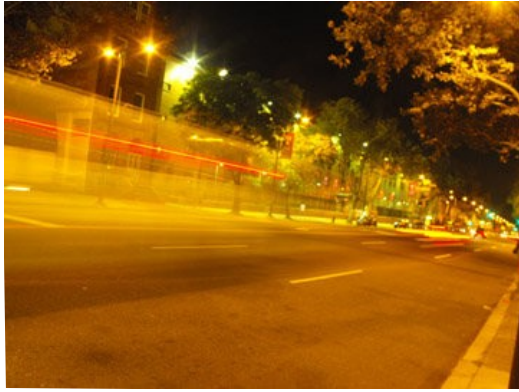
By Charity Roberts

Underneath a sky powered by sweating electric bulbs and headlights, I enter Philadelphia. No longer watching this world from the comfort of my padded desk chair, I stand on a sidewalk pockmarked with strip club flyers and a few stray sunflower-shaped barrettes that at one time dangled from the braids of a little girl. Only a line of wispy trees corseted by wooden stakes and dressed in trash bags separate me from Broad Street. And even then the sounds of this street and city manage to seep in and hypnotize me.

The Orange Line vibrates beneath me, a persistent humming that serves as the bass line for this odd orchestra. As I stand at the crosswalk the high-pitched scream of the faceless white silhouette demands that I cross the street immediately. Then I walk past a woman muttering obscenities under her breath until she sees me and as she lifts that royal head shaded by matted graying hair her voice trembles with emotion as she tells me where I can go. Instead I go further up Broad Street.

I see a rusting trailer parked on the corner of Girard. It is marked with two words spray painted on its side: SOUL FOOD. Beneath a faded canopy two customers wait to order their meals as the man running this establishment shouts at an invisible wife on his cell phone. In the background I can hear the faint sound of hissing oil drops beating on the surface of a copper hot plate.

In the midst of afternoon traffic the cars begin to become more and more restless as I walk. The noise of horns and the frantic rat-a-tat-tat of bicycles trying to escape the stampede pervade the street. I come across two men leaning over a worn table arguing over the price of a gold watch sold on the outskirts of a McDonald's parking lot.



*Broad Street at Night, photo taken by Katie Ogden*

Their voices rise in anger and in harmony. Then when it seems that Philadelphia has reached the ultimate crescendo of energy and magnitude there is silence.

Between Spring Garden and Callowhill sts. I am the only instrument. The echo of my own shuffling feet has become the climax of this performance. For the first time I feel truly embedded in these streets. For once this city that is so huge and so loud has rested so that my footsteps can be heard. Then as quickly as my solo began, it ends. The siren of an ambulance screams in the air and a little boy crosses a road without his mother's permission. Soon I hear a resounding slap on this boy's head and the staccato shriek of this woman. The symphony continues and I am comforted by its persistent chords. To some, this city may be a cacophony of sounds ground out by a few lost and broken instruments. As I spend more time on Broad Street, however, I can sense a rhythm slowly developing from all of this supposed discord. And, like in that one moment of silence, I am realizing that we are all being invited to join in this great performance.

## Live in the Backyard

By David Fox

On Friday, September 18th, MCPC students were serenaded by central Pennsylvania singer-songwriter Marc Seeley (otherwise known as Letters from the Prom) and Troubador, a band of youthful indie pop upstarts from South Jersey. Sipping hot cider and munching on s'mores and other snacks around a crackling fire in our beautiful backyard as

live music floated over the gathered community, Director of Community Life Ryan Wilson wondered, "Why haven't we done this before?"

Letters from the Prom is the solo project of Marc Seeley, a singer-songwriter so talented that he recorded all the tracks (vocals, guitars, bass, drums, keys) on his debut album "Nostalgia Is Dead... And You Killed It" himself.

A self-taught musician, he treated us to an hour-long acoustic set of his own material, peppered with occasional covers as diverse as The Postal Service and Bob Dylan, closing with his almost absurdly catchy tune "Discover & Deliver".

Troubador, fresh from a performance on Radio 104.5's local spotlight "Live at 5", played a short set of material from their upcoming "Between the Truth and the Lies" EP and a cover of Nirvana's "Heart Shaped Box". Lead vocalist and keyboardist Erika Ricchini was delighted to play in what she described as "a garden" despite a few minor technical difficulties. Due to a recent personnel change, the first few songs were played with keys, acoustic



*Ryan Wilson, director of community life and Casey Hetrick enjoying the fire at the back-yard concert on MCPC, photo courtesy of Katie Ogden*

guitar, and one drum for an effect some students described as "like a lullaby" before being joined by the full kit, electric guitar, and bass for the latter half of the performance.

Be sure to check the bands out at [www.youtube.com/icoelmono](http://www.youtube.com/icoelmono) and [www.myspace.com/troubadormusic](http://www.myspace.com/troubadormusic) respectively and look forward to more upcoming PSAB events!

## Eden...

"I personally love gardening, and seeing how to bring people together and giving them something they've never had before," says Emily Van Hook, an MCPC student. "It gives something new for the kids to learn and it keeps them off the streets."

Not only is the garden beneficial to college students looking to volunteer their time, but it is also beneficial to those who live in the surrounding neighborhood.

"Agnes, a woman who lives on Uber Street, came here with her son from Brooklyn," explains Wiener. "She was about to leave back to Brooklyn when the garden started taking root. Now her son is greatly involved, now she is involved in community up building projects and considers the garden the beginning of that involvement."

According to [urbantreeconnection.org](http://urbantreeconnection.org), it is estimated that Philadelphia has over 30,000 vacant lots that are overgrown, trash-filled and contributing to the blight and decay of the city. UTC has used this opportunity to work in other areas of Philadelphia.

In West Philadelphia on 55<sup>th</sup> St. between Haverford Avenue and Line Street, UTC found another vacant lot to plant their foot and begin another community development project.

"The bureaucracy is focused on transforming these vacant lots into buildings that produce taxes. Empty space does not produce taxes," Wiener explains, "The disconnect is where nobody seems to consider the neighborhood and the affect large high-rises have on those living in the community."

The lot on Uber Street that is now a garden is meant to be a senior's high-rise building in the up-coming years.

"There is quite a bit of tension regarding whether or not I should be doing what I am doing" Wiener says, "but I consider the good positive aspects it brings the children who could be on the streets, but instead are in the garden."

"You see a change in the neighborhood" He says. "At first there is an air of despair and with a flip of a switch that despair changes into hope, and that's what we've seen; it's profound."

## College Day on the Parkway

By Charity Roberts

I now have a special date in my heart: September 26, 2009. On this day I discovered my love of gigantic models of the heart, learned that Isaac Newton thought of the theory of relativity while riding his bicycle, and dug for REAL dinosaur fossils next to my fellow 7-year old paleontologists.

Jennie Riccio, Katie Ogden, Lynn George, and I began our exploration of College Day on the Parkway at The Franklin Institute. After showing our ID cards and entering for free, we immediately entered the Giant Heart where we journeyed through arteries, and took photographs of ourselves peaking through the left ventricle. This was the highlight of the museum although staring at the ever mesmerizing kinetic sculpture called "Newton's Dream" took a close second.

After the thrill of scientific discovery, we entered the Moore College of Art and Design Galleries for a little bit of art appreciation. Rather than seeing stiff portraits nailed to stark white walls we found hundreds of bicycles and tricycles, of every shape, size, and color.

Although I have a rather difficult personal relationship with bicycles I cannot say I didn't enjoy seeing so many Schwinn's bedazzled and covered in feathers.



*Charity Roberts and Katie Ogden behind a T-Rex skeleton, Photo taken by Lynn George*

Then we reached our final destination: The Academy of Natural Sciences. After chillin' with some friendly butterflies, we toured the wildlife dioramas. To our delight, many of these dioramas depicted the circle of life with polar bears mounting limp and lifeless seals and bobcats standing proudly beside the skulls of their most recent kills. Channeling the 5-year-old little boy I never was, I was transfixed by these dinosaurs' massive skulls and Katie Ogden and I made sure to pay respect to them by posing with the first one we saw.

We reached the climax of College Day on the Parkway, however, when we came upon the Dinosaur Exhibit. There we were given the opportunity to dig for our very own fossils! Unfortunately the day ended in disappointment because we never did find any; we did, however, manage to save lots of money while discovering some of Philadelphia's most highly acclaimed museums!

# The Philly Cheese-Steak

By Katie Breiter

On Friday night I had my first Philly cheese-steak at Pat's on 9<sup>th</sup> Street and it was a delicious and exciting experience. Pat's is all about the cheese steak. They have no neon lights and no gimmicks. After waiting on a long but fast-moving line, I ordered "whiz with" and paid \$7.50. I slid my cheese steak down the counter and was done, ready to find a seat and eat – I could've gotten a drink at the next line, but I was so overwhelmed by the speed at which my steak was ready that I missed that step and had to get my orange soda a little later once I'd settled in.

The whole experience is so quick. You tell the guy behind the counter whether you want cheddar, American, or cheese whiz, with or without onions, hence my "whiz with." It was \$7.50 and huge. If I hadn't come with an empty stomach, I definitely would not have finished it, but I did and I'm glad. It wasn't a healthy meal, but it was a cultural experience I needed to have before I could really call myself a resident of the City of Brotherly Love.



Rebecca Rinker and Sarah Bowman enjoying their Philly Cheese Steaks at Pat's, photo courtesy of Tricia Demmers



Upper: MCPC students working in the Uber Street Garden



Left: Jennie Rose posing with an animal exhibit on College Day on the Parkway Photos courtesy of Katie Ogden

# Poetry

## Maybe Masterpieces?

By Sarah Baranik

Muddied mortals making messes  
 Confused at the confines of clay  
 Struggling to surmount the shock:  
 The world's not black and white but gray.

Disordered dirt, humble humus  
 Digging deep to search for soul  
 Untidy universe, chaotic courses,  
 Pastiche parts pursue a whole.

Pointless pointillism perhaps?  
 Imperfect instances intertwined?  
 Nay, rise from rumpled reality—  
 See dense dots with disguised design.

Slipshod, soiled, flawed fortitude

Still sculpts souls in  
 some so shabby  
 Love liberates  
 veiled virtue  
 Creating clay crea-  
 tures with bound-  
 less beauty.

## Coming Up...

- A review on terror behind the walls/ Philly Pretzel
- Student spotlight
- Any responses to this issue?

## Dear soon-to-be-avid-fan,

The Broad Street Journal thrives on your life, so keep it interesting and send in your experiences by photo or any form or written word.

Contact Tricia Demmers at [td1188@messiah.edu](mailto:td1188@messiah.edu) or call ext. 7419