

# The *TIMES* of... SKINKER DEBALIVIERE

Vol. 25 No. 6

November 1994

FREE

The oldest neighborhood newspaper in St. Louis

## Residents Petition for Children's Playground

by Dawn Blobaum

Several weeks ago the ad hoc Playground Feasibility Study Committee began circulating petitions to garner support for a playground at the corner of Kingsbury and DesPeres. The following questions have been asked of the committee members as they've discussed the playground plans with their neighbors:

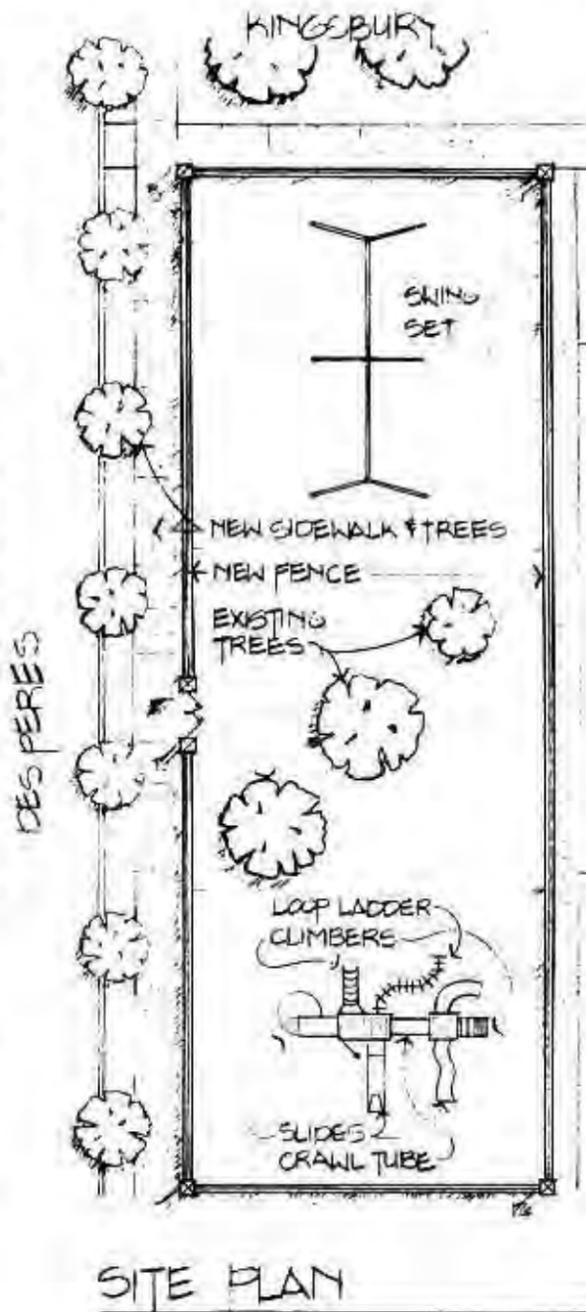
### Why do you want to build a playground in our neighborhood?

The goal we are all working toward in the Skinker DeBaliviere neighborhood is stability. Stable neighborhoods have less crime and higher property values. A stable neighborhood is created by families. This is not a knock on apartment-dwellers or students in the Skinker DeBaliviere neighborhood, but it is a fact that a neighborhood is stabilized by residents who buy homes here and raise their families here. Children in the Skinker DeBaliviere neighborhood must travel over a mile, crossing busy streets, to get to the closest safe playground. A playground within the Skinker DeBaliviere confines will help attract families to the area.

### Why was the location at the corner of Kingsbury and DesPeres chosen?

The committee used the following criteria to pick a site:

- Corner lot
- Highly visible area (for safety)
- Least number of residences directly adjacent
- Centrally located in neighborhood
- City-owned property



### What will the playground include? What will it look like?

The playground equipment will be purchased from a reputable recreational equipment manufacturer and sized for toddlers through 10 year olds. It will have rust-proof steel posts with a powder-coated color finish and vinyl-coated expanded metal decks, heavy-duty plastic slides, and tunnel; steel climbing equipment, bridge, and horizontal ladder; and a separate swing set with two toddler swings and two child swings.

Surrounding the playground will be a 6-foot-high masonry and wrought iron fence with one gate on the DesPeres side. The gate will be lockable.

As many existing trees as possible will remain.

### What's on the lot now?

The lot (roughly 35 feet by 150 feet) is approximately one-half concrete paving and one half grass with a few trees. A railroad tie retaining wall divides the two areas.

### Are there problems with the lot now, i.e. loitering, excessive noise, littering, etc.?

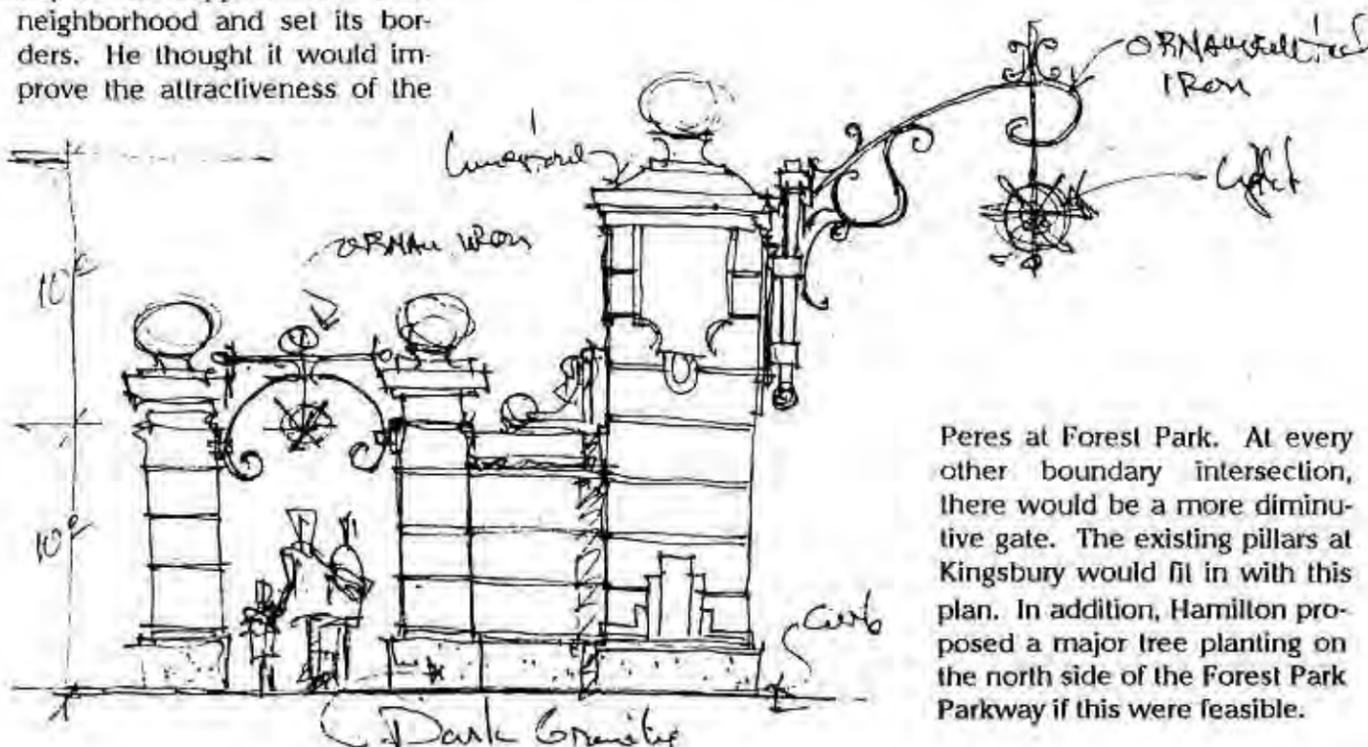
There have not been any calls to the police department regarding the intersection of Kingsbury and DesPeres in the last year and a half, according to Seventh District Police officers. Calls to the 6000 block of Kingsbury were for larceny or domestic disturbances not loitering or excessive noise. Even though it would seem to be a natural spot the existing retaining wall is not often used for loitering; therefore it will most likely occur even less on a wrought iron fence in that location. *continued on page 7*

## Entrance Gates Proposed for Area

At its meeting on October 18, the Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council heard a proposal from Alan Hamilton of the Apartment Owners Association that has been designed to improve the appearance of the neighborhood and set its borders. He thought it would improve the attractiveness of the

neighborhood if we knew exactly where the edges of Skinker DeBaliviere were and that there be a consistent identity around those edges.

Main gates would be put up at three principal intersections: Waterman at Skinker, Waterman at DeBaliviere, and Des-



Peres at Forest Park. At every other boundary intersection, there would be a more diminutive gate. The existing pillars at Kingsbury would fit in with this plan. In addition, Hamilton proposed a major tree planting on the north side of the Forest Park Parkway if this were feasible.

These landscape changes would be put into place over a five year period. The Apartment Owners Association would assume responsibility for its implementation. They will begin raising funds for the first set of gates. The Association will work with the Council on this plan but expects no funds from the Council for this. Major gates could cost from anywhere between \$25 - 50,000. Overall, the cost might be from between \$100 - 200,000. The first gate is the most expensive. Copies of it do not require a new casting so are less costly. Hamilton sees several possibilities for funding including approaching major corporations and applying for grants. He will also look into the urban tree program.

Hamilton and his association want to begin on this next spring. He said it would be the easiest of the principal intersections to address. There will be a visual tie to Parkview, thus joining both sides of Skinker.

## Editor's Notebook

by Lana Stein

Looking across the country, it seems like this has been the nastiest campaign I can remember. It almost seems like you never see a positive political ad anymore. This level of discussion aids and abets a public mood of get the rascals out, no taxes, much less government, and anyone holding office for more than just a few years is considered suspect.

Where does this sentiment come from? Obviously it feeds off of the tone of today's campaigns and ads. But, why is there so much anger at government? Part of the reason is that we just aren't doing as well as we used to. Our real income has gone down in the past few years. The notion that our children would do better than we have is now only a memory. Jobs are hard to come by, for college graduates, and for those with less than a baccalaureate degree. Certain simplistic campaigners are quick to blame government and taxes for personal plight. Yet, very few point to the changing nature of the American economy. We are not an industrial nation anymore. Instead, there is a two-tiered wage structure: professionals at quite high salaries and those earning only minimum wage or a little higher. Did the government contribute to this? Certain tax policies gave businesses an incentive to move their plants abroad. We do not have laws making business relocation more difficult the way western European countries do. But, a lot of the problem has to do with a changed corporate mentality. When John Kenneth Galbraith wrote *The New Industrial State* in the early 1960s, corporations wanted to maintain their level of profit and market share; they were not maximizers. That all changed especially in the 1980s. Profit maximization became the goal and capital became hypermobile. We saw takeovers, mergers, leveraged buyouts, etc., which served to raise business debt and in turn bring about the downsizing so evident today. Taxes were only a small part of the business decision.

Ironically, we have the lowest unemployment rate in many years now. But, that's just part of the story. People who once had good jobs earn a lot less. Many work part-time. The anxiety is always there. Its human nature to try to find scapegoats for problems. Today it's politicians who bear the burden. There are certainly some who might not deserve the public trust. But, in the present mood in the country, all are tarred with the same brush and people rush to simplistic solutions to very complicated problems. It's not a new phenomenon, but a disheartening one nonetheless.

## The TIMES of... SKINKER DEBALIVIERE

Editor: Lana Stein  
Business Manager: JoAnn Vatcha  
Production Manager: (Acting) Marj Weir  
Typesetting: Marj Weir

The Times of Skinker DeBaliviere is published by the West End Publishing Co., a not-for-profit, independent, community organization. Members of the Board of Directors are:

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Printing: Arcade Printing

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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 of submissions from non-staff area residents.

All material - articles, letters, notices, classified ads - must be typewritten on opaque paper, double-spaced, and signed. Copy may be submitted on computer diskette if the diskette is in DOS format. We cannot process Macintosh diskettes. Diskette stories should be accompanied by a printout of the article, the name of the word processing software in which it is written, and the full name and address of the party to whom the diskette should be returned. Signature on correspondence to the editor may be omitted by request. Calendar listings should be phoned in to the editor at 721-7532, or mailed to 5855 Nina Place. Deadline for all copy is the 18th of the month.

The writer is responsible for the accuracy of the data, including times, dates, location, and particularly the spelling of names.

Pictures or illustrations should be in black and white. Color photographs do not reproduce well.

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

# CALENDAR



## Neighborhood Meetings and Events

### November

- 2 Skinker DeBaliviere Community Housing Corporation, SDCC, 6008 Kingsbury, 8 a.m.
- 2 Personnel Committee, SDCC, 6008 Kingsbury, 7 p.m.
- 5 Boy Scout Food Drive
- 6 Crossroads School's Autumn Ambrosia, a progressive dinner on Westmoreland Pl. and Portland Pl., \$75 per person. Call 726-2962 for information.
- 7 By-Laws Committee, SDCC, 6008 Kingsbury, 6 p.m.
- 14 SDCC Board of Directors, SDCC, 6008 Kingsbury, 7:30 p.m.
- 16 Rosedale Fundraiser at Lyrics, Euclid and Washington, 5:30-9:30 p.m., \$5.
- 17 Old Newsboys Day. Watch for Shirley Polk at DeBaliviere and Forest Park Parkway, 6 a.m.-9 a.m.
- 21 Apartment Owners Association, SDCC, 6008 Kingsbury, 7 p.m.
- 29 Playground Public Meeting, Grace Methodist, 6199 Waterman, Fellowship Hall, 7 p.m.

### December

- 3 Food Drive by SDCC Social Services Committee. Pick-up begins from front porches at 9:30 a.m.
- 9 28th Ward Regular Democratic Club Holiday Party, at Crossroads School, 500 DeBaliviere, 7-9 p.m. All are welcome. Call 727-1727 or 862-4187 for information.

## Other Nearby Events of Interest

### November

- 4-20 The New Theatre (TNT) presents "Four Dogs and a Bone" at the ArtLoft Annex, 1527 Washington. Call 781-9314 for information.
- 6 Second Annual Singleton Palmer Jazz Jam, Midtown Arts Center, 3207 Washington, 4 p.m. \$15, \$10 for students.
- now-13 "The Years," at the Orthwein Theatre, 425 North Warson Road. For information, call 995-7300.
- 13 St. Louis Chamber Chorus presents "Silence and Music," at The Shrine of St. Joseph's Church, 1220 N. 11th St., 3 p.m., \$10, \$8 for seniors and full-time students.
- 18-20 Missouri Historical Society Conference "Jefferson and the Changing West: From Conquest to Conservation." Stewart Udall will speak. Registration fee is \$50, \$40 for members. Call 454-3136 for information.

### December

- 2 Christmas Gallery Walk in the Central West End
- 3-4 Christmas Walk on Euclid

## Hamilton Community School Sponsors Basketball

SDCC's Recreation Committee, chaired by Arthelda Busch, is sponsoring basketball for boys and girls 8-13 on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 5-6 p.m. at Hamilton Community Elementary Education Center.

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## Questions For The Alderman

By Tim Schoemehl

**Alderman McGuire, in our last issue, you discussed the city's plans to open public parking lots at the empty Sinclair and Bonafide gas stations on Skinker. Has any progress been made towards that goal?**

Yes, the city now owns the old Bonafide station at Westminster and Skinker. We are currently seeking bids to demolish the buildings on the property. Once this is complete we will work with the Skinker DeBaliviere Community council to design a landscaped parking lot. Hopefully this could be completed sometime in the spring. However, no further progress has been made on the Sinclair station at Skinker and McPherson. Sinclair Oil has still not expressed a willingness to sell the property.

**What is the status of the former Bi-Rite property on Delmar?**

The property has been purchased by a woman who wishes to renovate the building for use as a private teen recreation center. The center would provide constructive and supervised sports and activities that teens could participate in. The owner has been granted a Conditional Use Permit that will allow her to proceed with her plans as long as she meets certain restrictions regarding hours and security.

**Has anyone expressed an interest in the Wabash Station at the Delmar Metro Link stop? It seems like an ideal location for some type of business.**

The building is currently owned by a lawyer who has his law practice there. I met with the new owners shortly before the Metro Link opened. They expressed an interest in some type of long-term retail development at the station, but I have not heard from them since that initial meeting.

**Is there anything the city can do about the half-finished house on Lindell?**

The city does what it can. We send building inspectors occasionally, and they can issue citations for any building code violations. The city monitors for safety hazards, and tries to prevent excessive growth of weeds and build up of litter. Unfortunately there's not much else that the city can do.



Daniel J. McGuire  
28th Ward Alderman

## Rosedale Plans Happy Hour Fundraiser November 16

Rosedale Neighbors Association will hold a Fundraiser on November 16 from 5:30 to 9:30 pm at Lyrics, a new jazz bar, at the corner of Euclid and Washington. This event is designed to raise money for both Rosedale and the Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council. Admission is \$5.00. There will be a cash bar and attendees can purchase dinner if they like. There will be a jazz band. For more information, call 862-5122.



Repairs were recently completed on the World's Fair period limestone columns at both ends of the 6100 block of Kingsbury.

## Officer Now Located at Hamilton School

As part of the revamping of the community schools in St. Louis into elementary community education centers, each of these 15 centers now has a police officer assigned. Officer John Cochrine is assigned to Hamilton. He is using the school as a base from which to look after the area. This is made possible because of a three year grant from the federal government. Cochrine is trying to survey the neighborhood now to find out its needs and what the police could do to help.

### Joe Lange

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## Vicissitudes

by Marj Weir

Nancy Famer, 61XX Waterman, and Darrell Hartke, 58XX Waterman, quietly celebrated their marriage with family at Darrell's home on October 16. Nancy is the State Representative for the 64th District and Darrell is a psychologist. Cal Stuart officiated at the ceremony and asked that his honorific be a donation to *The Times*. This is not the first time he has done this and we are most grateful. It proves that you can take the boy out of Skinker DeBaliviere, but you can't take the Skinker DeBaliviere out of the boy.

Maureen and Dave Cunningham have a new baby boy, David Michael, born October 25 at St. Mary's Hospital. He weighed a hearty 8 lbs. 5 oz. and measured 20 inches. Maureen is the daughter of Sam and Lu Green, 61XX Westminster, for whom this makes three grandchildren.

Kim Koenig, Director of the Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council, and her husband, Joe, added 8 lb. Jacob Gerard to their family on October 28 with the help of the staff at St. John's Mercy.

Best wishes to all starting new phases in life.



New Mom, SDCC Director Kim Koenig holds "baby Santa" outfit received a baby shower at the home of Georgi Fox.

Our condolences to the large Hamilton family on the death of Margaret, known to all as Peggy. She lived in the 6000 block of Waterman.

Jack Wright was elated when Police Chief Clarence Harmon accepted his invitation to be the featured speaker at

the next Martin Luther King, Jr. Annual Commemoration. Jack chairs the event scheduled for January 15, 1995, at 3:00 p.m. at Grace and Peace Church.

This year at the Central West End Community picnic, five softball coaches were honored for their service to the youth of the community. They are Willie Haymore, Sr., Bernard Jackson, Eric McNeal, Wesley Falker, and Leroy Miller. They coached twice each week throughout the summer. Members of our softball team presented them with a framed certificate and a coupon booklet for AMC theaters.

Send your news to Marj Weir at 6120 Westminster, 63112, or call 863-7558. It is much better if you provide full detail in writing. Photos are welcome and will be returned if an address is provided.

# Where Children Learn How to Learn: 25 years of Education at the St. Michael School

by Katie Kurtz

**Question:** If McDonald's served 98 billion people, how many cows would it take to make enough hamburgers (assuming that from the average 1,000 pound steer, 110 pounds of hamburger meat could be obtained)?

**Answer:** 222,727,272 cows!

Not your typical word problem—remember, if a plane left Philadelphia at 5:15 p.m. going 450 miles an hour and another leaves Pittsburgh at 6:00 p.m. going 475 miles an hour, at what time will they pass each other somewhere over Pennsylvania? Such a problem sends many a child into a mild panic (this writer included) and most students, unless they have a burning desire to be air traffic controllers, consider the answer to be less than exciting. However, the McDonald's burger problem engages even the most mathematically challenged of us all. Such is the approach to math at The St. Michael School. The fifth and sixth grades dubbed the exercise "Cowgebra," and rose to the challenge of finding the answer as a collaborative class project. Teacher Chuck Stowers did not stop there; the children were then asked how much space all the cows would take up, how many miles would the cows extend nose to tail, how many gallons of mustard and ketchup would be needed, and how many gallons of coke and pounds of french fries would be consumed with these burgers. Each child completed the project by making a poster showing the math and his/her depiction of how the answers to the question would look.

This is education as usual at The St. Michael School. Located just five minutes from Parkview and the Skinker DeBaliviere neighborhood, the school is housed in the Episcopal Church of St. Michael and St. George just over the city limits in Clayton. Established as a preschool by the church in the fall of 1969, elementary grades were added one by one beginning in the early 1980s. The school is small, deliberately so,

with a population of 103 students (capacity is 125). The size allows for a student to faculty ratio of 7 to 1 and enables the entire school to function as a cooperative community. In fact, the school refers to itself as a community of learners where children, faculty, parents, and physical environment combine to provide an education which balances traditional academics, the Reggio Approach, and collaborative projects.

Understanding that education is an ongoing, elastic process, The St. Michael School's theme is "where children learn how to learn." Headmaster Ashley Cadwell says that "the challenge is to engage our community of learners in the learning cycle—the process of inquiry and invention." Ashley uses three interlocking circles to explain this learning cycle; in one circle is experience, another is reflection, and the third is expression. To use traditional scientific terms, one would have experiment, hypotheses, and conclusion. A student may enter the cycle at any one of the circles. For a pre-primary student learning about color, the question may be what makes orange. The experience of mixing yellow and red paint expresses itself with the new color; reflecting upon the fact that this will always be orange may require repeating the experience a second and third time.

"Cowgebra" was also an expression of the learning cycle. Studies have shown that memorizing facts is not necessarily the best way to retain and use information. While some rote work is always required, the ability to find out why something is the way it is will certainly hold that fact more firmly in the child's mind. Studies have shown that memorizing facts is not necessarily the best way to retain and use information. While some rote work is always required, the ability to find out why something is the way it is will certainly hold that fact and its processes more firmly in the child's mind.

The skeptic might ask what teachers do at the school if they are not forcing children to sit in desks and memorize. They help provide an environment which becomes the third teacher (the second teacher is the student, both to himself and his peers). A teacher will instruct in the many ways to communicate—writing, dramatic play, two or three dimensional art, giving an oral report, listening carefully to one's peers and respecting what they say, and music. Since the key to the learning cycle is reflection and hypotheses, teachers provoke in-depth thinking and discussions; they guide inquiries and invention while allowing the student to initiate direction and appropriate subject matter. All this is achieved through traditional academics: reading, writing, mathematics, music, art, and computer and environmental sciences. Because in the real world most disciplines are interconnected, they are at The St. Michael School.

The school serves preprimary and primary grades. Those in preprimary fall into one of three groups: the young threes who meet three mornings a week, and threes/fours and fours/fives who meet five mornings a week and as many afternoons as desired. The preprimary works to develop social skills and to cultivate a child's natural desire to investigate, create, and initiate.

In the primary grades, Spanish is taught four times a week and the children attend an ecumenical chapel service twice a week. Students spend some time in the HUB which is in the center of the school. The HUB contains an environmental science area, a computer resource center, and an art area. The school's library is adjacent to the HUB. A minimum of three teachers are always in the HUB to challenge and channel students working on projects in small groups.

Because it is an Episcopal school, grace is said at meals and snacks, prayers are offered

for the world as well as for members of the school's community, and God is celebrated as the provider and creator for all. The largest group of students are Episcopal, followed by Roman Catholics, other Protestant denominations, and Jews. While the image of the Episcopal church is often one of affluence, The St. Michael School has a diverse population, over 20 percent nonwhite. The Board of Trustees gives ten percent of its income for financial aid for the primary grades. The school is committed to serving any student who is willing to meet the challenges of being treated as a critically thinking person, capable of learning how to learn the lesson of a lifetime.



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# St. Roch Christmas Boutique

St. Roch's annual Christmas Boutique will be held Saturday, November 12, 1994, from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. and Sunday, November 13 from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. in the Church Hall at Waterman and Rosedale.

This event has grown over the years from a handful of booths to a hall full of exhibitors. A large variety of unique, hand-crafted gifts and holiday decorations will be available in addition to raffles, home-baked goods and lunch.



From Teddy Bears to Hand-painted sweatshirts, St. Roch's Christmas Bazaar has it all!

This year, a special added feature is an expanded Children's Activity Center for those aged 2 and above. Face painting, crafts for kids, and a storyteller are some of the activities available. Children can purchase items or create personalized gifts for family and friends. Mrs. Claus will also be stopping in to greet all the little visitors.

Raffle items feature a hand-knit sweater and a Radio Flyer "Town and Country" wagon filled with sports items for kids.

All proceeds from the Boutique support Women of St. Roch, an organization of parish women dedicated to raising funds and providing resources for parish needs. Mark your calendars now for November 12 and 13.



Martin Jaffe has begun construction on three new townhouses at Kingsbury Square. Each has a full basement, a two-car garage, and formal dining room. They begin at \$ 140,000.

# New City School Celebrates 25 Years

On October 2, New City School held its 25th birthday party. The celebration included traditional birthday party games for children and a rousing Caribbean music concert by New City parent Robert Fishbone and his band, Sambistas. The party concluded at dusk with fireworks.

New City School was founded in 1969 by Central West End neighbors. The original mission of New City, to educate children from different backgrounds, remains strong today. This academic year, New City awarded over \$140,000 in need-based financial aid. Kids from 46 different zip codes in the metropolitan area attend New City.



Barbeque and Caribbean music filled the air at the 25th Anniversary Celebration of New City School in the Central West End.



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- Joe Pollack, St. Louis Post-Dispatch

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## Reflections of a Boomer

By Elizabeth Freeman

There he was.

Blue plaid flannel shirt, jeans, white sneakers. He was a tall, bespectacled fellow with dark mid-length hair and a slight paunch over his black leather belt. Such an ordinary guy, with a good sense of humor. So approachable, so normal. Yet many of his readers know his dark side — via his novels: *Carrie*, *The Shining*, *Lawnmower Man* and *Needful Things*, to name a few.

Stephen King recently came to St. Louis to promote his new tome, *Insomnia*, and to speak on behalf of bookstores, the kind without chain status, who don't brag about deep discounts — with names you've not seen in the malls.

King, who says he's a better writer than a talker, isn't a bad public speaker. He told his audience about his start in writing, family life, his work — past, present and future — and took questions from the audience.

He's not the ghoulish human being you might have expected — actually a quite personable guy, who would probably make a good drinking buddy. But he sure has a real knack for horror. As a great storyteller who coaxes readers into the depths of his pages, King seems to be an admirable student of human nature. He knows what makes people tick — and what frightens them too.

You might wonder what makes people like King tick, what makes him dream up this stuff. But to share such dreams, I'd have to become an extra in *Night of the Living Dead* for lack of sleep. "Cool costume, but Halloween's over Mom," my son would say.

King says he had a normal childhood, but his favorite storybook tale as a youth was *Dr. Jeckyl and Mr. Hyde*. Maybe that's not so surprising.

But why do we so love a good scare? Is it a primal thing? Instinct? Something that we need to appreciate our normality or mundaneness? Or is it our deep-down hope to retain some of our childlike wonder?

Maybe all those years in Maine bring out the craziness in those like King, who grew up in a small Maine town and still lives in his home state. Quite frankly, I don't know how much more grief the good people of Castle Rock, Maine — the setting for many of his surreal stories — can take.

There's certainly more to this guy than meets the eye. I don't know what it is.

Churning out best-selling page turners sounds like a great time to a common garden-variety writer... especially if you get to ride your Harley across the country to promote your most recent work, as King just did.

A virtuoso writer makes what he does look easy. As we witnessed this fellow under bright auditorium lights, his ease with those who had come to eyeball him might not have been what appeared to us. Deadlines, quotas, agents, lawyers, having to "up" the manuscript of your novel in progress to top the one you just published, are probably just a few of the pressures this guy lives with regularly.

It's only natural to wonder. But maybe some things should just not be explained.

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## Pet Talk

by Stephen A. Brammeier, DVM

Allergies affect dogs and cats in various ways. Many times the target organ is the skin. A pet will scratch, or chew, an inordinate amount, damaging their skin. Red, inflamed skin; hair loss, either in patches or over large body surfaces; scabs and excess oils are all the results of trauma caused by a pet with allergic "itchy" skin. Sometimes these pets are defined as "face rubber/foot lickers." A dog will rub the side of its face across the floor, or on the furniture. Owners often complain that their dog keeps them up through the night by licking and chewing on its feet. Chronic changes in the skin from allergies include skin infections, pustules, dark, coin-sized lesions and crusts. The skin thickens and becomes dark. Light colored hair stains a rust color from the saliva. A cat may lick at its abdomen enough to create a bare belly.

Sometimes, the only evidence of allergic problems are recurrent ear infections. A pet's whole body isn't affected — just the ears. The trauma caused by frequent ear scratching results in yeast or bacteria colonizing the ear. The tissue lining the ear canal can be chronically inflamed producing more cerumin (wax), creating a more ideal environment for bacteria growth. On rare occasions, the lining of the canal swells to the degree that the canal seals over. If the tissue cannot be reduced

medically, surgery is required to literally remove the external ear canal.

Food allergies can cause recurrent digestive upsets: vomiting and/or loose bowels. These allergies can develop even if the pet has eaten a particular diet for several years.

Allergy testing is possible. Recent findings indicate that blood tests for allergies have comparable accuracy with skin testing.

Regional screening for pollens, molds etc. plus selected food screening is done with one blood sample. Treatment involves allergy injections and feeding a hypoallergenic diet. Initially the injections are given several times a week and then reduced over a several month period to a maintenance schedule of monthly injections.

Hypoallergenic diets must be strict. Many commercial diets claiming to be hypoallergenic are not exclusive enough in their ingredients.

Treating a pet for chronic allergy problems can make the pet more comfortable and reduce the need for the use of corticosteroids to control itching, antibiotics, and reduce the number of visits to the veterinarian to treat the complications associated with chronic allergies. In the long run, allergy testing and treatment can be beneficial for the pet and cost effective for the owner.



Gus, an allergic Scottie.

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— continued from page 1 —

### Who is paying for the playground?

The funds to buy the equipment, prepare the lot, and build the surrounding wall will come from the Gateway Foundation, an organization that favors funding children's recreational projects. Some volunteer labor may be required from neighbors to erect the equipment.

### What about the "Tot Lot" that was built over 15 years ago and didn't work? Won't the same thing happen again?

There are two main reasons the problems with the Tot Lot will not be repeated:

- The equipment at the Tot Lot was designed and built by students at Washington University, not by a playground equipment company. Some of the equipment was not sized for toddlers. The area was not fenced or gated. Teenagers tended to take over the playground. The playground equipment we are planning to install is made for small children. It will not be comfortable for teenagers. The area will be fenced and gated (lockable) so we can close it at specified hours.
- The Skinker DeBaliviere neighborhood has stabilized appreciably in the last 15-20 years. The improved cohesiveness of the neighborhood, the basketball courts, and the Youth Cycles program have greatly decreased the problems associated with inactive teenagers.

### What about Lucier Park? Why don't we use that area?

Lucier Park has several insurmountable problems:

- It does not meet the requirement for a centrally located playground. Many parents have stated that it is too far to walk there with their children.
- It has loitering problems now, which means that we have to devise a plan to improve the area, but a playground is not the answer.
- It is vulnerable because of its proximity to Delmar and the cut-through pedestrian traffic. Safety would be a big issue.

### Who will own the playground?

The city of St. Louis will own the playground. They will maintain it and accept liability for it.

### Who will lock the gate?

We are recommending that a group of volunteers be established. Each volunteer will be responsible for closing the gate each evening and opening it each morning for one week of the year. We have several volunteers already. This should not be an insurmountable obstacle, considering the size of the Skinker-DeBaliviere neighborhood, the number of people committed to improving the area, and the large number of people supporting this playground.

### Are there any examples of playground like this in the City that have been successful?

The Forest Park Southeast neighborhood has a small park/playground called Rainbow Park at the corner of Taylor and Gibson. The police officers in the area have said that the playground has not increased loitering.

### If this is such a good idea, why are you circulating this petition?

Three reasons:

- The Gateway Foundation that will be giving us the grant to fund the playground wants to be certain that there is neighborhood support for it.
- Some people in the neighborhood haven't heard about the playground, or have only heard rumors about it. We are trying to contact as many people as possible to let them know the facts about the situation. A public meeting that was held in August was not well attended, so we felt that a door-to-door effort would enable us to get more input on the project.
- There is a very small, but vocal, minority opposed to the playground. Although we are certain that a majority of the neighborhood supports it, signatures will help us get an accurate count.

**A second public meeting will be held on November 29th at 7 p.m. at Grace Methodist Church in the Fellowship Hall. We urge everyone to attend.**

## Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council Board of Directors Meeting

### October 17, 1994 Minutes

Members present: Directors B. Bender, J. Wright, A. Webb, J. Miller, G. Hayes, S. Johnson, D. Bordes, J. deBettencourt, R. Johnson, S. Polk, A. Johnson, L. Stein, A. Smith Carr, G. Freeman, and Executive Director K. Koenig.

Guests present: A. Hamilton, G. Johannes, K. Cohen, J. Walker, G. Lazard, H. Mullen, Officer J. Cothrine, and A. Busch.

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 p.m. by B. Bender.

#### Presentation of Plans for Neighborhood Landscaping Plan

G. Johannes and A. Hamilton, officers of the Apartment Owners Association, presented preliminary drawings and plans for a neighborhood-wide landscaping plan. The plan would include a consistent pattern of landscaping as well as monuments/gates at three points in the neighborhood: Waterman and Skinker, Waterman and DeBaliviere, and Des Peres and Forest Park Parkway. The estimated cost for each gate is projected between \$25,000 and \$50,000. Funds will be sought from neighborhood and local institutions for the project. More details on this project will be presented in the next three months.

Officer J. Cothrine introduced himself as the new Community Educational School Officer at Hamilton Community School. He distributed an informative survey for Board members to complete in order for him to better serve the community's needs.

#### I. Review of Minutes

J. Wright moved "That the minutes of the September Board meeting be accepted as read"; seconded by G. Freeman and approved.

#### II. Treasurer's Report

J. Miller reported that the FOSD campaign has been very successful, thus far raising over \$5,200. The 1995 budget will be presented for review at the November Board meeting. G. Freeman moved "That the September Treasurer's Report be accepted as read"; seconded by A. Webb and approved.

#### III. Committee Association Reports

**Commercial Planning** - K. Koenig reported on the recent hearing on the proposed youth club at 6016 Delmar Boulevard. The conditional use permit was approved with 18 conditions, including hours of operation, security, and maximum occupancy. The 6000 block of Washington supported the youth club proposal.

**5900 DeGiverville** - A. Johnson thanked Officer Cothrine for attending a recent block unit meeting.

**Nina Place** - L. Stein reported that the Nina Place condominiums were profiled in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* several weeks ago, and it has led to increased interest in the properties.

**Parkview** - J. deBettencourt reported that residents are concerned with the University City Mayor's current proposal of MetroLink expansion. K. Koenig will keep abreast of all proposed plans that would affect our neighborhood on this issue.

**Rosedale** - J. Miller reported on upcoming events:

1) Halloween Party at St. Roch's, Monday, October 31, from 5:30 - 6:30 p.m.

2) Happy Hour at Lyrics Jazz Club (Euclid and Washington), No-

vember 16, 5:30 - 9:30 p.m. The cover charge is \$5, with proceeds being split between SDCC and Rosedale.

3) Saturday with Santa, date in December to be announced.

**Housing Corporation** - K. Koenig reported that the ranchettes have been demolished, and the lot will be seeded in the next one to two weeks. Work is also progressing at 6025 Westminster.

**Recreation** - A. Busch distributed copies of a report that specified expenditures incurred when honoring neighborhood coaches who assisted with youth softball. She thanked SDCC and New Cote Brilliant Church for their contributions for coaches' awards.

**Social Services** - B. Bender reported that neighborhood homes of senior citizens will be weatherized on October 29 by SLU students. A neighborhood-wide food drive will be held on Saturday, December 3. Collection will begin at 9:30 a.m.

**Community Fund** - J. Miller presented and reviewed a preliminary report of bingo revenue. A final report will be presented at the November meeting. He also reported that Grace Pre-School applied for funding for new playground equipment estimated to cost between \$3500 and \$4000. The Community Fund reviewed the application and recommended \$2000 go to Grace Pre-School for their playground. B. Bender moved "That Grace Pre-School receive \$2000 from the Community Fund for playground equipment"; seconded by J. deBettencourt and unanimously approved.

**MLK Commemoration** - J. Wright reported that the commemoration will be held on January 15, 1995, with a snow date of January 22, 1995, at Grace and Peace Fellowship, from 3 to 5 p.m. Police Chief Harmon will be contacted to act as keynote speaker.

**Fundraising** - B. Bender reported that so far only 60 percent of Board members have participated in the FOSD campaign. She urged 100 percent participation. K. Koenig reported that thank you notes and membership cards will be sent out to all "Friends" within the next two weeks.

**Personnel** - B. Bender asked for volunteers to serve on a committee to develop a personnel policy. L. Stein, B. Bender, J. Miller, S. Johnson, A. Smith Carr, and G. Hayes will serve on this committee.

**By-Laws** - K. Koenig will contact T. Roland to set up a meeting of this committee.

#### IV. Adoption of Resolution to Receive Funding from John Heinz Grant

K. Koenig reported that a quorum of the SDCC needs to sign this resolution in order to make our first drawdown on this grant.

#### NEW BUSINESS

S. Polk reported that she will participate in "Old Newsboys Day" on November 17 from 6 to 9 a.m. at DeBaliviere and Forest Park Parkway. She invited all to stop by to see her.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

# In Your Ear

by Hawkeye B. Hoerr

As long as he could remember, he'd heard the voices. Oh, he didn't hear them all the time. Sometimes he could go days or weeks without hearing them. Those were times he enjoyed, relaxing times. But other times, he would hear the voices several times a day. Those days were rarer now, but they still happened. Usually the voices started in the late afternoon. He might be coming home from work or maybe relaxing, reading the paper.

At first, he remembered, in kindergarten, he thought that his imaginary friends were like everyone else's imaginary friends. Sometimes he and his friends would play dress-up or house or cowboy, and they'd all talk to their imaginary friends. He didn't think he was any different.

But then as he grew older, he realized that the other kids' voices were made-up. But his weren't.

He used to wonder if he was making up the voices. Once, when he was eleven years old, he decided that he was going to stop the voices for once and for all. He remembered it as if it were yesterday. He was in his room, it was late at night and he was trying to fall to sleep. The voices kept booming in his ears, though, especially the male one. "Stand up, jump up and down, jump up and down, higher, higher," the voice commanded. He remembered standing, with some resignation. This was the kind of thing that the male voice commanded him to do often. Sometimes it was jumping in bed, sometimes it was pushing someone off the sidewalk or ramming his bike into theirs. Sometimes it was tripping a friend who was running by. And he always did what he was instructed. Until that night.

For whatever reason, he stood up on his bed and then sat down. "NO," he said to an empty room, "I'm tired and you can't make me." He waited for what seemed like an eternity, and then the voice returned. But it was a different sound than before. Now the voice whispered. "Fine," it said, "but you'll be sorry in the morning."

He often reflected back on that night many years ago. The house had been quiet and he had been awake all night, or so it seemed, waiting for something to happen. Now, as an adult, he realized that probably he had fallen asleep; but at the time, and for years afterwards, he had been convinced that he had stayed awake all night, guarding against the voice. He had spent thousands of hours thinking about that night and what he had done.

He remembered, he could never forget, going downstairs the next morning to an oddly quiet kitchen and finding it empty. It was only him and his mom, but usually she was up every morning before him. The image of the mother he found remains with him to this day, slumped in her bedroom chair, dead of a heart attack.

The doctors told him it was odd, she had no history of heart problems. But he knew what had happened. She had died because he had disobeyed. Before he had picked up the phone to call 911, he knew what had happened and had vowed never to disobey again.

The next decade of his life was fairly uneventful, as uneventful as this time of life can be anyway. He went through the normal developmental stages and trials of a teenager. He had moved to Phoenix to live with an aunt. To her credit, she tried to do her best for this unwanted man-child who showed up on her door. They had tried to find his father at first, but gave up. He always suspected that they had been successful in making contact, but that his dad didn't want him. At least that's what the voices told him.

High school was difficult. Not the learning, but making friends. Whenever he began to know or enjoy someone, the voices would demand that he test the relationship. "Did that person really like him?" the voices would ask. The only way to find out was to test the person, put him or her, he had

would-be friends of both sexes, through some pain. Afterwards, if the person still seemed to like him, the voices would demand that he hurt them even more. This went on and on, over and over, until he had no friends. He was known as someone who humiliated others, made fun of them in front of their peers. People who know him better knew that he also physically hurt his friends. Sometimes he would laughingly trip or punch, sometimes he would hit hard enough to cause a bruise or bloody a nose.

Once, in his senior year, he developed a relationship with a girl named Ann. She had gone to a girls' boarding school in the east, and he met her over the summer. When September came the voices were happy because he had left his mark on her. She showed no physical bruises at all; but her self-confidence had been destroyed by his ego. Whatever she did wasn't good enough. He held out his approval like a golden orb, always out of reach. And the more difficult he made things, the more she tried and the worse she felt. It was a relationship made in heaven for him and the voices.

In his adult years, the voices had changed their demands. They no longer asked him to hurt those who were close to him, at least not so obviously. The voices were simpler now. As an adult, he was sarcastic and a user of others. And the voices were happy. By now it had become his second nature. It was just part of who he was. Every once in a while he would want to be nice, would want to be kind and trusting, would want to be supportive. But then he'd hear the voices again. And he'd think about his mother. He knew he had no choice.

## Classified:

59XX Kingsbury - Spacious 2 bedroom apartment. Separate Living, dining, kitchen. Carpeted, stove, refrigerator. Lease. \$435 month. Available November 1. Call 727-0471

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