



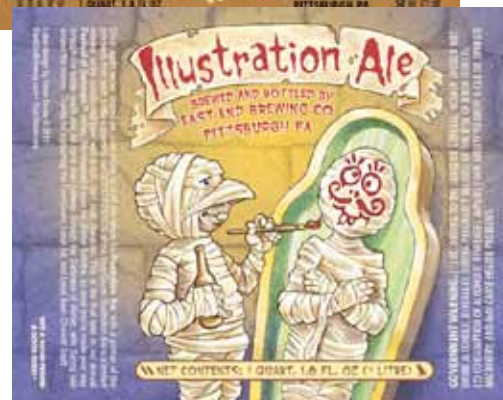
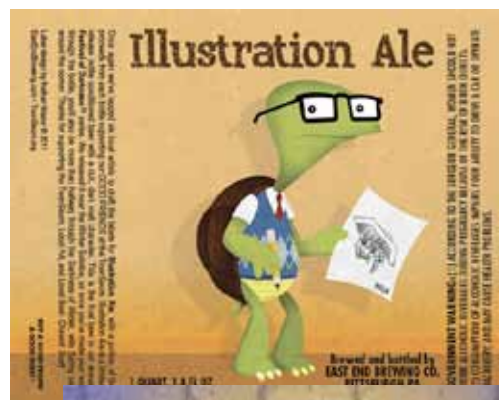
Editor: Anni Matsick

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Steve Cup
Beth O'Neill
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Member News

Spirited Imagery

Here's an advance peek at three of the six new Illustration Ale labels for East End Brewing Company, done by PSI members **Mark Bender**, **Nathan Mazur** and **Vince Dorse**. The other three label artists are Ed Piskor, Jasen Lex and Dave Wachter. Details on February 4 release party at the ToonSeum at www.illustrationale.eventbrite.com.



Bipartisan Button

"It's the Economy, Stupid" reflects the first line in an article in the Sunday, January 8 New York Times Business Section. **Taylor Gallery** did the art to accompany the piece, "Through an Economic Lens, an Election Too Close to Call," by Jeff Sommer.



Bizzarro World

This is a panel from **Wayno's** second weeklong run as Dan Piraro's guest cartoonist for his syndicated Bizzarro cartoon, which began the day after Christmas.

Here's link to a profile on **Wayno** in the January issue of Pittsburgh Magazine: <http://www.pittsburghmagazine.com/Pittsburgh-Magazine/January-2012/Waynos-World/>



My Spot

Anni Matsick

As we look ahead, wondering what the new year will bring, one of our very accomplished members offers help with his encouraging point of view in a state-of-the-arts essay you'll find on page 8.

Looking back on recent shows, we can prove positive response to our educational outreach with rave reviews

from students at Slippery Rock University on our group exhibit on campus in October. Read what impressed them most on pages 3-5. Our popular DUI exhibit at Art Institute of Pittsburgh has been extended another three weeks so there's no doubt it's appreciated there!

December's holiday revelers will enjoy a recap in photos taken at our annual Saturnalia celebration, on pages 6-7.

Along with our fresh, new look by **Steve Cup**, the new year introduces "Spotlight", noting a member in each issue for recent accomplishments. The first one highlights someone familiar on the Pittsburgh scene whose work keeps us aware and amused on a daily basis. Gone are some familiar features, leaving more room for Member News and Behind the Brush. The impressive entries should inspire you to make some news of your own!

On Exhibit

"Creative Meeuse" by **Ron Thurston** will hang in this year's *Signature American Watercolor Exhibition* at the Fallbrook Art Center in California. This is Ron's third acceptance into the FAC sponsored show, now in its third year. FAC is the only venue in the United States to have the honor of exhibiting both the *American Watercolor Society's Travel Exhibition* and the *National Watercolor Society's Travel Exhibition* at the same time, along with their show, which features works by Signature Members of U.S. watercolor societies, juried by noted Arizona watercolorist Ted Nuttall, AWS, NWS. *World of Watercolor* will run February 5 through March 18. View the online catalogs at: www.fallbrookartcenter.org



Mary Dunn will participate in a group show at Gallery Sim, 1735 E. Carson Street, Southside. In conjunction with the Southside Soup Contest, the gallery has invited over 30 artists to create their ideas of "culinary art." A reception open to the public is set for February 3, 6-8 pm. The show will run through March 25, open noon to 4 pm Thursday through Sunday, or by appointment.

Mary will also teach a pastel class on January 14 and 21 at the L. S. Hoffman Gallery in Munhall. The fee is \$40 and is an introductory class where she will teach basic strokes and how to do a painting of an iris.

"Beth Recumbent," a 20" x 30" oil painting is **Kurt Pfaff's** entry for the next *Naked in*



Pittsburgh gallery show at the Red Door Space, Southside. Kurt says, "This painting wasn't necessarily about the figure but recreating the light and a study of the various textures. I started out with the concept in my head of painting drapery."

"Sunday Morning" by **Anne Trimble** was accepted into the *Pittsburgh Society of Artists Fall Juried Show*, which exhibited at the Fein Art Gallery on the North Side during November.



Accolades

"Seeing the Forest" by **Taylor Gallery** was selected for inclusion in the 2012 New York Society of Illustrators annual, *Illustrators 54*.



As of January 1, **Anne Trimble** started her first term as president of the South Hills Art League.

Worthy Cause

Several regular contributors to Table Magazine are decorating lunch bags for a feature story and an auction to benefit the ToonSeum, date TBD. Here is the one from **Wayno**.



New Members

Affiliate Members

Michael Duncan

mikededesign@gmail.com
www.coroflot.com/michaelduncan

Michael has three years in the field after getting a BS in Industrial Design at AIP. He is employed by Caterpillar Global Mining as a technical artist.



Donna Whitford House

whitfordhouse@centurylink.net
www.bearpawartstudio.com

Donna is self-taught, freelances and teaches at Allegany College of Maryland Continuing Education. She has illustrated nature/animal themes on menu covers, journal covers, SADD publications, and is founder and current president of Colored Pencil Society of America (CPSA) Greater Cumberland DC 121 Chapter. Donna heard about us from fellow CPSA member **Mary Dunn**, a recent new PSI member.



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Exhibit Updates

Hung Over!

PSI's Drawing Under the Influence exhibit at Art Institute of Pittsburgh has been EXTENDED THROUGH FEBRUARY 17!

This second exhibit of the art from the PSI 2011 Illustrators Directory features over 50 pieces from the book's pages, and an accompanying display of process work from many of the artists. So, even if you saw the first show at GalleriE CHIZ, there's some fascinating new stuff to learn from this one! Both shows have proven their popularity, along with brisk sales of the books. The PSI 2011 Illustrators Directory book is available for \$5 per copy at any PSI social gathering, while supply lasts.

Art Institute of Pittsburgh is located at 420 Blvd. of the Allies. Gallery hours are 9 am - 8 pm Monday through Friday and 9 am - 4 pm on Saturday. Closed Sundays.



Photo by Alexander Patho Jr.

SRU Students Write About PSI Show

Associate Professor of Art **June Edwards** shares excerpts from student reviews of the Pittsburgh Society of Illustrators Exhibit at the Martha Gault Art Gallery at Slippery Rock University held October 4-28, 2011. The students are at all levels and from a variety of majors

Mark Klingler's work was very powerful to me because I appreciate nature and all the beautiful detail that goes with it. I live in a very rural area and his work showed me he has an appreciation of all the fine details that nature actually includes. I liked the Red-Bellied Woodpecker piece the most. I really got to appreciate that piece because I saw how much detail he had put into it to make the bird look great with almost perfect realism. The way his colors flow with the direction of the feathers is astounding.

Kathy Rooney's painting of an overhead view of Pittsburgh is truly something that should be appreciated. Unlike Klingler's work, she adds detail throughout her picture. It is almost as if there are an infinite amount of objects she paints that wrap up and come together as a whole. The picture of Pittsburgh has every little piece imaginable without anything missing any detail of the three rivers area. I have been in Pittsburgh many

times and seeing the detail in this piece really was amazing. Her work is very different from Klingler's but both are unique in a different way. This shows the great variety in this exhibit. -*Scott De-Bacco, Business Major*



"Perlina" and "Swan Princess" created by **Jane Popovich** are wonderful line drawings. The compositions are extremely busy and there is a lot on the page to trip you up visually. Each individual character plays a part in making the composition work. As an illustrator you are expected to interpret and clarify a subject by your own objective interpretation. -*Joseph Spears, Communications Major*

I greatly admire the intense detail **Mary Dunn** portrays in her work, "Koi." The detail is subtle, but if viewers look closely, they can actually see some of the scales on the fish, and the lines forming the ridge of the back. This detail really ties the image together and helps bring the koi fish to life. -*Stephanie Hastings, Elementary Education Major*



Katy Koenig's "It's in your Hands," incited a call to action. This work portrayed a penguin holding the world by its feet. I find the illustration most compelling of all because initially I did not interpret this character as a penguin. The position of the penguin creates a nonrepresentational figure that portrays bird characteristics of another species.



The five colors present in the illustration: black, white, yellow, blue, and green create a sense of texture and atmosphere; as well as a correlation between the Earth and the penguin. I interpret this illustration as a challenge to the viewer to be aware of the power and responsibility we possess in protecting our world.

The work of **Bernadette Kazmarski**, "Winefield Pines & Plan & Poster," depicts several images with text. The images consist of water and drainage, an existing problem, and solution. The authentic images and explanations of the current

conditions provide a framework for viewers to formulate an informed decision for future action. The most effective component of this poster is the layers that provide visual examples.

Frederick H. Carlson's "Pennsylvania Wetlands Habitat" portrays an ecosystem consisting of all the living organisms, as well as the physical components, of a wetland. The numerous organisms and many layers of the ecosystem create interest on many different levels. The most insightful part of this illustration is the bottommost layer that consists of the plant's root system and the underneath structure of the animal's habitat. The various colors used enhance this picture immensely. Carlson's use of watercolor creates a visual texture that gives the viewer a sense of realism. The subjects are perceived as tangible and vulnerable because of the methods that Carlson uses throughout his illustration -**Christa Stankovic, BFA-Art with Teaching Certification**



I like everything about the painting "Duquesne Incline" by **Kathy Rooney**. The comic feel gives a nice perspective of how Pittsburgh looks. The different colored trees give you a feel that autumn is in the air. The painting shows how beautiful a city like Pittsburgh looks in the fall season. The painting also has a peaceful feeling to it. There is not much wake from the boat. -*Andy Margo, Business Major*



What stood out to me personally was "Squids n' Ale" by **Elizabeth O'Neill**. The work of art was a fairly small piece compared to the others in the exhibit, but its bright colors and style made it really pop out among the bigger pieces. The medium is digital painting. This made the colors of the piece really vibrant and clean. The com-



position features a few pirate-like squids sitting around a table with drinks. This was my favorite piece in the exhibit; I really enjoyed the style. It was a cartoony piece. You could tell the artist had fun with creating it.

It's hard to talk about the exhibit as a whole, because all the pieces of work were very different from each other. However, a common theme among many of the pieces was nature and wildlife. A lot of the pieces depicted birds, fish, dinosaurs, and small mammals, but all in different ways. Some of the depictions were done in a very realistic style. "Encounter" by **Phil Wilson** was also a very realistic piece. It portrayed three *Tyrannosaurus rex*es circled around a distressed-looking *Triceratops*. The use of the acrylic paint made the colors bright and vibrant. The way the dinosaurs were arranged in the picture plane also gave the composition a nice flow. The circular-formation of the *tyrannosaurs* made the viewer's eye go in a circle around the piece. It was a great composition that kept the viewer looking around it.



Along with the realistic rendering, there were somewhat abstracted versions of different animals. "Koi" by **Mary Dunn**, composed with pastel on 400U Art sanded surface, was a good example of this. The viewer could tell that the illustration was of koi fish swimming in a body of



water, but the picture was slightly distorted and rough. Another nonrealistic animal illustration was "It's In Your Hands" by

Katie Koenig. It was done using acrylics combined with Photoshop. It showed a large penguin looking down at a small planet Earth. The use of acrylics allowed the viewer to see the brush strokes the artist used to create the image of the penguin. They worked well on the penguin, because it gave a similar texture to feathers. It was a powerful piece, because not only was it beautifully done, but it conveyed an important message to the viewer.



Along with the illustrations of animals, there were also many pieces of artwork that featured human beings. These pieces were also done in many different styles and mediums. "Quasimodo," by **William Panos** was a very abstracted picture of the face of what the viewer can

assume is Quasimodo, the hunchback of Notre Dame. This piece was placed right next to another illustration of a face by **Dave D'Incau Jr** titled "Mayer Hawthorne." The man's face in D'Incau's piece was far more realistic and detailed than that of Panos. By placing these two pieces side by side the viewer could really tell the difference in the styles. These two pieces are completely different from the way **Jane Popovich** illustrates humans. Her piece, "Swan Princess," was created with black ink and featured very fine details. The piece had so many things going on; it was



kind of hard to figure out what to look at first. On the opposite side of this spectrum, the work by **Gehres** called "Tribute to Amy Winehouse" was very minimalistic in composition. In the center of the picture plane was a simple cartoon-like picture of Amy Winehouse created with acrylic spray paint on top of a bright orange background. The rest of the picture plane was simply covered in gold leaf. The use of the gold leaf combined with the bright orange background grabbed the viewer's attention.



Overall, the exhibit was fantastic. Every piece was exciting and interesting. The wide variety of styles and mediums used made sure that every viewer could appreciate one piece of artwork. It also gave a great opportunity to see the things current illustrators are working on. PSI seems like a great society for an artist to be a part of. All of the artists featured in the exhibit did wonderful work, and it was very inspiring to me as an artist. -Dominique Kirchell, BFA-Art

I was inspired the most by **Brad Blahnik**. He had two digital pieces in the show, "Lumberjack" and "Contemplating." His work resembled a drawing, a collage and digital work all in one piece. Blahnik stated that he likes to create new things that no one else has created before. He asks himself several questions when he creates his



work: is it cliché, is it enjoyable to look at, and is it captured in the best possible way? I enjoyed Blahnik's digital pieces because I tend to work digitally also. He stated that working digitally is a great way to express and communicate

his feelings not only on a national, but also at an international level. He wants the viewer to be able to see the creator's point of view. Working digitally, Blahnik can create unique effects that are impossible with other media because of the flexibility. The process is faster working digitally compared to traditional media. Blahnik's thoughts and process of working with digital and traditional media mixes is inspiring to me because I don't tend to mix medias. His work encourages me to try different ways of implementing projects. -Heather Herczak, Communication Major

I really enjoyed **Phil Wilson's** "Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson." I had no idea that a watercolor could produce such a detailed painting. The illustration has a very smooth surface texture not revealing many brush strokes. It is a very realistic piece that shows Sherlock Holmes and his partner Dr. Watson staring at the viewer in front of a London cityscape, and how they would exist in a "real life" setting. The whole thing works for me because it really gives you a sense of being there.

Also, it conveys an eerie feeling perfectly. It's saying to me, "What sort of mysterious paranormal being are they going to meet tonight." Overall, it is a very captivating piece, and I think I will look into some of his other works!



I also liked **John Blumen's** "Lady of the Lake," a digital painting depicting a science fiction scene with a woman bringing a sword out of a lake while a knight watches. I think it represents Excalibur and how it is retrieved from a lake by a woman. The figures are very realistic, with sharp lines. The compositional layout of this piece was done very well; it keeps the eye moving from the sword, to the woman, to the man in the background. The colors and shadows in this piece give it a very otherworldly feel to it. Overall I enjoyed this piece, maybe due to my liking of this mysterious mythical feel.



Once I saw [the work in this exhibit] I started noticing illustrations all around me in my day-to-day life. It is nice to see how big a part illustration has in the world. Overall, I really enjoyed this exhibit. It was both educational and entertaining. -Justin Steffler, BFA_Art with Teacher Certification

The first piece I would like to discuss was by **Paul LeRoy Gehres** titled "Tribute to Amy Winehouse." The medium Paul used was acrylic spray paint with gold leaves bordering the picture, and the canvas was medium size. I really liked the idea of this piece, and I thought that the gold

leaves added a more fancy aspect to the portrait. However, I did not like the portrait of Amy Winehouse herself because it looked somewhat animate. Also, the artist made her look like a cartoon, in my opinion, and I don't really think that's the appropriate style to go for when doing a tribute. A more realistic approach could have made the piece better.

Next, **Phil Wilson** had two pieces which were very impressive with extreme detail. "Encounter," was a large acrylic/airbrush. This piece was one of my favorites because of the great detail and realism about the dinosaurs he painted. It was really amazing. "Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson" was also very detailed and had some brightness about it. Both had pretty literal representations. The thing I liked best about **Dave d'Incau's** digital/pencil piece, "Mayer Hawthorne," was the glasses the man in the picture was wearing. They were very shiny and almost transparent looking. It was really unique and I would like to ask the artist how he did this complicated piece.

Mark Klinger had a lot of pieces in this particular gallery and just like the others I don't see a whole lot of hidden meaning in the paintings because they are very realistic. I really enjoyed his pieces because I'm an animal lover so, of course, I thought they were really cute. Another realistic educational piece was done by **Frederick Carlson** titled "Pennsylvania Wetlands Habitat," which was carefully done with water colors, dye, gouache, and graphite. I wasn't sure what



gouache was, but I looked it up on artspectrum.com and it told me that it's basically a water based paint and can be used for smoother, precise details. This made a lot of sense to me because that piece was extremely detailed and I think it's the kind of picture that would be in a school text book on science or biology because it shows so much detail about the habitat. Overall, I enjoyed this exhibit very much: there was so much detail and talent in each amazing piece of art. -*Kate Brannon, Therapeutic Recreation Service*

Dave D'Incau's print, "Out 'n About" shows an amazing variety of vibrant, digital colors. His clever mix of pencil and digital colors displays a beautiful line quality that could never be achieved any other way. The bike, bringing the viewers' eyes across the composition and into the background, demonstrates a terrific use of perspective. The background displays transparent versions of colors borrowed from the figure, giving a rest for the viewer. -*Kayla Rogers, BFA-Art with Teacher Certification*

One of **Frederick Carlson's** works was a picture within a picture, which I thought was an interesting idea, called "Cardinal Newman's Journey." The image of the man is very well detailed, and the image of the same man painted at a younger age was framed in the corner. The boxed smaller image helped create a stronger composition.

The next artist that I thought was interesting was **Frances Halley**. Her imagery caught my eye because her works reminded me of a quilted family crest. The one I enjoyed the most was "Folk Art Wedding-Blessing." The edges around the objects were soft and rounded but, inside, all of the shapes were very choppy, geometric ones that made for great contrast.



One of my favorite artists was **Brad Blahnick**. He uses a collage technique that emphasizes a little bit of humor. My favorite piece was called "Lumber Jack." You can tell he uses images that he finds or takes pictures of, and then incorporates his drawings in with these images which really created interesting textures and effects.



Mary Dunn had a piece called "Koi." She works primarily in oil paints. This painting was incredible. The perspective was as if you were looking down into a pond and you saw all of these fish swimming just below the surface of the water. The colors of the fish and the reflective quality of the water were wonderful.

One of my favorite techniques is to work with pencil and then scan my images into the computer and manipulate them. **Dave D'Incau, Jr.** drew a face of a man, then turned the image digital. The portrait ended at the neck, and I wished there was more to the composition. The image has some interesting brush stroke lines over the top of the drawing, but I couldn't tell if that was a glaze used or if the strokes were rendered on the computer. The piece was primarily grey-scale with some subtle hints of blue here and there to make the image really pop.

Overall the show was a great success; there were many different artists and different styles that complimented one another. Many of the pieces had text added to them and more interaction with the audience. The illustrations without text, however, let the artist tell the story with images. It was really interesting to see how different everyone's styles were and how they approach different subjects with an array of media to keep their work interesting. -*Samantha Abbott, BFA-Art*

Science talk adds "live" element to SRU Exhibit



The Art Department at Slippery Rock University received a visit from Carnegie Museum of Natural History's artist, **Mark Klinger**, whose work was part of the PSI exhibit in the Martha Gault Gallery on campus. In the October 18 presentation, Mark talked about his illustrations on display, bringing them to life through added information. He showed slides of more examples of his work and brought some of the specimens he used as subjects. Mark covered many fascinating topics: the research required for scientific illustration, the collaboration between artists and scientists, the many techniques used to create both 2D and 3D work, and how he uses technology.

In addition to the Art Department, the talk drew interested students and faculty from many others, including Biology and Communications. They asked numerous questions about the examples he brought, and how he is able to achieve specific effects in his illustrations.

PSI thanks Mark for going on location and adding new dimension to the show!

ICON7: Drawn Together

ICON7, the national Illustration Conference, is set for June 13-16 in Providence, RI. Early Bird tickets are still available at the discount rate of \$525. Full details and online registration link can be found at: www.theillustrationconference.org

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Announcements

Utrecht Discount Returns!

One of our prominent booth sponsors, offering major discounts and prizes at PSI's Illustration Conference in November, 2010 was Utrecht Art Supplies, 1930 East Carson Street. Now they are inviting PSI members to sign up for an ongoing discount.

Utrecht Pittsburgh will now offer a 10% Discount* to all PSI Members who show their membership card and register for a FREE Utrecht ArtSmart Card (and provide name, address and email). Utrecht also offers a 105% Price Guarantee where they will not only match any local competitor's advertised price, but beat it by 5%. Feel free to give them a call at 412-432-1945 with any questions.

*** Discount can not be combined with any other offer, does not apply to clearance or sale items, Gift cards, BEST BUYS, Furniture, Lighting, and items designated as nondiscountable.**

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He Shone with the Light of Honesty

by Fred Carlson

Simms Taback died peacefully in his home on December 25, 2011. He was a founding member and president of The Graphic Artists Guild, and tireless advocate for artist's rights.



I met Simms a third of a century ago at the 1979 Illustrators Workshop in Tarrytown, New York, when I was 24 and just starting to contemplate the challenge of free-lancing. He was so happy when the At-Large Chapter in 1987 gave so many members around

the country a structured voice in Guild affairs when I was the first president of that chapter. Then, he later encouraged me to come forward and be the first non-NYC illustrator elected as National President. He knew we could do it together and move the Guild ahead.

We were driven by trying to answer the question: How do we make the Guild stronger as an organization? What a simple realist Simms was! Simms knew you had to have paid dedicated people to truly enact change, and he was willing to do the homework to help find the correct "fit." This effort that culminated with the three-year relationship with the UAW, though finally unworkable, taught our Guild many many lessons about the cost of change. He probably won more awards for great work during all these years as well!

Although not the only leader of the artist/designer/illustrators rights community, Simms Taback was clearly the most gifted, experienced, articulate, tenured warrior of this movement. Simms simply refused to believe that organizing artists and designers was a losing battle. Since it would take time and effort to see the desired results, he taught the patience and long view necessary to continue the struggle. He inspired and drew others together to create an information-sharing tool, Pricing and Ethical Guidelines, that has

revolutionized our industry. Artists' ownership is a top-of-the-agenda topic when we discuss assignments nowadays; it was not always like this. Simms shone with artistic integrity and true honesty about the ways our profession could be improved, and he NEVER said no to volunteering one more time and sharing his experience with the new practitioners who shared his idealism. His motivations were derived from a profound caring attitude and I personally never felt a heavy-handed political bias in his words. Simms was beyond politics. He cannot be honored enough for the blood, sweat and tears he brought over the course of his life to improving working conditions in our field.

I constantly draw on Simms' simple sharing human example to keep me refreshed and excited about what we do, both as artists individually, and what we are capable of accomplishing as talented people together. It was never about him but about us...and that attitude made his work all the more remarkable.



GAG National Board of Directors at first all-member convention Eye to Eye, Washington DC, 1992, taken during Fred Carlson's (center, front) term as National President. Simms Taback is in upper right, with the bowtie.

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2012 Meeting Changes!

The **Business of Illustration** gatherings will be held on the last Friday of each month. Members can see who's hosting which gatherings via the schedule posted on PSI's website. Bring your portfolio, a piece of art you need some feedback on, listen to the featured illustrator and discuss the latest topics about the business of illustration in a social environment.

The **PSI social meetings** are being moved to the second Tuesday of each month at 6:30pm at the Church Brew Works, 3525 Liberty Avenue. PSI will continue to purchase pizza for attending members.

Saturnalia 2011



The 13th Annual PSI Saturnalia Party was held December 10, 2011 at Vice-President **John Blumen's** home in Brentwood. Saturnalia, the traditional holiday extravaganza presented by PSI, annually attracts the largest crowd of our social night season and many clients and friends of members.

The board and membership of PSI thanks John for hosting this party for the past three years! And kudos to all who brought food and worked together from the PSI end to anchor the food table and beverage bar!



continued on page 7...

Spotlight on... ROB ROGERS



This month's "winner" just snared the best kind of cartoonist award: voted tops in the 'Burgh!

No surprise that Pittsburgh City Paper readers voted Rob Rogers Best Cartoonist in Pittsburgh in the publication's Best of 2011: People and Places poll. PSI members swept the awards with **Wayno** coming in second and **Joe Wos**, third. Rob's editorial cartoons covering national and international issues are looked forward to daily by Pittsburgh Post-Gazette readers and beyond, syndicated by United Feature Syndicate. Rob's reaction: "I was surprised and excited to have won. A lot of my fans have been overly generous, saying things like, 'Of course you won...who else is there?' They clearly have not seen any of Joe Wos' cartoon mazes. Seriously, though, most people don't realize that Pittsburgh has always been home to a lot of fantastic cartoonists and is now, with the help of the ToonSeum, becoming a mecca for cartoon fans as well." PSI's monthly social meeting place,



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Church Brew Works, was named First Place for Best Reuse of a Building. (No argument there!) A complete list of results can be found at: <http://www.pittsburghcitypaper.ws/pittsburgh/best-of-2011/BestOf?oid=1459454>

Rob has ventured into animated political cartoons. "Ascent of Man" is one of three examples ready to view on his youtube channel: <http://www.youtube.com/RobRogersCartoons> "All of these animations were put together by creating handdrawn cels, shooting them with a digital camera, importing the images into DigiCel Flipbook (animation software) and then importing the clips into iMovie," he says. Rob talks more about them on his blog: <http://blogs.sites.post-gazette.com/index.php/opinion/rob-rogers-cartoons/32041-im-a-little-tea-party>

Read more about Rob on his website at: <http://www.robrogers.com/>



PSI members **Phil Wilson** (Rickenbacker guitar and vocals), **Craig Jennion** (Gibson Les Paul guitar and backup vocals), **Fred Carlson** (Fender Stratocaster, Taylor acoustic guitar, Gibson mandolin and backup vocals), and **Molly Feuer** (fiddle) rendered some musical cheer in an upstairs jam session that stretched until almost



1:30am.

Members attending were **Rick Antolic**, **David Biber**, **Anna Brewer**, President **Mark Brewer**, VP **John**

Blumen, **Fred Carlson**, **Vince Dorse**, **Molly Feuer**, **Jamie Huntsman**, **Craig Jennion**, **Judy Lauso**,

Pat Lewis, Scholarship Chair **Rhonda Libbey**, **Kurt Pfaff**, **Ron Magnes**, Secretary **James Mellett**, **Beth**

O'Neill, New Member Committee Chair **Kathy Rooney**, Treasurer **Gina Scanlon**, **George Schill**, **Nora Thompson**, **Phil Wilson**, and

Ilene Winn-Lederer.



Photos by **Alexander Patho Jr.** Link to photo gallery: http://pathophoto.com/psi/saturday_nalia_2011/

What's With This Economy Anyway?

A Message to Encourage in Down Times: The View from Monticello Drive

Fred Carlson

It's no secret that the past four years have been a challenge to professionals in the illustration field. Starting with the banking liquidity crisis in October 2007, the stock plunge in fall 2008, stimulus spending that has gone to major players not related to our industry, nagging high unemployment and a decline in GDP in real terms almost every quarter--this period has been the most challenging since my career began in the late 1970s. I have had my four WORST years in my 34-year career over this 2007-2011 time.

This is not fun. The "creative survival fund," our liquid savings, are pretty tapped out these days at 118 Monticello. We can add to this lack-of-spending implosion the effects of the recession on the client base we serve and the pressure of high tech change on the field which is changing our end use from print to...what? It's a change still in major flux as the impact of Kindle and web technologies on traditional media continues.

The recession has had profound impact on the national business in real terms. While PSI has actually had a net increase in members the past few years, and we are even net +7 in member growth in 2011 (a very challenging year where we lost 15 members; gained 22 so far this year), the news from other illustration societies is terrible. The Los Angeles Society lost 60% of their members the past decade. The Washington DC Illustrators Club lost a third of their members, and then had a recent bump back up. (Maybe stimulus spending is helping DC more than everywhere else? No surprise there!). The Cleveland NOIS group has experienced local economic challenges since the early 2000s and continue to move ahead with a stalwart 30-40 members. The New York SI had a white knight come in and donate a huge endowment recently of a few million dollars that has allowed them to keep their doors open. New York had already lost a third of the people employed in the graphic arts industry after the 9/11 attack and subsequent cordon off of the lower Manhattan area in 2001 and 2002.

As I look back on the economic trends of the past 35 years, this recession without question dwarfs the oil-shock/high interest rate recession of 1979-1982 (when I began my own company). This current crunch also is much worse than the double header downturn with the dot.com bubble bursting followed by 9/11 (when the first four months after 9/11 I wondered if anyone would commission a drawing ever again). Two recent large bids that normally would have come through describe my current frustration: the first

is a set of illustrations on the Minutemen of the Revolution for an educational client, the second on desert animals for an Arizona Fish & Wildlife nature center. Both these clients say MY pricing is perfectly reasonable, but it's the overall budget on the projects themselves that the client needs to understand. No one seems to know how much total projects cost whether using illustration or not, and the lack of spending the past four years isn't keeping people up to speed on realistic budgeting.

What can I tell our struggling experienced members and our new younger members who are wondering why they ever decided to try this field?

1. This too shall pass. The US economy will rebound at some point. Hang in there.
2. Be prepared, no matter how difficult the discipline requires, to save to prepare for one terrible year every three decent years. You may find the savings you accumulate during the three good years will be used up over the terrible year, but at least you'll survive in this field we love. I've looked back on 27 good years and nine terrible years so the 3:1 ratio of decent years to terrible years still holds true even with the last four being the worst.
3. Do NOT give your work away now or when the economy begins picking up again. There are many factors contributing to downward pressure on pricing (and seriously, we all know that rates are about where they were in 1990 after four years of this vacuous economy), but we do ourselves a disservice by contributing to the problem by giving work away at low rates. Clients need to learn what it takes to purchase and plan budgets for illustration use and the field continues to retreat when we drive down our own pricing. Use your resources within PSI to ASK OTHER EXPERIENCED MEMBERS when you are faced with a bid situation and you want to hear information advice that can help you get what the job is worth.
4. There will be a huge buying spree (not from traditional print magazine markets, but from corporate, advertising, and institutional buyers with better budgets anyway) when the climate gets better. I do not know when this will happen but it happened big time in the 2003-2006 years when pent-up demand finally came through and everyone was bidding on large assignments. When this rush happens, it's when the work is due that matters, not fighting over the profit margins--bid realistically and aggressively when the work flow starts coming back.

5. Be aggressive with new strategies for marketing on the 'net, seeking new markets for your originals and prints, and networking with industry pros in the high tech world. That's where the future of our business is. Pittsburgh continues to grow as a hub of new technologies and while we have a terrific support group now with PSI on the aesthetic and professional front, I see this region as a source of a more generous buying market as the next years unfold.

6. Use your PSI resources! We will continue to be a spokes-group for encouraging that all communicators and decision-makers use illustration (witness the new DUI Directory which has been paying off for our members locally). There's a communication vacuum out there advocating for the use of illustration and we continue to fill it with upholding some of the finest work seen in the United States.

May this New Year be a time for retooling and rededication to our chosen craft. See you at our Business of Illustration meetings and social meetings in 2012! Hopefully companies start spending again after their four-year freeze-up.

Fred is former President of Pittsburgh Society of Illustrators from 2000-2004, former National President of the Graphic Artists Guild 1991-1993 and At-Large Chapter President 1987-1993. He has illustrated over 350 CD, LP, DVD, and cassette covers since 1984. His first free-lance job was portraits for Carnegie Magazine in the fall of 1974 so this year makes his 38th year earning money drawin' pitchers n'at...

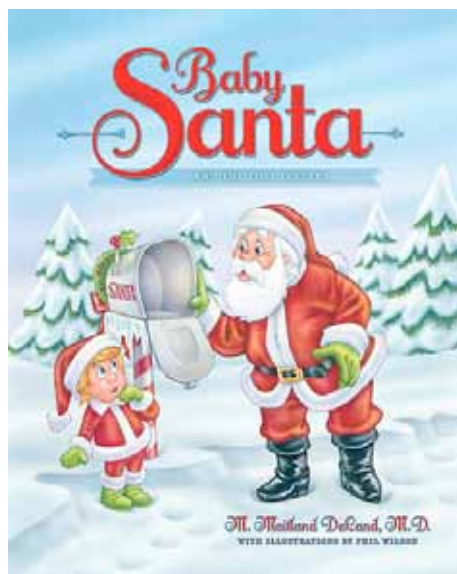


"Thin Ice" by Mark Brewer will accompany an article on the world economy in the February issue of Strategic Finance Magazine.

Behind the Brush

See what PSI members have been up to this month

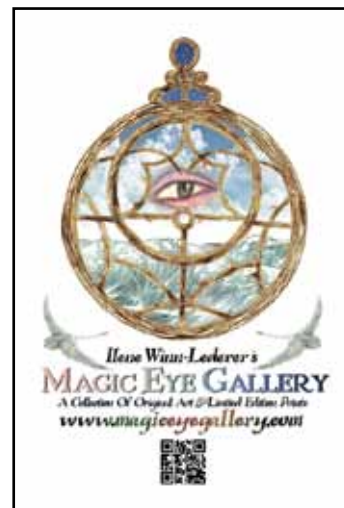
Santa series, and the 71st book that Phil has illustrated.



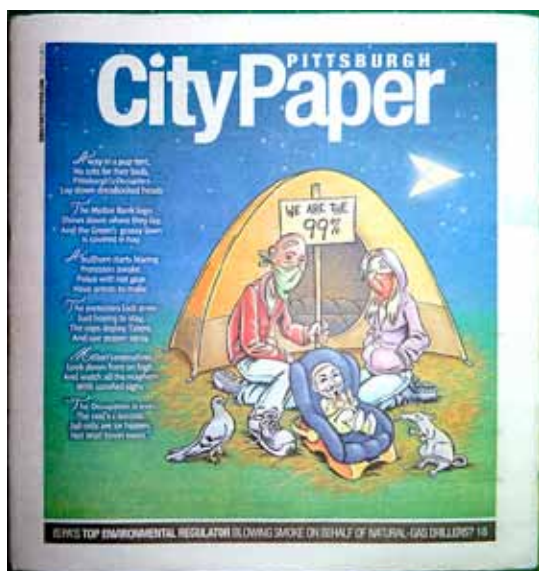
Ilene Winn-Lederer is continuing to develop new images and illustrated alphabets which can be seen at: www.magicseyegallery.com Here's one in Hebrew called "Scroll."



Here is Ilene's new postcard for this site. Note the qr code; you can scan it with your smartphone and get directly to the site!



And here's a recent illustration from Ilene's London Underground series that is posted at her blog, Imaginarius.



Vince Dorse did this cover for Pittsburgh City Paper as a rush job the weekend before Christmas. He reports that just days after publication, the editor received a wellthumbed and marked-up copy of this issue with some editorial commentary scrawled on the cover. "If you'll take note, the anonymous sender scribbled or taped baffling critiques over every element of the design," Vince says. "I'm pleased to say I was labeled 'sick' and fared much better than the City Paper itself which was labeled 'crap.' Score one for me."



Completed just months before the holidays, **Phil Wilson's** latest illustrated children's book, *Baby Santa and the Lost Letters*, is now available through Amazon and major book dealers.....(less than 350 shopping days till next Christmas!). This is the third book Phil has illustrated in the Baby

Taylor Gallery's "Risk Optics" piece for Wells Fargo Conversations <https://www.wfconversations.com/> was for a full page feature, "A Portfolio with a View," about a planning strategy that gives a clear view of investment options in today's complex financial realm.



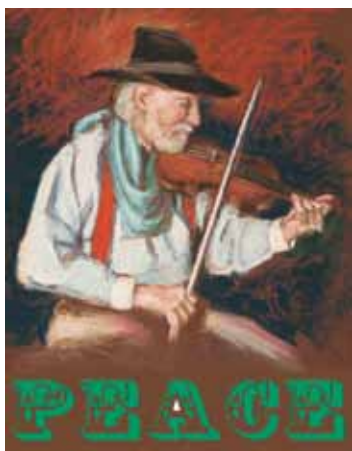
This portrait of a CMU Alumni Donor was created by **Dan Hart** for a profile feature in the December issue of Meche News.



Fred Carlson shares his most recent DVD cover for the Guitar Workshop teaching series, *The Guitar of Lonnie Johnson*.



Anne Trimble shares her 2010 Christmas card. She says, "They are always musically themed."



"I'm working on my historical fiction steam-punk graphic novel, *Hecock*, and will begin to release finished pages starting in February at www.hecocknovel.wordpress.com," reports **Leda Miller**. Leda has been posting roughs of the pages for the last two months, and asking for comments. Shown here is page 5.



Shown are two illustrations done by **Ron Mahoney** for Art Rooney, Jr., son of Pittsburgh Steelers founder Art Rooney, Sr.. "Will Wills was a colorful scout for the Steelers who played for the NY Giants from 1941 to 1943," Ron advises. "The other illustration is of Art Rooney, Jr. returning from one of the past Super Bowls with what he calls his 'game face'."



White Mountain Puzzles has just announced release of "The Eighties," the much anticipated jigsaw puzzle illustrated by **Jim Mellett**. Those of you who suggested items for inclusion will enjoy taking a close look! This new release and more of Jim's popular puzzles, including "The Sixties" and "The Seventies," are listed on the manufacturer's website at: <http://www.whitemountainpuzzles.com/products.asp?dept=34>



Beginning with the January issue, **Wayno** is doing spot illustrations for the monthly *PittGirl* column in Pittsburgh Magazine. The one shown is for the February issue.

