

This issue has been
generously underwritten by
Coldwell Banker Real Estate.
Many thanks for their
kind support!



December 2005/January 2006



Exciting New Blackridge Fundraiser Begins This March!

By Bill Miller

Blackridge Fundraiser Q&A

What is the Blackridge Civic Association?

The BCA is a collection of your neighbors who volunteer their time to promote civic activities throughout the neighborhood of Blackridge. The BCA owns the BCA Clubhouse building and 22 surrounding areas that include the BCA Park and the Blackridge Swim Club. The BCA sponsors events throughout the year including the Strawberry Festival, July 4th Bike Parade, and The Summer Concert in the Park, The Fall Festival and Family Holiday Party. The BCA Clubhouse building provides meeting space for the Blackridge Garden Club, Children's Play Group and is available for party rental. The BCA also publishes the Blackboard.

Where does the BCA get it's funding?

The BCA has two sources primary sources of funding:

1. Annual dues of \$40.00 per household. Annual dues are meant to cover the cost of all the events.
2. Income from the rental of the Clubhouse. Rental Income is meant to cover the taxes, insures, utilities and basic maintenance of the building and park. Income from both sources does not leave enough for capital improvements.

Why does the BCA need a fundraiser?

Over the past four years the BCA has taken on financial responsibility for not only its own taxes, insurance, utilities etc. but those of the Blackridge Swim Club. Each year the BCA covers the operating expenses of the pool with the expectation of reimbursement from the pool following the swim season. In addition to operating expenses, in 2004 the BCA secured a five year term loan, where approximately \$15,000 was used to make a capital improvement to resurface the pool. This year, for the fourth year in a row, the pool board has failed to sufficiently reimburse the BCA in a timely manner for their expenses. This year the delay and lack of payment in full has caused a severe cash flow problem for the BCA and means putting off again, much needed improvements for the BCA building and parking lot.

Is the BCA still doing the Steeler games fundraisers?

No. This season it has been impossible to secure enough volunteers to work the games despite personal calls, and requests or volunteers in the Blackboard to work the games.

New Fundraiser (continued)

What is the B52 Club?

The B52 Club is a raffle that will replace the Steeler fundraiser. The board hopes that can be a fun way to connect with the neighborhood while raising money.

What are the details?

The B52 Club is a fundraiser for the Blackridge Civic Association. 300 tickets will be sold with a weekly drawing and a chance to win at least \$100 week. The cost is \$1.00 a week or \$52.00 for a ticket good for one year. You can win multiple times, as your ticket is eligible every week. Tickets will be selected and witnessed weekly by friends and neighbors in Blackridge. Weekly winners names will be published in the Blackboard and all participants will be notified by e-mail of the weekly winner.

Who can buy a ticket?

Ticket sales will be limited for the first 30 days to Blackridge residents giving you the opportunity to buy one or many tickets for you and your friends and family. You can reference the order form in this month's Blackboard. You can also purchase more than one ticket. **(Page 5 this issue has an outline of the raffle in greater detail)**

When will the raffle begin?

Weekly drawings will not be held until all 300 tickets are sold. The target is to sell all 300 tickets by March with the contest running March 2006 through March 2007. Drawings will be sooner if all tickets are sold prior to March.

Where can I get a ticket?

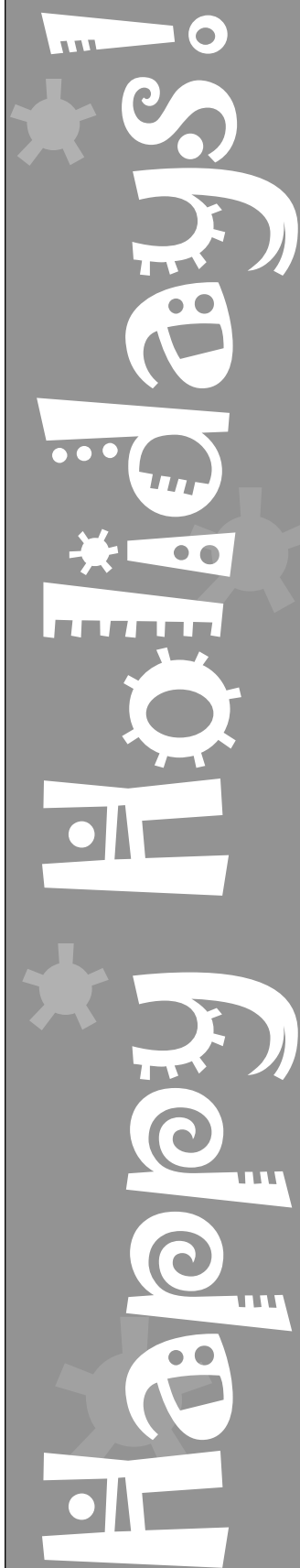
Blackridge residents can get their tickets through the order form in this month's Blackboard. BCA board members will also be selling tickets. Please reference the order form or contact Michelle Greenawalt (412-731-6518) with any specific questions you may have regarding the B52 Club Fundraiser.

Hooray for Helping Hands!

A number of members of the Garden Club and the BCA took an hour of their time on a beautiful October Saturday morning to clean up along Beulah road from Forest Drive down to CVCC. It's truly amazing how careless people are with their trash, and how quickly they drive up or down curvy Beulah Road even when there are people along the road cleaning up! The good citizens who helped were: E.J. Foster, Jay Gamze, Ceil Greber, Rose and Tom Guerriere, Lil and Neil Huguley, Helen Johnston, Anne Messner, and Karen and Dan Risher. Thank you!!!

Want to submit an article or ad in the Blackboard? Here's how...

Please submit articles by January 15th for inclusion in the February/March NL to tarataylor914@comcast.net **Please use the word Blackboard in the subject header to avoid being suspected as a spammer!** Questions/problems, call 412-244-3949.



Ho-Ho-Wholesome Holiday Fun for the Whole Family!

It's the Annual Blackridge Family Holiday Party!

Saturday December 10th

12 - 2 PM

Blackridge Civic Association

There will be refreshments, crafts for the kids and a possible visit from Santa, if he's not too busy making toys! If anyone is interested in volunteering or bringing a dish to share, contact Gretchen Morris at 412-243-7713 or via email gncmorris@comcast.net



Blackridge Events Scheduled for 2006

- Mar. 11** Semi-formal wine tasting at the BCA. March Madness Theme! Anything goes. (Château Lafite Rothschild Pauillac, Night Train ... your choice.)
- Mar. 21** Annual Strawberry Festival - neighbors can meet the Board, sign up for the pool and swim team and enjoy strawberry treats (and daquiries)
- June 17** Annual Blackridge Yard Sale
- July 4** July 4 - 4th of July parade and picnic at the park
- Aug. 13** Concert in the Park (tentatively scheduled pending artist's schedule)
- Oct. 14** Fall Fest
- Dec. 9
(2006)** HolidayParty

NOTE: All of these dates are subject to change, be sure to watch future Blackboards for updated information. Again, contact Gretchen Morris if anyone is interested in volunteering or chairing an event! (gncmorris@comcast.net 412-243-7713)

Time for a Reality Check

A Message from the BCA President, Bill Miller

I've been struggling with how to write what I need to write in this article for the past week. I want to make negative things sound positive but I don't think there is a way. The intent is to make you the community aware of a serious situation regarding the finances of the Blackridge Civic Association (and by extension the Blackridge Swim Club) without sounding major alarms or hurting anyone's feelings. That said:

For the ten years that I have been on the BCA board there has been this undercurrent of on-going tension (for lack of a better word) between the BCA and the Blackridge Swim Club. This was recognized by both organizations and over the past two years great strides have been made with the organizations working better together. Nothing more dramatically points to that cooperation than the fact that in 2004 the BCA secured for the BSC a loan to cover the resurfacing of the pool. There was no way that the BCA could let the pool close (which was a distinct possibility) because the pool surface was in such disrepair that it could cause injury to a swimmer. Both boards recognized that something needed to be done. In 2004 the pool was resurfaced and the project cost approximately \$16,000.

The loan by the BCA for the pool was only the most recent example of the interdependency between the two organizations. Currently the BCA holds the insurance liability policy that covers the BSC. Having that level of insurance coverage raises the BCA insurance premium more than \$6,000. The BCA also covers operating expenses including taxes, and utilities (namely water and sewerage) during the swim season with reimbursement due following the swim season. These pool expenses are due in addition to running the BCA itself.

At issue now is the inability of the pool to reimburse the BCA for operating and capital expenses for 2005. In September the BSC was presented with their share of reimbursable expenses. This amount was \$7,100. At the November BCA meeting the pool informed the BCA that it would be able to pay only \$3,000 of the amount due, with an additional \$500.00 coming before year end once a fundraiser was held. There was no mention of when the balance due was to be paid.

As president of the BCA I need to take a large part of the responsibility for the lack of communication between the two boards. However, I also need to address the issue. To that end I'm calling on the community to support me on the following proposal:

For me, closing the pool is not an option. Finding ways to increase membership is important to me since I head the organization that is essentially paying its bills. My recommendation is to combine BCA board and the BSC board. Since the BCA is paying the bills anyway it's silly (that's right silly) to have the pool collect Swim Club membership dues, have the BCA pay the bills and then not be reimbursed!

My idea:

- 1. BCA membership includes membership in the pool thereby making the pool truly a community pool.**
- 2. Revise dues structure for the combined pool/BCA membership, have the BCA collect and disburse the funds**
- 3. Integrate fundraising efforts (see other articles in this issue regarding the B52 Fundraiser and *please buy a ticket*)**

I don't know if the mood or the timing is right for these types of changes but I think we need to at least begin an honest assessment of where we are as two organizations and of what the current reality is.



B52 Club Fundraiser Fact Sheet.

By Bill Miller

Membership will be limited to a total of 300 tickets. A waiting list will be established for others once the 300 tickets have been sold.

The pay off is \$100.00 per week, beginning in March 2006 through March 2007.

The drawing Thanksgiving week 2006 will be for \$500.00 rather than \$100.00.

Listed on your ticket are the dates the drawings will occur. Winning tickets will be drawn and witnessed by various neighbors and others. The winners and the drawer's names will be published in the Blackboard and on-line.

The price of a ticket is \$1.00 per week (\$52.00 per year). You will have a 1 in 300 chance at winning EVERY week. Your ticket stays in the weekly drawing for the full 52 weeks, even if you've won. You have the potential to win EACH week!

If you join and pay in full by January 31 you qualify for a chance to win a free additional ticket for 2006. This drawing will occur the first week of February 2006.

Checks should be made payable to "Blackridge Civic Association"

If there comes a time when you no longer wish to participate, even in the middle of the year, we can arrange for a person on the waiting list (if any) to purchase from you the value of the ticket remaining.

Members and their guests will be invited to attend B52 Club events and be entitled to other drawings or prizes throughout the year.



Ticket Order Form

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Number of Tickets Ordered _____ Amount Enclosed _____

Each ticket is \$52.

Please make checks out to Blackridge Civic Association and send this order form and your check by January 31st (in order to be eligible to win another ticket) to Michelle Greenawalt, 1634 Georgetown, Pittsburgh, PA 15235. Questions, call Michelle at 412-731-6518

Garden Club Heads to Clayton

by Adrienne O'Toole

Clayton in all its holiday splendor is the destination of the Blackridge Garden Club on Tuesday, December 6.

Fall 2005 ends with a step back over the past 100 years for members as they anticipate visiting the Victorian era mansion decorated with the Christmas traditions of a century ago. (By happy circumstance the club's attention during the past months focused on local aspects of American history: Bob Messner's talk on Braddock's battlefield in October; November's overview of the botanical discoveries of the Lewis and Clark expedition launched on Pittsburgh built boats; and finally, nearby Clayton, built by labor's nemesis Henry Clay Frick.)

Today the restored mansion, its grounds and the adjacent Frick museum is a destination for Pittsburghers and visitors alike. The Christmas decorations provide a glimpse of upper class Anglo-American ideals of hearth and family circa 1905.

An 11 a.m. brunch at the BCA precedes the tour. Shirley Rapport and Adrienne O'Toole are planning the menu assisted by Judy Diorio and Joyce Hapke. Sally Drago will design the table decorations. Carpools to Clayton will leave the BCA following the brunch and a short business meeting. Sheila Mozer is the "travel" coordinator.

The Garden Club does not meet in January but will be back in business on February 7 with Churchill Borough Engineer Andy Blenko discussing the watershed ecology of the neighborhood. He will present a map of Blackridge including the Penn Hills and Wilkinsburg sections as well as Churchill, discussing drainage and runoff details particularly as they affect gardeners. A jump from history to the serious considerations of 2006.

By way of local interest, Andy grew up at 2363 Sebring Place. Visitors are welcome to attend Garden Club meetings. Contact membership chair Louise White (412.371.6950) or any club member for details. The Garden Club's executive board will meet at 10 a.m. prior to both programs.

Hoagies! Hoagies! Hoagies!

The Blackridge Swim Club will be selling turkey and Italian hoagies in December. Orders will be accepted up until December 9th for delivery on December 15th.

These delicious and filling foot-long hoagies are only \$6 per hoagie. The proceeds of this sale will help the Blackridge Swim Club keep our neighborhood pool operating for another year. We are counting on all of our pool members and everyone in Blackridge to make this fundraising a success.

Order your hoagies by contacting Georgeann Perla 412-244-0396 or Barb Liberati 412-247-5306 or by returning the order form below with your check made out to Blackridge Swim Club by December 9th to Georgeann Perla, 2323 Forest Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15235.

ORDER YOUR HOAGIES TODAY!

_____ 12 inch Italian Hoagies, \$6/hoagie _____ 12 inch turkey Hoagies, \$6/hoagie

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

What's Cookin'?

The Blackridge Cookbook can help you give a variety of answers to that age-old question. A cool fall day is a great time to bake a nutritious, healthful bread. You can use it to select the perfect menu for your holiday open house or sit-down dinner, or you can lower fat intake with delicious meatless selections. Of course, you can also find a crowd pleasing dessert to serve when your kids come home from college lugging laundry and a car full of friends.

The Blackridge Cookbook is a bargain at \$12 a copy and is filled with the tried and true recipes of your friends and neighbors. It makes a great gift for new brides, new homeowners and college students who want a taste of home now and then. Wrap and ribbon it for a great hostess gift or stocking stuffer for the coming holidays.



And, remember this! With every purchase, you receive something extra, because cookbook proceeds benefit our community. Sales help the Garden Club maintain the grounds around the BCA Clubhouse, the unique "bloomin' corners" and make it possible to take on special projects--such as maintenance and restoration of the corner signs--that help keep Blackridge beautiful.

Get your cookbook today. Call Lil Huguley at 412-731-6441 or send your completed form to her at 1036 Old Gate Road, 15235. You can pick up a copy or have it delivered.

Yes, I want to order _____ copies of the Blackridge Cookbook at \$12 each.

My check for \$_____ payable to the Blackridge Garden Club, is enclosed.

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

E-mail _____

The Garden Club can arrange to mail your cookbook(s) for an additional \$3 each for shipping and handling. Attach the complete name and address of each recipient to this form and enclose it with your check payable to the Blackridge Garden Club.

Mail forms to: Lil Huguley, 1036 Old Gate Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15235

**SAVE
THIS
DATE**

March 18, 2006!

Bloomin' Corners. "Daffodil Daze" is coming, Saturday, March 18, 2006, 11:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Longue Vue Club. Reservations are \$27.

Don't miss it!

Neighborhood Reflections

by Bill Miller

I read Craig Wilson every Wednesday in USA today. His article last week regarding his neighbor who moved away got me thinking about my neighbors and Blackridge in general.

I think my street alone is one of the most diverse (my translation meaning interesting) in the neighborhoods. I know this because I live here but look around your street. Looks pretty "normal" on the outside but when you look closer I think the demographics are pretty mixed. Older, younger. Married people, people living together. People living alone. White, black and Asian people. Religious people. Gay people and straight people. Kids with moms and dads. Some kids with one of each. It says something about Blackridge and who chooses to live here.

Wilson's column was about people moving I'm talking about people moving in. Since moving to Orlando five years ago we've gotten three new neighbors in the past three years.

When I told my neighbor Dan recently that we were going on vacation, to keep an eye out in case he saw any activity at the house. He said he'd "walk the perimeter" daily. I'm not sure if I feel safer but I thought it was funny. He then asked if Lucky (the world's best dog, more about her in upcoming issues) was taken care of. Thoughtful.

When Mary Lou across the street needed help taking down her pool awning, I didn't think twice before volunteering my long suffering Gary to help her. (I helped put it up and did not want to be there when it came down!) She responded a few days later with a pot of homemade soup. Thoughtful.

This summer Mark tricked almost everyone on the block into helping him plant a new tree in the front yard. It was hot that day and it was a pretty big tree, the ground was full of roots and like digging in solid rock. Again I was no help watching from the sidelines but to see the rest of the neighbors in action was in a word, thoughtful.

I'm sure that you and your neighbors have had countless thoughtful instances like these. It says we like our neighbors and want to get to know them.

By the time you get this, Thanksgiving will have come and gone and it will be three weeks until Christmas. In that time remember to be thoughtful about what you have and especially what you have here in Blackridge.

Clip and Save Blackridge Recipes

This recipe comes from me (your Blackboard editor) and it is one of my favorites. It also appears in the fabulous *Blackridge Garden Club Cookbook*. (don't forget to buy a copy!) The recipe makes a huge amount so it's great for holiday giving. Be careful — it's addictive.

Submit your favorite recipe

via E-mail to tarataylor914@comcast.net
or via US mail to Tara Taylor,
2628 Orlando Place, Pittsburgh, PA 15235



Holiday Snowflakes

From Tara Taylor

1 (15 oz) pkg thin pretzel sticks, broken, but not crushed
4 cups Crispix cereal
3 to 4 cups Rice Crispies cereal
3 to 4 cups Cheerios cereal
3 pkgs white chocolate melting wafers

Mix first four ingredients in a giant bowl. Melt chocolate in a double boiler, or very carefully in the microwave. Pour over dry ingredients and mix to coat. Spread mixture out onto parchment paper on a very large surface. (I use the dining room table) Allow to dry and put into gift bags or an airtight container.

COLDWELL BANKER

REAL ESTATE, INC.



CONNIE ZIMMER

Call Connie Zimmer
412-363-4000 ext. 709
Cell: 412-519-0666
for a complimentary,
no-obligation market
analysis.

connie.zimmer@pittsburghmoves.com
www.pittsburghmoves.com

FAITH HEINAUER

Call Faith Heinauer
412-363-4000 ext. 727
for a complimentary,
no-obligation market
analysis.

fheinauer@coldwellbanker.com
www.pittsburghmoves.com

In-Home Massage Therapy



Are you stressed and tired?
Do you need to relax?
Have a massage in the privacy
of your home or mine.

Detox your body and feel great!
Find out how many toxins are in your body.

Call **Hedy E. Esplen, P.T.A., M.T.**
Certified Massage Therapist and
Instructor at Butler CCC

412-243-3154

Email or call to find out about specialized types
of massage treatments that are done.
haeburch@hotmail.com

Massage parties also available...FUN TIME!

\$5 off
for first-time
clients.

Winter Word Search

M G D H S C A R F F O E I E W
 D K S E D F M I T T E N S C D
 I X T U C D R B A W D L Z U U
 O E S P N E H O L I D A Y S U
 U R I F P G M T S N O W M A N
 P C O L D P X B Z T A H K U B
 E B A Q U M O G E E B O L Y V
 H C Q U J O N E Q R I I S S F
 E E Y K T C K X Z V H P T Q X
 K Q X S Y Y J L F S O E U E I
 F O N Y G E M P L M K N A Y Q
 Y O C N T Y N E N C M I M A M
 W U H A S M D B A U C W I U Z
 C Y G D B S Z J D J U L Q N O
 J N Y A E B L Q P A D E C H G

Find the words below.

- Boots
- Cold
- December
- Fireplace
- Frostbite
- Hat
- Holidays
- Ice
- Jackets
- Mittens
- Scarf
- Skiing
- Sled
- Snow
- Snowman
- Winter

Winter Word Scramble

Unscramble these words associated with winter.

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------|
| 1. Jraauyn | 7. onwslabls |
| 2. otobs | 8. trenwi |
| 3. adiyllhos phayp | 9. helvso |
| 4. cie trfo | 10. wnos galen |
| 5. tho holccotea | 11. onws ayd |
| 6. Furbeyar | 12. pclfreaie |

Christmas Movie Trivia

1. In the 1988 film "Scrooged," the character played by Bill Murray is:
 - a) a cold-hearted banker
 - b) a cold-hearted TV executive
 - c) a cold-hearted police officer
 - d) a cold-hearted politician
2. What's the name of George Bailey's guardian angel in "It's a Wonderful Life?"
 - a) Ariel
 - b) Henry
 - c) Clarence
 - d) Frank
3. In "It's a Wonderful Life," George Bailey as a boy suffers an injury to:
 - a) his foot
 - b) his arm
 - c) his eyes
 - d) his ear
4. "The Nightmare Before Christmas" was written by:
 - a) Tim Burton
 - b) Richard Burton
 - c) Freddy Kruger
 - d) Wes Craven
5. "White Christmas" is set in
 - a) Colorado
 - b) Montana
 - c) New Hampshire
 - d) Vermont
6. Who plays Bing Crosby's Army buddy in "White Christmas?"
 - a) Jimmy Stewart
 - b) Dean Martin
 - c) Danny Kaye
 - d) Bob Hope
7. The little girl who's skeptical about Santa Claus in "Miracle on 34th Street" is played by:
 - a) Natalie Wood
 - b) Audrey Hepburn
 - c) Anne Bancroft
 - d) Sharon Stone



8. Miracle on 34th Street revolves around which department store?
 - a) Bloomingdales
 - b) Macys
 - c) Target
 - d) Neiman Marcus
9. In "Home Alone," a young boy is abandoned when his parents rush to a holiday vacation in:
 - a) Aspen
 - b) Las Vegas
 - c) Paris
 - d) New York
10. In "A Christmas Story" why isn't Ralphie permitted to have a Red Ryder BB Gun?
 - a) too expensive
 - b) already has three
 - c) he'll shoot his eye out
 - d) he's getting a manly gun instead
11. In "A Christmas Story" what kind of "major award" does Ralphie's dad (Mr. Parker) win?
 - a) gold watch
 - b) sexy leg lamp
 - c) Christmas cuff links
 - d) water pump lamp
12. In "Christmas Vacation" what is Clark Griswold's Christmas bonus?
 - a) \$20.00
 - b) a trip to Bermuda
 - c) Jelly-of-the-Month Club
 - d) a puppy



STANFORD HOME CENTERS

Trusted By
Home Owners,
Contractors & Builders
For Over 50 Years.

The Quality You Expect . . . The Service You Deserve

We Install!

- Decks
- Interior & Exterior Doors
- Windows & Skylights
- Garage Doors & Openers
- Outdoor Storage Buildings
- And Much, Much More!



All installations . . .

- Are fully insured and done by skilled, reliable Stanford employees . . . not subcontractors.
- Offer guaranteed quality products and workmanship at competitive prices.

We offer the following services:

- Building Materials
- Windows & Doors
- Plumbing & Electrical
- Lawn & Garden
- Outdoor Furniture
- Paints & Stains
- Stock & Custom Moulding
- Home Décor
- Screening / Glass Cutting
- Blade Sharpening
- Lawn Mower /Snow Blower Shop



724-327-6800
2001 Route 286, Plum Boro

&

724-845-8104
1173 State Route 356, Leechburg

CLASSIFIEDS

Overdone it in the yard? Old injury? Take care of yourself with neuromuscular massage.

Eleven years experience. Convenient Blackridge location. \$10 off with this ad. Body Harmony Massage Therapy, Marcia Smith, 412-871-5388.

The Blackboard

c/o Tara Taylor
2628 Orlando Place
Pittsburgh, PA 15235

PRSR. STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
PITTSBURGH PA
PERMIT NO. 1557