

Missed connections and resolutions

In the days when I was single digits, the fall season was about the chill in the late afternoons and early evening that disappeared after an hour or two of running around, resulting in pink cheeks, and chilled fingers, making it a bit hard to make a fist, all in the name of soaking up the crisp weather.

The other night, I realized that I miss this seasonal time of the day most by being a 9 to 5'er.

I decided to recapture my youth and love for this time of the year by putting on the sneakers and jetting around town to take a look at Hoboken underneath the colder twilight hours.

Though I wasn't exactly playing on the swings or tearing

around playing tag, I was still able to take in the refreshingly damp air and investigate the changing landscape of this town.

On my walk, I learned two things: wet leaves on the ground are extremely slippery, and not only are the leaves turning and greenery giving way to purple and amber potted mums, but the façade of the store fronts have also been changing.

Not only does Hoboken now have it's own movie theater – essential for rainy nights when we Hobokenites don't want to trek to Jersey City or Manhattan, but also I've noticed a few more eateries and other business bloom as if it were spring:

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KOA KOA frozen yogurt, Beauty Mark Face and Body on Newark, Miami Rice Pudding on Garden

Street, Pizza Republic on Washington, to name a few. I believe a new pub called McCarthy's also just opened on Hudson.

It's a shame that unless I walk myself as if I were my own pet, I wouldn't even know about these new places, since during the week my commuting pattern seems to lock me inside a Bermuda Triangle downtown: no farther than Adams Street, no higher than Second Street,

no further south than Newark Street.

With my iPod on as blinders, I don't look up as much as I should.

Though my walk the other night served as a great way to reconnect with the goings on around the center of town, had I paid more attention, I would not have missed out on street festivals such as the Art and Music Festival back in September, or the 70th Anniversary of the one and only Leo's Grandevous.

Missing out on seventy cents for pizza and beer deals should be a crime.

I'm guilty, Hoboken, of my head being in the clouds.

The fall season brings the idea of a fresh start, and I'm making

a few resolutions.

No doubt that the arrival of my sister (it's a definite that she's moving uptown!) will be a great way to draw me out of my downtown rut, but before we all go into hibernation for the winter, we should be sure to take in and experience both the changing foliage, and changing window displays.

It's important to stay connected, and both are sites to see in this neighborhood.

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PHILLIES

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team was becoming a bona fide force. Also in 2007, Iaquinto officially brought his clubs to Mulligans bar, a place that Iaquinto now likens to an embassy representing Phillies nation. "When you walk in Mulligans," Iaquinto says, "you're on Philadelphia soil."

While Iaquinto chats standing underneath Mulligans' awning, he is greeted by several members of the club as they arrive at the bar (He always arrives early to secure a seat right under the TV). One tentatively mentions that he brought a Cubs fan along with him. Iaquinto chuckles as he exhales a cloud of cigar smoke.

"Ah, that's okay. You guys are lovable losers," he jokes welcoming her to the club. Everyone laughs at the reference to the

Cubs' 100-plus year world championship drought and the new arrivals head inside. They seem to adore Iaquinto who sees himself as a kind of union organizer. He kids that he hopes not to end up dead and buried in an end zone like Jimmy Hoffa. Then, a woman wearing a Yankees hat walks by and playfully taunts Iaquinto. He acknowledges her and laughs off the trash-talking.

The year 2009 is especially significant because the Phillies are facing the Yankees in the World Series and Mulligans is situated in territory that is largely pro-Bronx Bombers. Ordinarily, Yankee fans appreciate the foil the Phillies play to the Mets, but now that the Phils are a threat to take down the mighty Yanks, attitudes have changed.

"During the regular season, most Yankee fans love us. They hate the Mets," he explains. "We humiliate the Mets and everyone

is happy. Now that it's the World Series, I think the mood has shifted a bit amongst Yankee fans and they are a bit irritated that we dare cheer on our team."

When asked to venture a prediction on the outcome of the Series, Iaquinto bristles and dodges the question saying, "I think if the Phillies keep playing the way they have been playing and the Yankees keep playing they have been playing, it's going to be a very good Series."

Like Iaquinto, Vinny Caruolo grew up in the Philadelphia suburbs. He's lived in Hoboken for nearly six years and is a veteran member of the club who's been a part of it "since we started our domination over the Mets three years ago."

Caruolo admires Phillies second-baseman Chase Utley for his workman-like approach to the game and his quick, devastating swing. However, unlike Iaquinto,

Caruolo is eager to make a prediction. He expects a Phillies repeat World Series victory.

"The Phillies will win the World Series in seven games," he said prior to Game One.

Ryan O'Donnell concurs. He's lived in Hoboken for just over three years and is a member of both the Phillies and Eagles clubs. He, too, anticipates a Phillies win in seven games. As for his favorite players current and all-time: "Utley and Lenny Dykstra. I love how both of them play the game, hard-nosed, sacrifice anything for the team. They put winning as a team above anything else in the way they play"

Chase Utley is a popular player among the club's members and for good reason. The second-baseman connected for two home runs in the Phillies 6-1 Game One victory over the Yankees. After the game, Iaquinto uploaded pictures he took of the event to his blog,

Philly2Hoboken, many of which depict Phillies fans rejoicing. Their team dominated the first game.

He also has a Facebook group page, which he says makes organizing and communicating with members significantly easier. And, he adds, the group doesn't confine festivities to the bar. They work with a group called PhillyTailgate.com to organize events at Yankee Stadium and Citi Field when the Phillies are in town.

Iaquinto relishes the opportunity to bring "a slice of Philadelphia life" to Hoboken for himself and his followers. His vision is for the club to continue growing so Phillies fans will always have a place to celebrate together in triumph and commiserate together in defeat. Whether his club will be celebrating or commiserating this year remains to be seen. The Yankees took Game Two and at press time the Series is tied at one game apiece.

89 years ago. My father died last week.

>:(Boo to Beth Mason for her negative campaigning.

:) Yay for the Cake Boss!

>:(Boo to the Staten Island-looking couple that gave me the finger on Washington Street on

Oct. 29 at 2:15 a.m. What did I do to deserve that? Why did you think we were racing?! Well, I'm glad you won the race so that then you and your girlfriend or sister or both or whatever she was could have gone home and cooked you up a nice tomato sauce. "Ay yo, Anthony!" People like you should stay on THAT side of the

river.

:) Yay for the young man who gave up his seat on the PATH train for me. My medical problems have made it difficult for me to stand for long periods of time. I wish your good manners rub off on others in your generation!

>:(Boo to the clique on the Board of Ed.

:) Yay for love!

>:(Boo to the City Council for bringing in a movie theater without first figuring out where people were gonna park.

:) Yay to the organizers of the Hoboken Farmers Market! You are true friends to the City of Hoboken. Thanks!

>:(Boo to my upstairs neighbors who must be jump-roping in clogs for several hours everyday.