

The *TIMES* of... SKINKER DEBALIVIERE

Vol. 23 No.6

November 1992

FREE

The oldest neighborhood newspaper in St. Louis

Grace United Methodist Church Celebrates 100th Birthday

by Lana Stein

This November marks the centennial of Grace United Methodist Church which has occupied the corner of Waterman and Skinker since October 11, 1914. The church was founded on November 20, 1892 on Lindell and Newstead and then followed its parishioners westward to its present home. The current church was rebuilt stone by stone from the original edifice on Lindell. The building was completely redecorated in 1975.

Today the church's membership is drawn from throughout the metropolitan area though about thirty percent call the Central West End home. Grace United Methodist was instrumental in the formation of the Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council in 1966. It was also in the 1960s that Grace United Methodist made a firm commitment to "remain a metropolitan church in the true sense" at its city location on Skinker.

In 1975 Grace United Methodist established the Breitmayer Ministry as a tribute to the memory of Douglas R. Breitmayer who had been Grace Church Minister of Music for 14 years prior to his death. This special ministry is aimed at fulfilling the needs of youth and adults in the immediate neighborhood. Laura Wright, the present director, lives on Waterman. Grace Church has conducted its summer program since the founding of the ministry. It allows children a place to gather during summer vacation. Participants range in age from 2 to 12 and



part of the funding comes from SLATE. This summer program does some tutoring, math exercises, reading, science, art projects and has fitness periods. There are also field trips once a week.

The Breitmayer ministry also tries to deliver Thanksgiving baskets to those in need and to have a Halloween or Christmas party for neighborhood children. Other accomplishments include a jobfind program for the unemployed and a weatherization program for those in older homes.

In addition, Grace United Methodist runs a very popular preschool program that has been utilized by many Skinker DeBaliviere parents.

Grace United Methodist Church is planning several events to celebrate its centennial. On November 20 there will be a celebratory dinner at the Holiday Inn in Clayton for members and friends. Then, on Sunday, November 22 the Church is holding its special centennial service and birthday party. The Church has invited all its neighbors to join in worship and celebration that Sunday.

Congratulations to an important neighborhood

**Congratulations to our neighbors
Nancy Farmer, new 64th district
State Rep. and Dee Joyce Hayes,
Circuit Attorney Elect**

Executive Director Sought for SDCC

The Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council (SDCC) is accepting resumes for the position of Executive Director. The Executive Director develops public awareness of SDCC, serves as SDCC's liaison with a variety of public and private sector organizations, organizes and participates in SDCC activities, and administers the policies, procedures, programs, budget and day-to-day activities of SDCC. The Executive Director is expected to work frequent evenings and weekends.

Applicants should have the following qualifications:

**A Bachelor's degree or commensurate work experience;

**Excellent organizational and writer/oral communications skills;

**Interpersonal skills, tolerance and the ability to work with diverse groups and individuals;

**Self-discipline and the ability to work independently

Candidates living in, or willing to relocate to, Skinker DeBaliviere will be given priority. Starting salary ranges \$20,000-\$25,000, plus benefits, depending on qualifications.

Resumes along with a writing sample should be sent to: SDCC, % Jeannerett and Associates, P.O. Box 12007, St. Louis, MO 63112-0107, and postmarked by 11/20/92.

EEOC

THE GREAT CHILI COOKOFF IS COMING NOVEMBER 21st

Gather around all friends of The Times. Food, fun, and festive fellowship designed to help fund St. Louis's oldest neighborhood newspaper is planned. We are looking for those who say they produce the world's greatest chili to offer their wares for prizes and tasting!

We are looking for judges who are willing to select the best chili chefs in St. Louis!

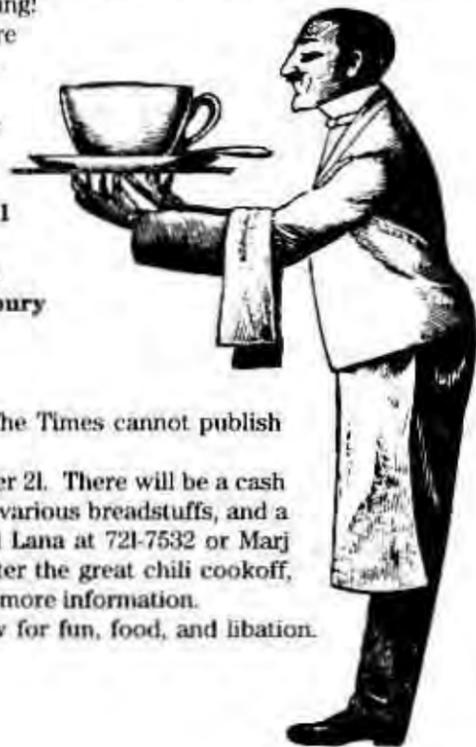
We are looking for everyone else to come and have a good time!

Date: Saturday, November 21
Time: 7:00 p.m.
Place: Crossroads School on DeBaliviere at Kingsbury
Admission: \$7.50
Judgeship Fee: \$25

This is all in a good cause. The Times cannot publish without reader support.

We want to see you on November 21. There will be a cash bar, and we'll supply crackers and various breadstuffs, and a couple little surprises. Please call Lana at 721-7532 or Marj Weir at 863-7558 if you wish to enter the great chili cookoff, be a judge, or just would like some more information.

Mark your calendars right now for fun, food, and libation. The Times is calling you.



Editor's Notebook

by Lana Stein

During a recent conversation with a Times board member, I was pleased to learn that she and her husband limit their sons' television viewing to no more than a couple hours per week. She was tired of television's shrillness as well as the constant commercialism.

I was excited about her stance for another reason. It is my fervent belief, now backed by some scholarly studies, that television viewing detracts from academic performance. I certainly have found this phenomenon at each of the three universities where I have taught over the past twelve years. And, it's getting worse.

Constant television viewers often are poor readers. Their attention span is poor and they seem to want everything wrapped up in thirty minutes or an hour. My colleague says that when one is watching TV, brain waves are flat. Reading produces clear evidence of vigorous brain activity.

Worse of all, nonreaders frequently are very poor writers. I have clear evidence of this each semester. If a reader cares to doubt my blanket

statement, I volunteer to share nonidentifying samples of college seniors' writing at a moment's notice.

Perhaps, elementary and secondary schools have not learned to teach the TV generations. Unless children have the rare good fortune to grow up in homes where TV is limited, they present a great challenge to traditional methods. Either we have to learn how to educate those captured by the home screen or we have to limit the time that screen is illuminated.

This is a selfish desire on my part; I want students who read the assigned material and can construct a literate essay. And, to my mind, reading is still the key. My family did not have a TV until I was eight and already an inveterate reader. I watch TV now but am certain that one week's worth of viewing at my home does not total one day's at many others.

The TV can be a giant babysitter or mind num-ber. Escapism and entertainment have their place. However, to ensure a work force able to handle the tasks of the next century, forget the videos, etc., and give books a chance.



Neighborhood Meetings:

Nov. 9
Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council Board Meeting, 6010 Kingsbury, 7:30 p.m. All are welcome.

Nov. 12
Delmar Business Owners Association luncheon. Happy Taco, 11:30 a.m. Owners will discuss the Delmar redevelopment plan.

Nov. 19
28th Ward Regular Democrats, Portland Towers Ballroom on Union, 7:00 p.m. All mayoral and comptroller candidates will make presentations.

Nov. 23
Nina Place Condominium Assn. Board of Directors meeting, 8:00 p.m. 6010 Kingsbury. All owners welcome.

Dec. 11
28th Ward Regular Democrats Christmas Party at Portland Towers. Members and prospective members welcome. Call 454-1863 or 727-1727 for information.

Other Events of Interest

Nov-Feb. 28
Hear My Quilt: 150 Years of African-American Quilts, Gallery 100, St. Louis Art Museum

Nov. 13-15
Opera Theatre of St. Louis presents "The Very Last Green Thing" at Missouri Botanical Garden.

Nov. 14-15
St. Roch Christmas Bazaar

Nov. 19
Spatz, vocal swing quartet, entertains at a benefit for the Grace and Peace Winter Shelter at the Off-Broadway Club, 3511 Lemp, \$7, 9:00 p.m. See related article. (p.4)

Nov. 21
Chili Cookoff for The TIMES, Crossroads School, \$7.50, 7:30 p.m. See related article. (p.1)

Nov. 20
Grace Methodist Centennial Dinner

Nov. 22
Grace Methodist Centennial Worship Service and Party. All neighborhood friends welcome.



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The Times, 6010 Kingsbury, 63112 or call 863-7658.

Guidelines for Submitting Copy

The Times welcomes unsolicited articles and letters. Because of the small size and volunteer nature of the writing staff, the quality and range of The Times has always depended in large part on submissions from non-staff area residents.

All material—articles, letters, notices, classified ads—must be typewritten on opaque paper, double-spaced, and signed. Signature on correspondence to the editor may be omitted by request. Calendar listings should be phoned or mailed to 6010 Kingsbury. Deadline for all copy is the 15th of the month.

In a news article it is essential that the writer state the most important information in the first paragraph. The writer is responsible for the accuracy of the data, including times, dates, location and particularly the spelling of names.

Any pictures of illustrations submitted should be black and white.

The Editor retains the right to omit or alter any material.

Send all correspondence to 6010 Kingsbury, 63112. Deadline: 15th of the month or call 721-7632.

Extension of Conservation District Proposed

In December 1991, a large portion of the Skinker DeBaliviere neighborhood became a housing conservation district. When ownership or occupancy of residential property is changing hands, that property must be inspected by someone from the Building Division. That inspection checks for certain basic deficiencies such as doors and locks in good condition, ceilings and walls free of holes or loose plaster, electrical fixtures and switches in good operating condition, workable plumbing fixtures including hot water, etc. There is a \$40 charge for the inspection. This program is designed to insure that neighborhood housing stock, particularly rental, is maintained in standard condition. Alderman Dan McGuire has called it "another

tool to ensure the long-term stability of the neighborhood."

On October 23 Alderman McGuire introduced a bill to extend the boundaries of our conservation district to include that area north of Delmar from the city limits east to the Bi-State Development Agency Metro Link Right-of-Way (thus encompassing the Wabash Triangle). A public hearing was held on Thursday, November 12, at 9:00 a.m. in Room 208 City Hall before the aldermanic Public Safety Committee. The purpose of this hearing was limited to a discussion of the proposed extension. The public was welcome to attend and to give testimony. If there are any further questions regarding this proposed expansion of the conservation district, please contact Alderman McGuire at City Hall.

Thanks to Art Santen

Rosedale Recognition at 25th Halloween Party

Aside from the longevity of our marriages or maybe our jobs, how many of us can say that we've done anything for 25 straight years? Some people commit to doing a volunteer job for two or three years, maybe even a few more, but most would laugh in your face if you suggested they do that job for a quarter century. We don't know if Art Santen knew at the beginning that he would be organizing the Rosedale Neighborhood Association Halloween Party for 25 years, but he has done it faithfully all that time without a complaint. We think that kind of service deserves recognition. Thanks a million, Art. Your commitment to the neighborhood and especially to its children is a model for us all.

As a surprise for Art, the Rosedale Neighborhood Association took up a discreet collection to provide a memento of the occasion and presented it to him before the Halloween Party at St. Roch's on October 31.



(Above Right): Bill Christman presents Art Santen with specially created art work.. (Below Left): Winners of the 1992 contest sponsored by Rosedale Neighbors at St. Roch School. (Below Left): Alderman Dan McGuire reads mayoral proclamation declaring October 31 "Art Santen Day "

Photos by King Schoenfeld

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PEOPLE'S CLINIC EXPANDS AGAIN 1972 PEOPLE'S CLINIC IS NOW PEOPLE'S HEALTH CENTERS 1992

by Mary Schmit

Can you believe it? Twenty years ago it all began in the Kingsbury storefront. On October 5, 1992 People's Clinic (now Peoples' Health Centers) broke ground for expanding their facilities another 37,000 square feet. The new building will be linked to the old clinic and will enable the Health Center to not only provide better care but to expand services to more people.

It was an exciting homecoming for this former board member! As I sat with other invited guests under a big white canopy. It was good to say, "Hello," to former and current board members. Doctors David Malone and Daniel Whitehead and I recalled the early days of the clinic when professional and student volunteers opened a small office at Kingsbury and DesPeres. Then there were difficult and challenging days of growth and moving to the present location on Delmar. Peoples' Clinic opened a second office in Maplewood in 1986. And now this new expansion which

will almost double its present space!

The ground breaking ceremony moved quickly due to the talents of Dr. Donald Suggs, the Ground Breaking Chairman, and Roy Heimburger, People's Capital Campaign Chairman. Father Paul Reinert, S. J. (former president of St. Louis University) offered a blessing. Jack Keane from the mayor's office read a citation honoring the clinic. Board members and staff wearing construction helmets broke the first ground with a ribboned silver shovel amid smiles, pictures, and a burst of brilliant red and blue balloons.

Betty Jean Kerr, Executive Director, and staff deserve special congratulations for providing quality health care. Their efforts and success at proving that quality health care is a human right and not a privilege and has necessitated this expansion.

Peoples' Health Centers invites you to visit at 5701 Delmar.

Grace and Peace Fundraiser for Homeless Is Planned

The Grace and Peace Fellowship has a licensed shelter which is used to provide temporary housing for homeless women during the winter months. This shelter has been in operation for seven years and is located in the basement of Grace and Peace Fellowship at 5574 Delmar.

On Thursday, November 19, at

9:00 p.m., the vocal swing quartet SPATZ will perform a benefit concert; all proceeds from this concert will go to the Grace and Peace shelter.

The concert will take place at the Off-Broadway Club, 3511 Lemp (near Broadway). The phone number is 773-3363. Tickets are \$7 and are available the night of the show.



Items to be sold or auctioned at the St. Roch Christmas Bazaar, November 14-15. Photo by King Schoenfeld

Vicissitudes

by Marj Weir

For posterity let us record that 1992 provided not only a uniquely moderate summer but a stupendously beautiful fall. No doubt this has inspired an optimistic and romantic spirit which helps account for the high number of marriages which have taken place recently or are scheduled soon.

Kim Thomas, granddaughter of Lucille and Charles Mongo, of the 6100 block of Westminster, married Kenneth Easley in October.

Lou Hamilton and Tricia Roland will take their vows on November 21 at St. Roch's. They live on the 6000 block of McPherson. The date is the same one on which Lou's grandparents married many years ago.

By then Danny Hudspeth of the 6000 block of McPherson, son

of Sue and Jim Kropp of the 6100 block of Westminster, will have wed his bride Elizabeth Laura Riley. Their vows were exchanged on November 14

In December, Diana Simmons of the Nina Place condominiums will marry Tony Williams. It's worthy to note that many of the young people who grew up in this neighborhood remain here to raise their own families.

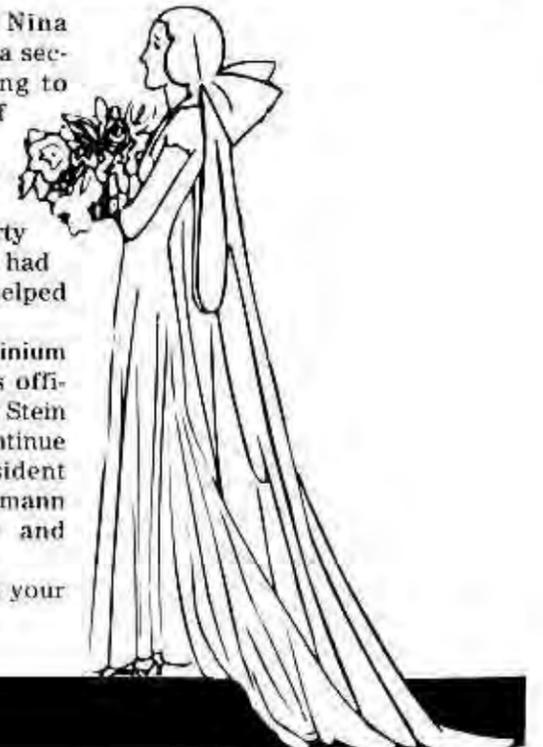
Another case in point is Andy Cross and his wife Linda, of the 6000 block of Waterman, who have just had their first child, a daughter. Andy is the son of John and Jane Cross of the 6100 block of Kingsbury. There are many such examples of the enduring attractiveness of life in Skinker-DeBaliviere.

Claudia Perry of the Nina Place Condos gave birth to a second son recently, bringing to three the total number of babies in the development.

Richard Rice of the 6100 block of Westminster was honored with a birthday party at the end of October. He had to turn 40, so his friends helped him over the hurdle.

The Nina Place Condominium Association has chosen its officers for the next year. Lana Stein and Richard Beitler will continue as president and vice-president respectively. Debbie Twellmann will be the new secretary and Wes Gray the treasurer.

Don't forget to call in your news! 863-7558 evenings.



Delmar Is Becoming Beautiful: Exciting Times for the Commercial District

by Joe Miller

- A&C Auto Parts
- Art Directions
- Boulevard Cleaners
- Daniels Realty (concerning the building at the corner of Skinker and Delmar and 622-628 N. Skinker)
- Gingiss Formalwear
- Glass Doctor
- Happy Taco
- J&W Package Liquor
- Johnson Real Estate
- Pawnmasters
- Palomino Lounge
- Robertson's Furniture & Appliances
- Sunshine Academy

What do the businesses listed above have in common? In addition to the fact that they are all part of the Delmar Boulevard commercial district, the listed

businesses are proof that these are exciting times for the commercial district. As a result of St. Louis City's Neighborhood Commercial District Incentives program, each of the above businesses has begun the process of installing awnings at one half of the regular cost; Radiant Products is also installing new windows. The Delmar commercial district was selected as one of twenty similar districts throughout the city. The City of St. Louis is matching half of approved facade improvements up to \$2,500.

The Delmar area also can expect to see street trees planted on Delmar from Skinker to DeBaliviere. Banners will line the streets as well. The banners and trees also come as a result of the Neighborhood Commercial District Incentives program. They are

funded by a joint program of the city and Southwestern Bell named Southwestern Bell Growth Grants. The banners and the trees will be completely subsidized.

Thanks to the hard work by the Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council and its executive director, Nancy Farmer; the Commercial District Committee and its chair, JoAnn Vatcha; the St. Louis Development Corporation's Commercial District Manager Charles Wilson and Joe Miller; as well as Alderman Irving Clay and Alderman Dan McGuire, these are exciting times on Delmar. Delmar was resurfaced, awnings will soon go up, trees will soon be planted, and the Delmar commer-



Delmar storefronts now and as planned with new awnings.



From the Archives

(Left) The Wabash Crossing at Delmar, looking west in 1923, shortly before the railroad was dropped below grade level and the Des Peres River was enclosed.

(Bottom) A 1919 sketch of a proposed railroad station at Delmar to be built in conjunction with the elimination of the Wabash grade crossing. The view is looking west down Delmar. Hodiament runs in front of the building at right. Note the steam from the hidden train engine at the left.

Photos courtesy of Missouri Historical Society



WABASH GRADE-CROSSING ELIMINATION
SKETCH OF PROPOSED R.R. STATION AT DELMAR

Home Schooling in the Skinker-DeBaliviere Neighborhood

by Mary Ann Shickman

Almost a decade ago well-known home schooler and Skinker-DeBaliviere resident, Mary Pride, frequented the former Kingsbury Kiosk.

A charismatic personality, and at that time great with child, Mary Pride ordered new books each day as she drafted her first book. She said that with the birth of each child more strength and energy flowed into her. Now the mother of eight, she has produced several books on home learning which are available from the St. Louis Public Library. I'd like to use this quotation from her **Big Book of Home Learning** as an introduction to this fascinating subject.

"Learning is the magic key that millions have used to unlock the educational treasure chest. No longer must you spend a fortune on college credits for knowledge that is sold everywhere for a pittance. No longer must you watch your child shrivel up under the burden of a label that some educator has stuck on him or her. In the comfort of your own home you can learn whatever you want to. . . whenever you want to, and so can your children."

Mary Pride and her family moved to the country a few years ago, but her books are used by home schoolers everywhere.

One such person is Janet Hollar, who lives in the 5900 block of Waterman and has been home schooling her children, David and Caroline, for the past five years. They make frequent use of the former Kiosk and

now Charring Cross library.

Janet and her children gather around a card table in front of their living room fireplace each morning of the week for lessons. With other

especially like the peaceful atmosphere of our home, compared with the noise and competing activities that are a part of the usual classroom."



Janet, David, and Caroline Hollar studying in their home school

Photo by King Schoenfeld

families they recently branched out into a more challenging curriculum addition, the history of civilization through literature, art and music.

"Of course, I individualize the curriculum materials—which I order through the mail—to suit my children," says Janet. "And this is the ultimate in teacher-student ratios."

"I balance character development with academic development," she adds, "and it's fun. We enjoy it. We

Janet, a warm, fun-loving person who graduated from Washington University is not a teacher, but a parent who is helping her children learn.

"Socializing is no problem for us home schoolers", Janet responds to a familiar question. "After a day of home schooling, the kids are ready to participate in outside activities. We appreciate St. Roch's willingness to allow our children to be active in sports."

Janet and her children are also active in Cub Scouts, Brownies, soccer, church activities and the Gifted Resource Council.

Some people "home school" only through the elementary grades, but a few do it all the way through high school.

Is home schooling legal? In Missouri it is legal, but one must keep accurate records of hours spent on each subject, for example. No achievement tests are required.

Where do parents find guidance? There are national, state and local home schooling organizations to assist parents.

Home schooling is not for everyone. Obviously, one parent must be at home with the children. This can have a very real impact on a family's income, but the rewards are very real, as well. If you enjoy spending a lot of time with your children and learning with them, it might be right for you.

It requires a gentle discipline to devote time each weekday to schooling. Purchasing the curriculum materials does have some, modest cost. On the other hand, a great many resources such as pictures, audio and video recordings and museums are free.

Another home schooler, Barbara Havens, lives on McPherson. She home schooled her two daughters for several years and considered it "An enjoyable and positive time."

Anyone with questions about home schooling may call another neighbor, Lucy Hannegan, at 367-3779.

Pet Talk

Questions by Mary Ann Schickman

Answers by Stephen A. Brammeier, D.V.M.

Q. My cat has very bad breath although she seems well. Why is this?

Halitosis is a common problem for cats and dogs. Gingivitis, periodontitis and excessive calculus build-up are likely causes for "bad breath." Endocarditis (an inflammation of the interior lining of the heart), nephritis (kidney inflammation), and hepatitis (liver inflammation) are more serious medical problems caused by chronic oral/dental disease. Maintaining healthy teeth and gums will reduce "bad breath"; more important, good oral/dental health promotes good general health.

Diet, genetic predisposition and oral hygiene affect the degree of oral disease. Hard (dry) foods are better for the teeth than canned or hard dog biscuits. Also, dogs that chew wooden sticks benefit from the natural cleansing action. Generally, cats do not chew on objects and must rely on hard food to stimulate teeth and gums.

Owners willing to spend the time teaching a pet to accept oral hygiene measures can prevent or significantly improve the oral health of a pet. Most pets will accept—enjoy—tooth brushing if properly trained using behavior modification techniques. Special toothbrushes, pastes and liquids are available for safe and effective use with pets. "Brushing" a pet's teeth three times weekly is the goal.

Professional oral/dental care is available from veterinarians for pets. During the last 5-8 years the veterinary profession has realized the importance of maintaining healthy teeth and gums, not as a source of a nice smile, but as a necessary part of general health. As with humans, routine home care is the most impor-

tant factor in good oral health. Pets who already have periodontitis, gingivitis, broken teeth, receding gums or root abscesses require professional care from a veterinarian. Routine professional cleanings and homecare provide the best chance of preventing deteriorating oral conditions that are painful and harmful for a dog or cat. If an owner is unable to do any

homecare, the pet's visits to the veterinarian for cleaning and evaluation gain more significance.

The goal for maintaining a pet's good oral health is to decrease the possibility of serious oral problems that contribute to overall poor health, keeping your pet healthy and pleasant to be around without "bad breath."



MACHO MENU

by Neville Vatcha



Photo by King Schoenfeld

REALLY SPICY CHICKEN

In a recent review of a long-time St. Louis oriental restaurant, master food critic Joe Pollack called attention to an important problem: "Where are the peppers?"

Pollack writes of his yearning to find someone or someplace with "a new stock of peppers and a willingness to use them for those who want the fire."

Well, Joe's clearly never had my "Really Spicy Chicken," which of course can be varied up or down the heat index by moderating the amount of cayenne (red) pepper used.

But that's your only choice: don't skimp on the other spices or you won't get that taste that keeps them coming back for more. And don't skimp on the oil either. There's nothing worse than the taste of boiled spices! Besides, didn't you know that spices cancel out calories?

This recipe is enough for 4-6 chicken breasts, or 3-4 lbs. chicken:

SPICES

Teaspoons

- 3Garlic (granulated)
- 3Ginger powder
- 3Cayenne pepper
- 2Ground cumin powder
- 2Salt
- 1Ground Nutmeg
- 1Ground Cinnamon
- 1Ground Cardamom
- 1/2Ground Cloves

10 strands...Saffron

Remove skin from chicken, and place pieces in roasting pan (blue type works great). Chop 1 onion (4 ozs) and mix 6 oz of tomato paste, 1 oz of vinegar, and 2 oz of vegetable oil (absolutely essential to bring out the taste of spices).

Combine onion mixture with spices and then spread on chicken pieces in roasting pan. Cover and place in 300 degree oven for approximately 1 hour. Check to make sure you have adequate sauce for dipping bread or serving on rice, adding a small amount of water if necessary.

The Importance of YAHOO

by Lana Stein

According to Jill McGuire, executive director of the Regional Arts Commission, Kathleen Hamilton, a Parkview resident and RAC board member, played a key role in bringing the YAHOO program to St. Louis. She learned about YAHOO's prototype in New Orleans from National Public Radio and sent away for information. The Regional Arts Commission agreed to get the program going here and provide funding. The West End Arts Council became the sponsor of the pilot program; our neighborhood's Bill Christman, working with other nearby artists, is the facilitator.

The Yahoo pilot program represents the kind of activity that the Regional Arts Commission wants to fund. Including the West End Arts Council, the Regional Arts Commission funds 13 neighborhood arts councils. YAHOO, in nurturing youthful neighborhood artists, represents a very special form of neighborhood involvement, the involvement of artists, kids, and businesses, as well as the West End Arts Council and the Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council.

The Skinker DeBaliviere pilot has received a grant from the Central West Bank as well as funding from Anheuser-Busch.

The YAHOO students have assembled a wonderful mural at Regional Hospital. McGuire said that this project has been beneficial to the young artists. But, it has also benefitted the neighbors and all who visit Regional by providing an enjoyable contrast to normal hospital surroundings.



Posing before the large mural created by last year's Yahoo students in the out patient clinic at Regional Medical Center were (Left seated) Margaret Sheppard, Reg Med. Ctr. P.R.; Patricia Chavez (Yahoo participant); Polly O'Brien and Nancy Farmer of the West End Arts Council; (rear left) Mary Wiitenburg and David Gioia (Yahoo participants); Bill Christman; Jill McGuire; and Pat Donelan, Regional Arts Council Commissioner. (right) Jill McGuire and her sister Jackie Mullin look over several of the "clock" sculptures made by last year's Yahoo young artists.

Photos by King Schoenfeld



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In Your Ear

by Tom Hoerr

As I write this, past the deadline as usual, Daylight Savings Time has just kicked in. I've spent the past couple of hours changing the clocks. Fortunately, most of my clocks aren't working so they don't need changing. Like some people I know, many of my clocks are decorative, not functional.

Moving the clocks back an hour really requires moving them forward by eleven hours. The clocks that chime on the quarter-hour are the toughest. It seems to take forever because while moving the hands forward you have to stop each fifteen minutes to wait for the chimes. I haven't heard so many gongs since I listened to Congress on C-SPAN.

Creating Daylight Savings Time is one of the few good things that our government has done. By "good," I mean worthwhile without any cost. Think about that. When is the last time something beneficial took place that didn't require a tax increase?

I always wonder why we don't have Daylight Savings Time all year round. Someone once told me that the farmers didn't like it, but, heck, everything I read tells me that there are fewer farmers than there used to be, and the latters, I mean farmers, I know would ignore it anyway.

Thinking about Daylight Savings Time causes me to think about other things that our government could do to help us. Oh sure, there are many things that it could do, which it needs to do, which would cost mega-bucks: addressing the needs of the cities and solving the educational crisis for starters. And then there are other needs which PURPORTEDLY would even save money, like fixing our health-care system. (But I ask you, does anyone seriously think that the government can come out of this spending less money? Seriously? Maybe, just maybe, the government will spend less. If that happens though, guess who's going to spend more. Yep, the writer and reader of this article times 250 million others.)

But back to my point, things that would help that wouldn't cost! Gosh it's easy to get distracted. Say, look at that painter out the

window! Whoops. I'm suggesting that there are many things which government could do to make life a little more comfortable and wouldn't cost any money. Just like Daylight Savings Time.

By now you're probably thinking, is Hawkeye Hoerr writing this article or is it really Ross Perot? Yes, I realize that this is a rather conservative approach from one who still treasures his McGovern buttons, but that's OK. Dad was right: My politics are changing as I'm getting older.

So here goes, as David Letterman would say, "Here are the five things that wouldn't cost anything that the government could do to make our life easier":

1 Let us vote by mail. We'd even be willing to pay for the stamps. This would avoid lots of time standing in line. And get this, it might even SAVE MONEY! Fewer walk-in voters could even reduce the number of alert patronage workers who are paid to sit at the table and ask your name, and ask it again, as you vote. ("Alert patronage workers"; now there's an oxymoron!)

2 Eliminate pennies. Pennies used to be worth something, one cent I believe. Now, though, with everything costing more and people using less cash in general, who needs them? Many restaurants even have cups with pennies free for the taking! We should eliminate pennies and round everything up or down to the nearest nickel.

3 Scrap the North American Free Trade Agreement. I know that economists maintain that in a perfect world there should be no tariffs anywhere. And in a perfect world there should be no crime and no overweight people. But, hey, guess what, it's not a perfect world! Our American workers will be competing with folks who work for a fraction of our salaries, and often without health care benefits. There's no way that this won't result in manufacturing

jobs leaving the country. Who thought up this turkey, Walking Joe Teasdale?

4 Force us to use alternatives to the auto. How about letting cars drive on the streets only on the days which correspond to the last digit on the car's licence plate: cars with plates ending in even-numbered digits could be driven on even-numbered days, etc. Yes, this would be a pain and inconvenience for everyone, but we need to do it. Mass-transit would get a boost, folks would have to car-pool, bike, or walk to work. Pollution would drop, we'd be less dependent on foreign fossil fuels, people would save money, and we'd be able to stop building all of those goofy highway interchanges and exit routes to suburbia. No, this step wouldn't be easier in the short-term, but over time there's no question that it would help all of us.

5 Outlaw junk mail. Or at least raise the rates on it enough so that it wouldn't be used as often. Heavens knows how many fewer postal workers we'd need with this reduction in mail, so that could even save some money. But the more important point is how much nicer life would be for all of us if we didn't have to sift through the chaff each night as we went through the mail. I counted last week and over a six-day period I received THIRTY-SEVEN pieces of junk mail! And that doesn't even count the political propaganda.

So there it is. The definitive list of cost-free government cures. All we need are some politicians who have the courage to talk about these kinds of things. After that, maybe we'll get some politicians with the courage to talk about government responsibilities which do, in fact, call for increased taxes. Our needs aren't diminishing, that's for sure. And by the time I write my next column we'll be facing the specter of President Bush II, President Clinton, or President Perot. The good news is that things can't get any worse.

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