

The *TIMES* of.... SKINKER DEBALIVIERE

Vol. 29 No. 3

September-October 1998

FREE

The oldest neighborhood newspaper in St. Louis

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Eclectic Crowd Celebrates National Night Out

The 1998 observation of National Night Out in Skinker DeBaliviere saw widespread participation, many special guests, and new program ideas. A very successful neighborhood band, John Thomas and Friends, performed for an ever-changing crowd. People came and went, savoring the entertainment of the moment along with a bratwurst, visiting with old friends and sometimes even the neighbor from next door. As has become a Night Out tradition, the 5900 McPherson Block Unit sponsored an ice cream social. Newcomers to the Night Out scene included the Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council

Photo by Andy Cross



Playground Committee, who sold pretzels and talked the talk regarding their efforts to construct a children's play lot in the heart of the neighborhood, accessible to all and a safe haven where our youngest children can be brought to play. The Grace Methodist summer camp youth group, T.A.G., sponsored a bean-bag-toss. Temporary tattoos proved to be the most popular and coveted prize awarded at this booth. Gary Hayes and Shirley Polk fed a crowd of hungry and thirsty folks (we ran out of beverages this year!). They

were backed up by Steve Schiller, Bridgette Gray, and Corey Welsh on the grills and Ruth and Herbert Johnson handling tickets sales.

In addition to fine music throughout the night, entertainment and information was provided by Support Dogs, Inc. Under the leadership of Georgi Fox, eighteen dogs, attired in their blue capes, and their handlers demonstrated some of the commands and responses that the dogs use to help those who depend upon them. Mingling freely with the crowd after their demonstra-

tion, the handlers of these extraordinarily disciplined dogs answered many questions about Support Dogs, Inc.

Crowd-pleasing demonstrations of another sort were brought to the Night Out by a 7th district-sponsored Double Dutch team. With the team's star performers coming from the Skinker DeBaliviere neighborhood, the girls received an especially warm welcome. Jumping that night were: Tiffany, LaShonda, Tamika, Sharita, Princess, Tay, Ash, Myra, Ebony and Alicia. The girls were coached by P.O. Jill Taylor.

Dignitaries at our party included Police Chief Ron Henderson, Comptroller Darlene Green, Democratic Committeewoman Rose Storey, Alderman Lyda Krewson, Captain Harry Hegger, 7th District, Lt. Joe Boffa and Sarah Smith, Arts in Transit.

A Bi-State Arts Bus (painted by neighborhood resident Andy Cross), a fire truck, and the D.A.R.E. Corvette also make appearances during the festivities.



Photo by King Schoenfeld

Skinker DeBaliviere National Night Out Wins Award

The Skinker DeBaliviere neighborhood earned recognition this year from the Mayor's office for carrying out the theme "Keeping Kids Safe". At ceremonies September 9th in Kiener Plaza, neighborhood representatives accepted the award.

From youth participation in the planning process to numerous activities organized by and featuring youth from the neighborhood, this National Night Out kept a number of our children, busy, productive and safe. Additionally, the Playground Committee launched the "matching funds" component of their fundraising efforts for the Playground watch will serve the needs of the "under 5" set.

Congratulations to block captains, youth leaders and all who shared their time and talent with their friends and neighbors for an outstanding, award-winning National Night Out!

IT'S TIME TO PARTY WITH THE TIMES!

Back by popular demand is the annual Times of Skinker DeBaliviere "New Neighbors" Party. All neighborhood residents and friends are encouraged to attend. The party will be held at the Nodiffs', 6142 Westminster, on

Saturday, October 10 beginning at 7:00 p.m.

Refreshments will be provided and there will be a cash bar. There is no admission charge.

The party is a chance to become acquainted with those who have moved to our neighborhood recently and to renew acquaintances with old friends. We will be looking for the person who has lived in Skinker DeBaliviere the least amount of time and the person who has been here the longest.

If you have questions about the party, please call 721-7532.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Times Delayed by Lightning Strike

A strong storm on a late August afternoon disabled the computer of the Times' production manager and delayed the appearance of this issue. Although armed with a more than adequate surge protector, lightning struck the computer through the telephone line connecting its modem to the Internet. Luckily, the machine was successfully repaired but there is a lesson here for all of us with telephone hook-ups.

Further Developments Regarding Nina Place

All units at the redeveloped 6-family building at 5885 Nina Place have been sold and the building is fully owner-occupied. Because of substantial deterioration, a building on Kingsbury was demolished this summer. It was directly behind the McPherson Community Garden. Amrit Gill, of 61xx Westminster, purchased the 6-family next door and is renovating it as rental property. The building with balconies across the street on Kingsbury will also face the wrecking ball. Its third floor collapsed, making any renovation far more difficult and expensive. However, 5999 Nina Place will be renovated by a local developer in the near future. Various plans for the now empty space on Nina and Kingsbury include a small park, an orchard, or possible in-fill housing.

Washington University Becomes Largest Property Owner

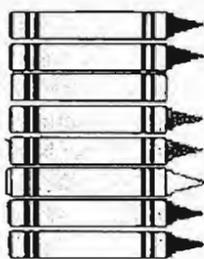
Over the past 18 months, Washington University has acquired a considerable amount of rental property in Skinker DeBaliviere and is now our largest property owner and landlord. The university initially acquired the rental properties owned by Parkview Properties in the fall of 1996. Since then, it has acquired a number of 2-6 family units, particularly on the 6000 and 6100 blocks of Pershing and Waterman. (See photo below.) It also recently purchased the Arthur building—former home of Talayna's—on Skinker. The university has not yet announced plans for that property.

Editor's Notebook

by Lana Stein

On Aug. 29, a Saturday, I dashed over to super Schnuck's in the late afternoon to pick up a few things. As I approached the entrance, I noticed a woman at a table with a sign, "Free Cardinal Tickets with Purchase of Expressions Cards." The tickets were for Sept. 8. I almost let them pass, knowing I would be teaching a seminar on the 9th for 3 hours. I also thought would anyone be free to go? But, with birthdays coming up, I bought some cards and waited for 15 minutes for my free tickets (the woman went on break). As soon as I got home, I called several friends, coincidentally on the Times board, and said can you go? The answers were a resounding yes. So, on the 8th, we journeyed on MetroLink to Busch Stadium. When I got the tickets I had no idea this could be the big night but on the way down we all felt as if we had a rendezvous with history. And indeed we did. The 62nd McGwire home run was wonderful but even more special was being part of a special, only in St. Louis, crowd. Every seat in the house was taken that night. Amidst the crowds, people were unfailingly polite. We were all part of a very warm glow. When Big Mac dedicated that special homer to the city of St. Louis and its fans, people could not have been happier. Leaving the park after the last of the ceremonies had ended, it was the same—no pushing, no shoving—polite, happy people everywhere. Frankly, it was fun to feel like a youngster again too! In a recent column, Greg Freeman talked about McGwire's home run pace restoring our esteem. He's right. This race has given us something positive and hopeful during a summer of much unpleasant news. And he's right about St. Louisans, too often self-disparaging. Our city isn't perfect but it certainly comes through in the clutch. The motto of this tale is to be in the right place at the right time and to sometimes look on the bright side about our town and its residents.

PLAYGROUND COMMITTEE ANNOUNCES COLORING CONTEST



Children in the Skinker DeBaliviere neighborhood can share the excitement surrounding the proposed playground at Four Corners Park even before the playground is built.

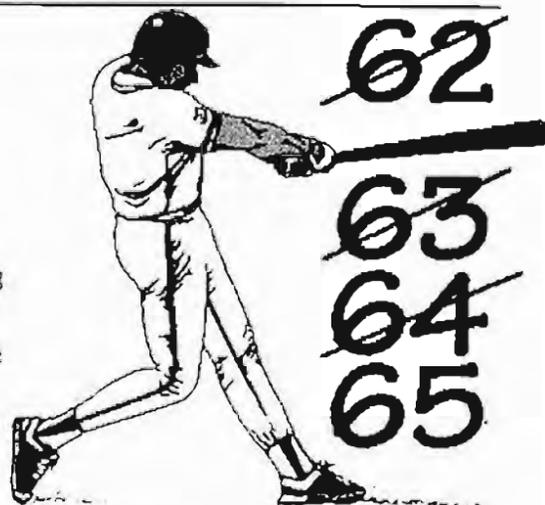
Our hard-working playground committee, under the leadership of Katrina Steirholz, has announced a coloring contest open to all children in the Skinker DeBaliviere neighborhood. Coloring sheets and rules for the contest will be distributed by our block captains as part of an information packet on the playground. Prizes include safety helmets for biking, skating

etc. and bicycle locks. Extra coloring sheets and a copy of the contest rules may be obtained at the Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council offices, 6008 Kingsbury. Call 862-5122 to make certain someone will be at the office when you plan to stop by.

Calendar

Neighborhood Events and Meetings

- 9/24 Social Services Committee, Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council, 6008 Kingsbury, 7:30 p.m.
- 10/5 Transportation Committee (formerly MetroLink Committee), Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council, 6008 Kingsbury, 7:30 p.m.
- 10/7 Skinker DeBaliviere Community Housing Corporation, 6008 Kingsbury, 12:00 noon
- 10/10 FOOD DRIVE 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon
- 10/12 Columbus Day - HOLIDAY
- 10/19 Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council Board Meeting, Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council, 6008 Kingsbury, 7:00 p.m.
- 10/21 Skinker DeBaliviere Community Housing Corporation, 6008 Kingsbury, 12:00 noon



Other Events of Interest

- Now- 10/17 William Shearburn Gallery exhibits the paintings of St. Louis artist Tim Liddy. Gallery is at 4740A McPherson and is open Tues. thru Sat. from 11-4pm.
- 9/30 Mark Crispin Miller, professor of media studies at New York University, speaks at the Washington University Assembly Series on "Our Master's Voice: The Growing Power of Global Media," 11am at the Graham Chapel, open to the public.
- 11/5 Spike Lee, film director, speaks at the Washington University Assembly Series at 4pm at Graham Chapel; This lecture may be open to the general public with limited seating.
- 11/10 Terry Gross, host of Fresh Air on National Public Radio, speaks at Washington University's Graham Chapel at 4pm. This lecture may be open to the general public with limited seating.
- 11/11 Former Senator George Mitchell, chief negotiator of the Ireland Peace Accord, will speak at 11am in the Graham Chapel at Washington University. This lecture may be open to the general public with limited seating.
- 1/8/99 Blueberry Hill's 15th Annual Elvis Birthday Celebration at 7:30pm. Impersonator contest and trivia contest. \$15 tickets go on sale Dec. 8.

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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. Copy may be submitted on computer diskette if the diskette is in DOS format or on high density Macintosh diskettes. Submissions on diskette 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. The 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, 63112.

The deadline for all copy is the 18th of the month.
 The writer is responsible for the accuracy of the data, including times, dates, locations, and particularly the spelling of names.
 Pictures or illustrations should be in black and white. Color photographs often do not reproduce well.
 The editor retains the right to omit or alter any material.

Saint Louis Ki Society Counting Down to the Big 2-0

by Mark Ruppert, Senior Instructor

Hello neighbors. It's hard to believe, but we've begun planning for our 20th anniversary. We've seen many changes in the neighborhood over the years and it's great that so much of the area is doing well and getting better.

Yet, I suspect that many people in the neighborhood still don't know who we are, what we do and maybe not even where we are. Where is easy, at the corner of Des Peres and Pershing in the same building as the Yoga Center. Who we are isn't too tough either. We are people who live all over the St. Louis area, children and adults, men and women, big and small, of all sorts of different professions, persuasions, colors, and even nationalities that come here to this neighborhood to train. Over a thousand people have come here over the past 20 years to take art in what we do. A few of us have even stayed around for most of those years.

The most basic thing we do is study Mind and Body Unification. This is a calm and relaxed way of being, in which the mind is free to lead and the body free to follow. In this way, we can have an energetic connection inside ourselves and with everything around us. We call this connection and energy "ki." Ki is a Japanese word usually defined as mind, heart or spirit. We teach and study the martial art Aikido as a way of learning about ki. We also have less physically vigorous classes in Ki Development in which we focus on learning deeper relaxation and calmness in daily life.

You're probably going to hear more about us in the next year as we count down to a big celebration of our 20th anniversary in September 1999. We love to have visitors, so please feel welcome to come visit and see a class. We're planning some events for the neighborhood and hop to meet more of the people who live around our school.

Remembering Virgil "Jack" Wright

by Cal Stuart

In the mid-1960's, the area that is now known as Skinker-DeBaliviere was beginning to experience crime, great unease, overcrowding and some dereliction of multifamily buildings. "For Sale" signs were up, and families were moving. The neighborhood began to show the signs of an urban area in decline.

However, many fine people did stay. And, frankly, due to the really fine quality of the housing which sold at very depressed prices, many new and, at that time, young people and families were able to afford this wonderful housing stock and began to buy into the area.

At the same time, realizing the pressure that did exist, the two neighborhood improvement associations (Rosedale-Skinker and Washington Heights Neighbors), three churches and the administration of Washington University came together and formed a new umbrella organization, the first of its kind in the St. Louis area, the Skinker-DeBaliviere Community Council. The purpose of the Council was to stop the decline. The question was, how?

Jack Wright and his wife, Chris, were two of the younger people that moved into the neighborhood and raised their three children there. Jack was a member of St. Roch's, a Boy Scout leader and more importantly, a member of Washington Heights Neighbors.

With that membership in hand, Jack was one who was an important element in the formation of the Council. He was an early board member, representing Washington Heights. But his most outstanding contribution to the Council, and the neighborhood, was when he agreed to serve as Chairman of the Board.

Before Jack became chairman, the Council had tried to solve the neighborhood problems with various programs, many social in content.. They

may have been good programs, but nothing changed and the decline continued.

Finally the Council received the reality statement it needed. Two derelict, single family houses were torn down and several others were on the city's list to be demolished. Knowing this, Jack strongly suggested to the board that a small staff and limited funds require a clear priority and that priority should not be the social programs. He said clearly and bluntly that the priority for the Council should be the development of programs to maintain, rehabilitate and market the housing stock of the Skinker-DeBaliviere Neighborhood. This is when Jack really began to take the heat and a lot of it. He had every social advocate, in and out of the neighborhood, coming to Council board meetings to challenge the new priority of the Council. Some yelled, some cried and all left angry, because Jack did not waiver.

Jack's point was always very clear. You can have all the social programs you want, but if you don't have adequate housing, then you won't have people there to benefit from the programs. Good housing meant stability and a place for growth.

I lived in Skinker-DeBaliviere for almost 30 years and knew Jack for almost all of that time. I worked with him when he was the Chairman of the Council, and I can honestly say that he was one of the toughest, quiet men I have known. Most of the people who gave him those hard years of problems and irritations are no longer in Skinker-DeBaliviere and have gone on to other ventures.

I am certain of one thing—on those hot and crowded, often noisy Monday nights at 6008 Kingsbury, if Jack did not have a heavy and quick hand on the gavel, I doubt that the quality of life and the housing stock in Skinker-DeBaliviere would be as fine as it is today.

A footnote: After the meetings, Jack and a few others would retire to my house for a few "refreshers" in order to review the meeting and discuss the future. As the night would wear on, Jack would sometimes mention not running for Chairman of the Council again; that he had enough abuse. I was always thankful that he was only bloodied and still had the strength to man the ramparts once again. I will always remember him with great gratitude and fondness.

Dan Shea Stars in *The Tempest*



One of the special assets of the Skinker DeBaliviere neighborhood is that it is home to many of the exceptionally talented faculty members of Washington University.

Dan Shea, chairman of the Washington University department of English and longtime resident of the 6100 block of Kingsbury, has pursued a second vocation as an actor for many years. This summer he portrayed Prospero in *The Tempest* with the St. Louis Shakespeare Company at the Grandel Square Theatre for which he received critical praise as well as local fan approval.

His range includes both comedy and tragedy, modern to classical drama, from King Lear to Uncle Willie in *Philadelphia Story*.

He has performed with the New Theatre, the Theatre Factory St. Louis, Washington University and Off The Cuff.

Dan can be seen in a number of television commercials and print advertisements and for select audiences, industrial films.

On the occasion of a celebration of the poetry of Robert Burns, Dan can adopt a Scottish burr and do justice to the reading of Burns' paeon to the haggis. Dialects and regional accents are among his specialties.

In the 1970's he played pivotal roles and delivered performances of towering intensity in the neighborhood melodramas, *Penelope*, *Pride of the Pickle Factory*, *The Fastest Thimble in the West*, *The Last of The Ghostlies*, and several others.

Friends and neighbors can expect more opportunities to see Dan in performance. He expects to have more time available next year when the department chairmanship rotates to one of his colleagues.

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New State Rehab Tax Credit Law

by Jo Ann Vatcha

Property owners engaged in rehab projects within the Skinker-DeBaliviere Historic District could be eligible for some big savings this year. A new state law created for the first time the availability of State Historic Tax Credits, available for commercial and residential use, including homeowners. Unlike the Federal tax credits for rehab, homeowners are eligible to take credits on their state income tax for eligible rehab costs incurred after January 2, 1998. It is anticipated that the new legislation will encourage rehab and stimulate development of historic areas. Key to the success of this legislation was building consensus among both urban and rural legislators. The "Main Streets" in several outstate communities will thus benefit from the new law, as will historic neighborhoods such as ours.

In fact, the legislation is immediately effective for buildings in 28 eligible tax credit districts in St. Louis, including Skinker-DeBaliviere/Catlin Tract/Parkview Historic District and the Central West End. Our area's buildings do not have to be certified individually, since the whole district is already certified. Overall, the law affects buildings which are either 1) in a local district certified on the National Register of Historic Places, 2) in a local district certified by the U.S. Department of Interior, or 3) a building which is individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

These key elements of the legislation determine whether your rehab project is eligible:

1. Rehab costs must exceed 50% of the cost of the building.

If you plan to put \$ 40,000 into rehab, and you purchased the house for anywhere between \$ 1 and \$ 79,000, that would qualify. However, if you purchased a house for \$ 125,000 and put \$ 20,000 into rehab, that would not qualify.

2. Tax credit is 25% of the cost of rehab.

For example, a \$ 40,000 rehab would have a \$ 10,000 tax credit.

3. Tax credit can be used to offset taxes in the current year, back three years, and forward up to 10 years.

For example, for the \$ 10,000 tax credit above, a person making \$ 55,000 per year pays 6% state income taxes of \$ 3,300. The homeowner could get a credit for \$ 3,300 in the current year and each of the past 3 years to receive a cash refund of \$ 9,900, then use the remaining \$ 100 balance in the following year, for a total tax credit of \$ 10,000.

4. Tax credits can be used by individuals, corporations, or partnerships and can be sold or exchanged.

5. Tax credits must receive preliminary approval from the Department of Economic Development and the State Historic Preservation Office.

After preliminary approval is granted, work can begin. After work is complete and documentation submitted, the state issues a certificate for inclusion with your state income tax returns.

As a homeowner, you may be planning work to your home which would easily qualify for the tax credits. On the other hand, you should think carefully about the consequences of proposed work which might not be approved. For example, removing or altering distinctive features that were original to the building would be rejected. Moreover, the rule of thumb is that deteriorated historic features should be repaired rather than replaced. If the deterioration is severe and replacement is required, then the new feature should match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials.

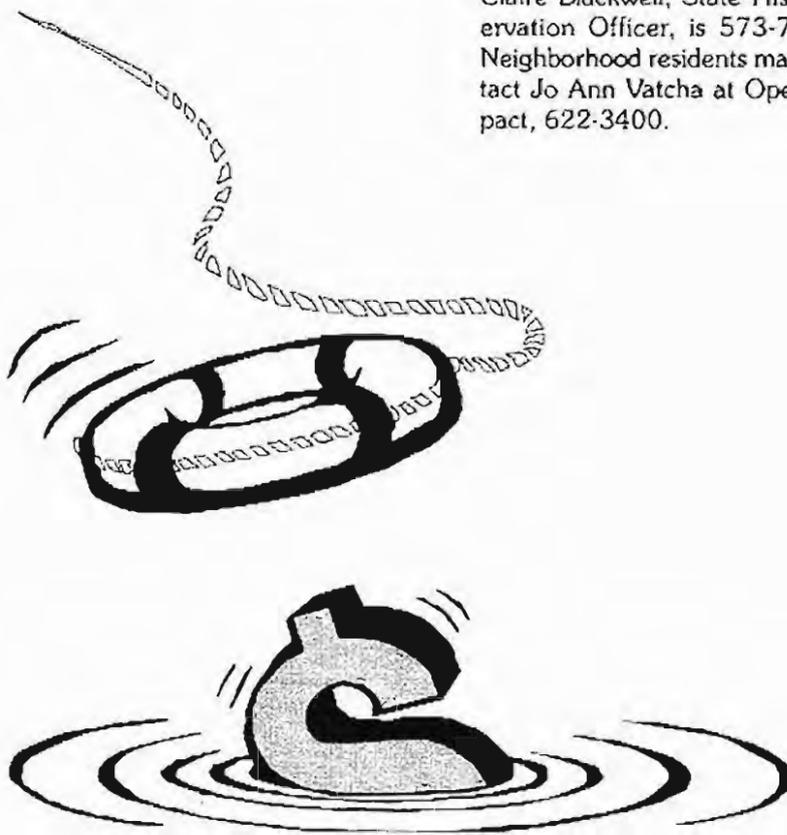
And remember, new additions don't qualify as rehab, so the cost of building a room addition would be subtracted from the basis. And if adding, say, a

"Florida Room" would substantially change historic features of your property, the whole application might be denied.

The application process may be rigorous, but definitely worth the trouble, says long-time neighbor and Feinberg Real Estate agent Rennie Shuter, who has been working with architects

George Johannes and Tom Cohen while going through the process for obtaining approval for the renovations at the Shuter home in Parkview.

Homeowners or building developers interested in applying for these credits can obtain an application from the State Historic Preservation Office, P.O. Box 176, Jefferson City, Missouri 65102. The telephone number for Claire Blackwell, State Historic Preservation Officer, is 573-751-7857. Neighborhood residents may also contact Jo Ann Vatcha at Operation Impact, 622-3400.



Public Meetings Announced for MetroLink Extension

An update from the Skinker-DeBaliviere Community Council Transportation Committee

by Paul Hohmann

East West Gateway has hired Mary Means & Associates, Inc., a community planning firm to manage community participation in the Cross County MetroLink Extension Conceptual Design Analysis which will run from now until Spring 1999, when East West Gateway will choose a design for the route. The extension will run from the existing station at DeBaliviere west along the Forest Park Parkway to Clayton, then south along the Terminal Railroad Right of Way to Shrewsbury.

Residents are encouraged to attend the first two parts of the Community Engagement Process:

Monday, September 28
4:00-6:00, 7:00-9:00 PM
Clayton Community Center
2 Mark Twain Circle 63105

An **Open House** which will display various designs that will be considered by the East West Gateway Coordinating Council.

directions: Take Forsyth west past Brentwood Blvd. (Shaw Park on S.W. corner) Take 1st left on Parkside Drive (NationsBank on corner). Go 2 blocks, street veers right, name changes to Topton Way. Turn left onto Mark Twain Circle, pass high school, Community Center is next building.

Thursday, October 1
7:00-9:00 PM
Compton-Drew Middle School
5130 Oakland Avenue 63110
(West of the Science Center)

1st of three **Community Issue Workshops**. This public forum will cover the portion of the route from DeBaliviere Avenue to the western limits of University City. Citizens will have the opportunity to express their concerns about the proposed designs.

Please take time to participate in these public meetings. The future quality of life in Skinker-DeBaliviere may depend on a large turnout of people at these meetings.

We also recommend that you attend the following:

Clayton MetroLink Advisory Committee - Wednesday September 23, 7 PM - City Hall (Forsyth & Bemiston). This meeting will feature several speakers on sources of Federal, State, as well as Municipal funding of light rail systems.

Community Issue Workshop - Thursday October 8, 7-9 PM - Wydown Middle School (on Wydown east of Big Bend & Fontbonne College). This forum will cover the portion of the route through downtown Clayton. Why is this important to me? - you ask. Some of the design options that may be considered for this segment resemble the slow streetcars of yesteryear, and could create a major bottle-neck in the regional transit system.

Technical documents which include information about the design options are also available for viewing at the Skinker-DeBaliviere Community Council office at 6008 Kingsbury Avenue.

For more information, or to be added to the Community Engagement Process mailing list, contact: East West Gateway Coordinating Council: (314) 421-4220; Steve Schukraft, Engagement Team Manager for Mary Means & Associates: (703) 684-2214; the Project Hotline: (314) 621-4499; or e-mail a message to: crosscounty@marymeans.com

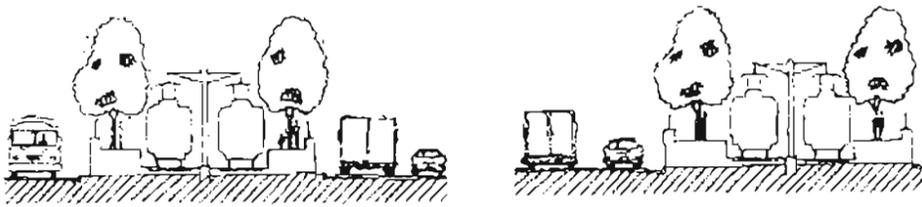
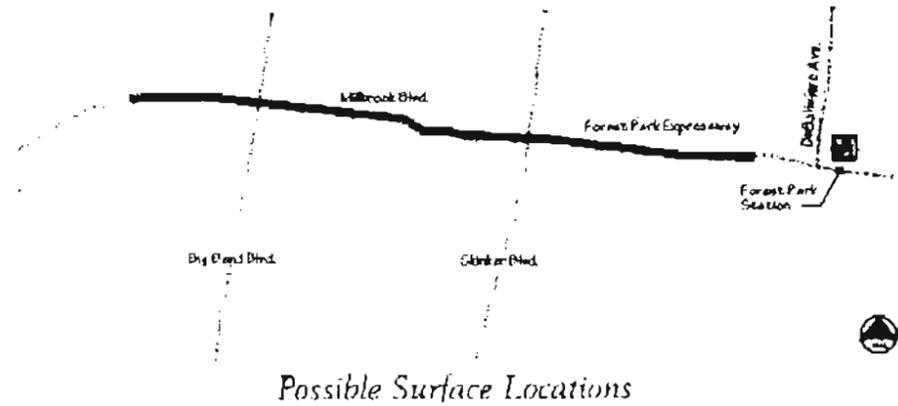


MetroLink Options for Extension to Clayton

The information below is taken from the Cross-county MetroLink Update published and disseminated by the BiState Development Agency. Reprinted is Section I: Forest Park Station through University City.

The options under consideration run within or along Forest Park Parkway and Millbrook Boulevard. The extension will connect to the existing MetroLink line at or near the Forest Park Station, so changes to the existing station will be required to make a below-grade connection. Each option would run within or alongside the existing roadways. Issues associated with the location of stations and parking, and the effects of various design options on the neighborhoods along this section will be central considerations throughout the study. Design options are described below.

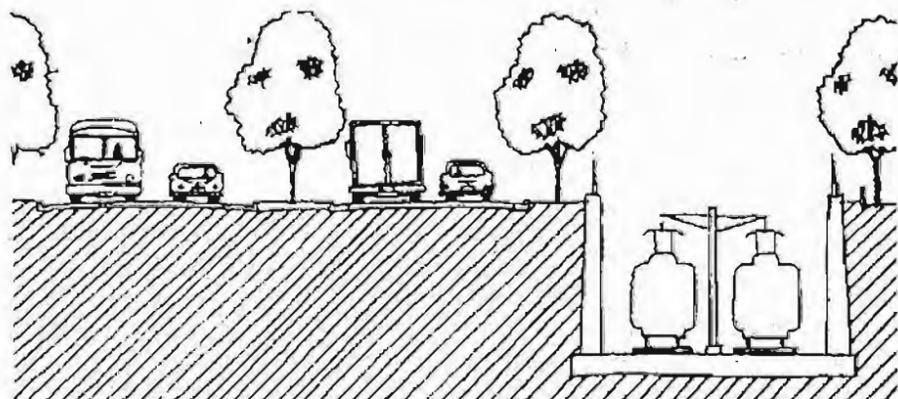
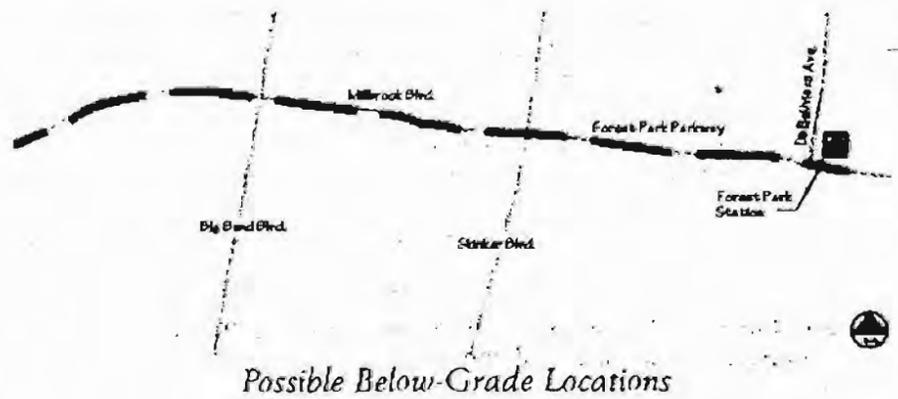
A. Surface Tracks. In each of these options, the tracks would slope up from under DeBaliviere, where the line diverges from an expanded Forest Park MetroLink Station. Two options for running lines on the surface are under con-



sideration. Tracks could run in the median from just west of DeBaliviere to the point at which Pershing Avenue diverges from Millbrook Boulevard, or they could run on a strip of land along the south side of Forest Park Parkway and Millbrook from just west of DeBaliviere to Big Bend, with the tracks crossing to the north side of Millbrook west of Big Bend. If it is determined that rail operations or traffic flow might be disrupted because of insufficient intersection capacity, the design of through lane underpasses could be considered for both Skinker and Big Bend Boulevards. From Pershing west, lines would run below-grade to the east edge of the Clayton central business district (CBI) under the Forest Park Parkway pavement.

B. Below-Grade Tracks—Cut and Cover Tunnel. A similar pair of options can be located below-grade. Clearance of the River Des Peres storm-water tunnel will be an important consideration. Two cut and cover options are under study. Under the first option, the line could run under the existing roadway pavement from DeBaliviere to Pershing. Under the second option, cut and cover tunnels would carry tracks underground along the edge of the surface road following the same alignment proposed for the surface lines.

C. Below-Grade Tracks—Open Cut. The alignments for open cut are similar to the cut and cover options, but open to the sky. The cuts could be bridged at intervals to permit vehicles or pedestrians to cross.



Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council Minutes of Board of Directors Meeting on July 27, 1998

In Attendance: Lara Doyle, Steve Givens, Ronie Haliburton, Ruth Johnson, Gwen Lazard, Susan Littlefield, Miki Merritt, Shirley Polk, Julie Schoemehl, Paula Sigman, Lana Stein; Guests: Paul Hohmann, MetroLink Advisory Committee, Eloise Goodum, Sgt. Ed Peich, Vivi Wolf, NSO, Gary Boehnke, Housing Project Administrator, Laure Porterfield, SDCC Executive Director.

Absent: President Gary L. Hayes, Ann Smith Carr, Peggy Droege, Jane Geiler, Maggie Hart-Mahon, Dan Schesch.

Meeting was called to order at 7:10 p.m. by Lara Doyle, acting as president in Gary Hayes' absence. Council acknowledged Ruth Johnson's return after 6-month absence. Ruth thanked Board for flowers, notes, and calls during her convalescence.

Financial Report

Lana Stein, Treasurer, presented the monthly financial report. Susan Littlefield moved to adopt the report, Shirley Polk seconded. The motion passed. Lana Stein wants separate line items for taxes paid out. Shirley Polk requests \$450.00 to help fund Annual Picnic. Lana Stein suggested we use bingo money (Community Fund). Ruth Johnson moved that the Board authorize expenditure of \$450.00 from the Community Fund to pay for the picnic. Gwen Lazard seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Executive Director's Report

Laure has completed all of our annual not-for-profit corporate registration. Marvin Nodiff, a resident and attorney, serves on a pro-bono basis as our registration agent. There is a change in property management for SDCC building. Appraisal of building in needed. New management has had workers look at water problems. The building may need tuckpointing, gutter work, and more. National Night Out is Tuesday, August 4, 6:00-9:00 p.m., we still need help with set up and tear down, as well as a few more food servers.

Housing Corporation Update – Gary Boehnke reported on the acquisition of several lots and hopeful completion of 536 Rosedale by September 1, 1998.

Committee and Neighborhood Reports

Security report was given by Sgt. Peich. There has been a rash of crimes (car bashing and garage burglaries) in the neighborhood. Police have unmarked cars in area and much overtime manpower out in the neighborhood. This is helping to slow down crime some. Arrests have been made. Sgt. Peich reported that you can help by calling 911 to report any suspicious people or activity. Don't leave stuff in cars, lock in truck if needed. Secure your garage! Increased patrols at the DeBaliviere Mall. A suggestion was made to have the "Street Smarts" booklet distributed to Washington University students and at National Night Out.

Residential Development Committee – Lana Stein, Chair, gave tour of neighborhood to Washington University representatives. They expressed interest in Delmar; possible participation with George Johannes. Archway asked if security guard is stationed at new Talayna's as agreed by Mike Faille. Vivi Wolf will check into it. The Arthur Building (Talayna's old building) is in danger of being demolished instead of rehabbed. We will need to identify a neighborhood position on this. It was

pointed out that this is difficult if plans for the site are not shared.

C. Social Service Committee – Shirley Polk asked for a moment of silence for former Board member Jack Wright, who recently passed away. Social Service met July 22 to plan the Food Drive, which will be held on October 10, from 10:00 – 12:00 noon. We will be asking neighborhood businesses to have containers set up for food drop-off.

Laure is looking into getting collection boxes from BFI. Next meeting is September 24, at 7:30 p.m.

Playground Committee – met and is working on promotional materials for National Night Out. They are taking a lead role in the activities for National Night Out. They are almost 1/2 way towards projected goal!!

Beautification Committee – Master gardener from Missouri Botanical Garden said the fungus that has attacked some of the plants in the community vegetable garden is under control, not a crisis situation anymore. Post Dispatch contest awarded us Best Design for neighborhood gardens.

Transportation Committee – Paul Hohmann and others who went on the San Francisco trip met with neighborhood residents on July 6 to share their impressions of several light rail systems in California. Three main points were discussed:

The need for our neighborhood to communicate and cooperate with other groups.

Better visuals.

Public notification of meetings.

Susan moved that Paul Hohmann be appointed as SDCC representative to the Community Work Group that is suggested by Mary Means & Associates. Lana Stein seconded this motion. It passed unanimously.

Other Business

Ronie Haliburton reported that the 5800 block of DeGiverville is making preparations for National Night Out. Also the landfill at Laurel and McPherson is being slowly removed. Lana stated that a resolution honoring Jack Wright is being prepared; it will be shared with the Board at the September meeting and his children will be invited to receive it at the October meeting.

New Business – Lana needs more writers for the Times. Looking for Vicissitudes information to include the whole community. Deadline for the next issue is August 25.

Eloise Goodum, a representative from the 5800 block of Pershing, was welcomed to the meeting. Mrs. Goodum reported a re-organizing effort for the 5800 and 5900 blocks of Pershing. It is hoped that a board member representing those blocks will be selected soon.

Lana moved to adjourn the meeting. Susan Littlefield seconded. The meeting adjourned at 8:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Julie Schoemehl



The Walkers on Washington

by Jane Geiler

"... (R)ead a life backward as much as forward." James Hillman.

When one talks with George and Bobbie Walker of the 6100 block of Washington, one speaks in decades. Everything they do, they do for a long time. Everything they've done, they've done for a purpose, a definite, no-nonsense reason. One can count on the Walkers. They are Mr. and Mrs. America. If you want to understand the solid, responsible, firm foundation of the Rosedale neighborhood, look to the Walkers.

On June 28, George and Bobbie tied the knot and began a lifetime together. That was four decades ago. George has owned his own company for three decades and, in addition, he worked for GM for over two decades, retiring after 23 years. In July three decades ago, the Walkers moved to their present home. They have been my neighbors for two decades. George and Joe Geiler, who are the same age, both attended McBride over four decades ago! But who's counting?

The Walkers came to Washington Ave. looking for a "spacious" house to accommodate their family of three boys, and thereafter also a girl. They had looked "on the northside", but found rooms too small. George knew two people from GM who lived here. Those folks are long since gone, but Flossie and Frank Driscole, the first people that the Walkers met upon moving, remain "good neighbors," who "came down to meet us" right away. For a period of time, the neighborhood "got rowdy," reported Bobbie. "Kids were a problem and crime was sorta rampant. We thought we'd have to leave." A low point was a nun's being held up at St. Roch. The Walkers helped form a Neighborhood Watch. "We walked the streets," George re-

ports. (Washington University) students (living in the area) were a big help," said Bobbie. "They took kids to Wash. U. for swimming" and things like that. There were (what else?) "about 10 difficult years."



Though never ones to brag, the Walkers obviously pride themselves on all sorts of hard work and accomplishments. Bobbie moved to St. Louis from Georgia "to get an education." Valedictorian of her high school class, she attended an all-black Methodist college—Payne, back home. Then she moved to St. Louis where she attended Harris-Stowe the first year it was integrated (1955). Since then, she has also attended Forest Park and Waterson College. She has worked as a clerk typist, a substitute teacher, a home health nurse and is a Certified Medical Technician. She would still like to work part-time. (862-6664)

Bobbie met George at Soldan where they were attending adult education programs at night. George worked at both the Wentzville and St. Louis plants of GM where he was required by the company to "learn 16 jobs." He retired as a "mig welder," who could "weld a car door in 15 seconds." That job was "the best job on the line," but "did affect my eyes." While at GM, George kept his "Walker's Pest Control" (862-6664) going on the side. Business was so good that "(w)e prayed for lay-offs sometimes!" George laughs. George and his son John still run the business. George guarantees he can get rid of any pest except squirrels where the only remedy is "trap 'em." He once got rid of bees in a woman's house by listening to the walls to locate the queen, but his specialty is roaches. "If you can get rid of a roach, you can get rid of anything. A termite is nothing but a sissy compared to a roach!"

George Walker is not one to respect sissies. From 1963-65, George was active in C.O.R.E. He participated in boycotts and marches and was arrested once for demonstrating at Jefferson Bank. Bobbie completely supported him in this, staying at home with the children while he took risks on the streets in the name of racial equality. George speaks fondly of Congressman Bill Clay for seeing to it that many St. Louis institutions were integrated.

The Walkers will always tell it like it is. Life has not left them and theirs

unscathed since the struggles of the '60's. They are greatly troubled by drugs. He and Bobby having been victims of Jim Crow, George has no truck with any group preaching racial division. And George laments, "Kids now don't even vote. This is very discouraging because you fought hard for those things."

No matter how soberingly realistic about their own and society's problems the Walkers become, they can bounce back quickly to other things that sustain them. They attend New Cote Brillante Baptist Church. Bobbie was one of only a handful of black members of Delmar Baptist when the vote was taken by that congregation to move away from the neighborhood. Now she and George both seem enthused about the transition to New Cote Brillante. On the date we met for this interview, they were freshly home from service and both were almost giddy about "the message" they had just heard from a female pastor there. Never short of things to do, Bobbie sews and gardens and is wildly enthusiastic about art. George loves cats. "A cat will always be your friend," he says. Their present "friend" is named "Randy" after "Mandy" proved to be a male. "Cats are clean," George repeats. One can find George barbecuing in the backyard in preparation for all the holidays, but he laughs, "I told Bobbie the other day, 'We have to get some barbecue for the 4th of July' and she said, 'The 4th has passed!' Then I remembered that this year we spent the 4th at son John's house and John barbecued!" Now that's a good legacy, a son having taken over the father's tradition so smoothly that it came and passed without even really registering. That makes the decades worth it.

Community Gardens Growing Strong

by Andy Cross

The two community gardens of Skinker DeBaliviere have had very productive summers thus far, thanks to the dedication of many neighbors and the guidance of Gateway Greening and the Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council.

The McPherson Community Garden won Honorable Mention in the Post-Dispatch "Great Garden Contest" this year and we are very proud. The McPherson Garden was on tour with 20 other gardens of other varieties, both community and private, and photos of the McPherson Garden were on display with other winning gardens at the Kemper Center at the Missouri Botanical Gardens for the months of July and August.

Later in the summer, Gateway Greening sent master gardeners to the McPherson garden to demonstrate for all Gateway Greening community gardeners how to identify and spot problems and pests that menace our plants. As usual, some plants (especially tomatoes this year) took a few hits from Mother Nature, but the gardens recover and go on with little extra effort.

The two wildflower gardens at the entrance of the McPherson Garden exploded in size and color from early spring time, and are still in fall array. The sunflowers burst forth in such abundance and we were taken by surprise. Squirrels had planted seeds from last year's sunflowers in our wildflower garden and the results were bright red and

yellow varieties of sunflowers we had never seen before. Our squirrels proved to be fine cross-pollinators.

The butterfly garden in the center of the McPherson Garden is packed so tight with flowering plants it is bursting out of its terraces.

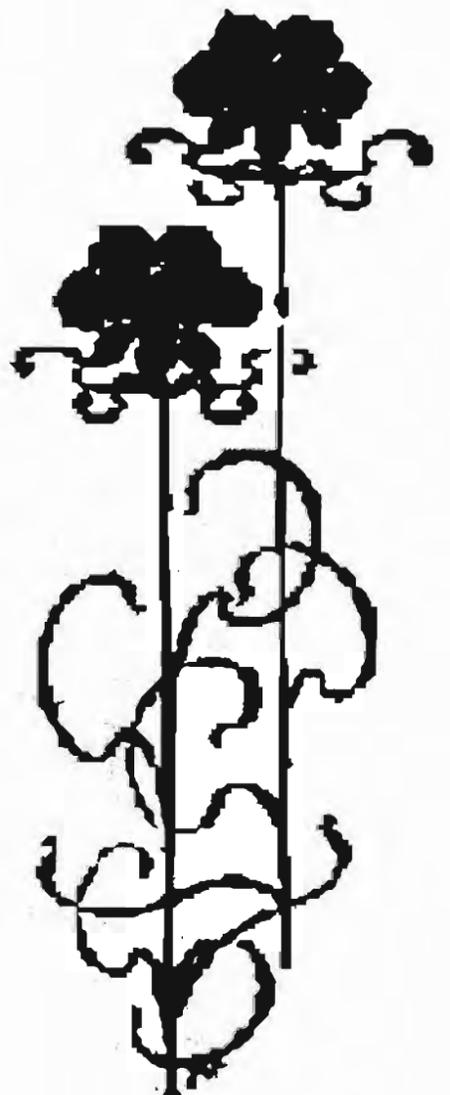
The raised beds are full in both community gardens and we are all learning more about how to manage our plants.

The Block Unit 1035 Garden, under the leadership of Ronie Haliburton, with help from Michael Butler, the Beautification Committee and the SDCC, has been doing fantastically this summer. Also under the guidance of Gateway Greening, this garden is bright, healthy and productive. This

once-vacant lot across from the Hamilton Elementary Community Education Center is now a beautiful sight, with flowers and vegetables growing tall and proud.

Mrs. Haliburton and other gardeners from the 5800 block of DeGiverville have also been maintaining the triangle park at the intersection of Waterman, DeGiverville, and Laurel, with plants from Gateway Greening and Operation BrightSide.

Both community gardens have come a long way in a very short time. The McPherson Garden is less than a year and a half old. Next time you need to stretch your legs, come by and visit our gardens.



Neighborhood-Wide Food Drive to benefit FOOD PANTRIES at

Grace and Peace Fellowship, Grace Methodist,
New Cote Brillante Church of God, and St. Roch

Saturday, October 10, 1998

pick up between 10:00 a.m. and 12:00 noon



Needed: Non-perishable foods (canned goods, cereal, pasta, rice, soups, etc.) and personal hygiene - items (toothpaste, disposable razors, toothbrushes, soap, shampoo, diapers, etc.)

Why: To help replenish the pantries that serve our neighbors in need.

How to help: Leave items you wish to donate in clear view in a bag on your front porch by 10:00 a.m. Attach this brightly colored flier so your donation can be identified. Teams of collectors will be by after that time to pick up your items.

Not home October 10? Drop-off baskets will be located at Central West End Bank, Crossroads School, Mail Boxes etc., and Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council from October 3, 1998 to October 10, 1998

Questions? Interested in being a volunteer? Have a pick-up truck you can drive? Call 862-5122.

Food Drive sponsored by the Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council and our Social Service Committee.

In Your Ear
Continued from page 8

"Second," he continued, "I hereby merge the City and County. Reversing the foolish decision of 1876, the City of St. Louis now extends west to Lindbergh Boulevard.

"And third, the new City of St. Louis annexes all lands and properties to the Missouri river on the west. St. Louis will once again be a city of the magnitude of 1904 when we were the fourth largest in the nation. With this an NBA franchise is on the horizon, I'm sure, but we don't want the Clippers!

"Next, fourth, the St. Louis Board of Aldermen is hereby eliminated, the legislative body to be replaced by the mayors of each of the now-St. Louis municipalities of 10,000 or more people." Oddly, although the reporters were all Washington-based and knew little of St. Louis, they cheered at this. "But," he continued, "the St. Louis City Mayor will serve as chief executive officer for the whole shebang. And I appoint Vince Schoermehl, former mayor, to be mayor again. One thing about Vince, he was good and he was never dull! Come to think of it, that's two things."

He cleared his throat. "Fifth, it is illegal to walk Cardinals' first baseman Mark McGuire in any game played in St. Louis. He must be pitched to until the ball is put in play or he strikes out.

"Sixth, the area over highway 70 downtown will be covered so that pedestrians can walk directly from the Mississippi to downtown and verse-

vica. The land will contain a picnic area, to be called 'Iorg Park,' in honor of first baseman Dan Iorg, the only individual every to hit a ball, even though it was foul, out of Busch Stadium, a miniature golf course, and a canal which ties it into River Des Peres, the subject of my seventh edict." At this Hawkeye paused and gave a big smile to the press corps, all busily writing and trying to make sense of what they were hearing. Flashbulbs were popping and he opened his coat to ensure that the cast of smile faces on his tie would join him in any photo.

"Seventh, River Des Peres will be transformed into a recreational waterway, connecting the Mississippi River in South St. Louis to the newly created waterways in Forest Park and to the downtown area," Hawkeye announced. "And as part of that recommendation, work will commence on transforming the entire riverfront into a recreation area. I have already signed a contract with Rouse Company, the developers of our Union Station and Baltimore's Harbor Place.

"Eighth," he went on, gasping a bit for breath, "school district boundaries are all dissolved and parents can choose to send their child to any public school they choose, with free transportation to be provided. I realize that some districts and schools will be over-subscribed. When that happens a student's admission will be based on lottery. This will, in effect, eliminate the monopoly on quality schools that is currently available only to those who can afford to

buy expensive housing or to send their children to fine private schools.

"As a result, the artificially-inflated property values in Clayton and LaDue will plummet while those in the former City of St. Louis will soar. And those schools that receive no subscribers will be forced to reconstitute themselves. For a change we will trust families, rather than bureaucrats, to decide what is right for their children."

Gaining momentum, he continued, "Next, ninth, almost all of every park of 10 acres or more will be closed to vehicular traffic so that walkers, runners, bikers, and bladers can enjoy access at will. And relatedly, I am levying a 5 cent tax on every gallon of gasoline sold in the community so that work can commence immediately on all of the MetroLink lines that we will need. By the year 2002 we will have light-rail connections to South St. Louis, Chesterfield, Florissant, and Kirkwood."

Pausing for effect and playing with the bottom of his tie, Hawkeye now spoke a bit more softly, "And finally, the tenth recommendation is that adults and children be prohibited from selling candy by standing in the street near stoplights at busy intersections. This act will save much driver angst and a few lives."

Turning away from the chart and taking a deep breath, he now spoke from a piece of paper he had pulled from his pocket. "Next week at this time I will have a press conference at

the new Emperor's Palace in St. Louis, the 17th floor of a high-rise building on Skinker, overlooking Forest Park. At that time I will announce the next series of proclamations, dealing with reducing air pollution by creating "Bike Days," merging Civic Progress with the Donneybrook cast, eliminating chime, paving Bridgeton for a new airport, annexing the land east of the river to Breeze, Illinois, and refunding the PSL money, plus interest, to all those who purchased Rams' season tickets. Thank you, Mr. President. It's going to be a fun ride, ladies and gentlemen."

Hawkeye then stepped back in order to return the microphone to the President but neither the President nor Ms. Lewinsky were anywhere to be seen. After an awkward moment Mr. Starr strode to the microphone, "Thank you Emperor Hoerr. It will be, ahem, interesting. And men and women of the press corps, I invite you to remain around for a while. I will be hosting a press conference about my newly-be-gun investigation of whether or not Elvis is still alive." *End of report.*



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In Your Ear

by Hawkeye H. Hoerr

December 1998 API Newservice: President Bill Clinton today announced a new initiative designed to save urban areas and restore them to their former luster. Standing on the White House lawn, flanked by fiancée Monica Lewinsky and chief of staff Kenneth Starr, the president began to speak: "For too long we have treated our cities, our core resources, as throw-away communities, expanding helter-skelter and building new infrastructures at a cost to both taxpayers and the environment. Today that changes. Recognizing that governance is the key, I am creating a series of nationwide EEE zones, 'Empowerment for Excellence by an Emperor.'"

Ms. Lewinsky's presence at a press conference was a bit of a novelty, the president having only announced their engagement after the November elections in which the Democratic party won twelve House seats, regaining its majority status. She stood silently, beaming to the press in her blue dress. As reporters typed madly, their fingers dancing on a bevy of laptops, the president continued, "Monica and I have long felt that while democracy has its strengths — I was elected by a majority of the minority who voted after all — we recognize that stronger leadership is warranted in our urban areas. Mr. Starr and I, along with speaker of the house Dickie Gephardt, have fashioned a new model for decision-making, one designed to achieve excellence. Effective today I will begin appointing 'Emperors' of our urban areas, individuals who have powers never before granted since the days of nation-states. They will be accountable to me and given licence by me to do what is necessary, not being hampered by legislative bodies, federal or local laws, or," and he paused, "the approval of the people. After all," the president now leaned forward, squeezing Ms. Lewinsky's hand and smiling at his new-found ally, Mr. Starr, "often the people don't know what is needed."

Referring to his notes, the president said, "Representative Dickie Gephardt has been working closely with us and we have chosen St. Louis to be the first site of the nation's EEE effort." At this point Representative Gephardt came forward and spoke to the audience: "I have long regretted my decision in 1986 to support elimination of the federal investment tax credit. Taking away this support devastated St. Louis' recovery and that in many other urban areas as well. Candidly," and at this the Representative gulped and smoothed out his translucent eyebrows, "I pandered to special interests and forgot my hometown interests. I hope that my involvement in the EEE Zone act will restore the confidence of my constituents. Because in 2000 there will be an election for president and friends and neighbors, I..." But at this President Clinton forcefully interrupted him, stepping back to the microphone, leaving Ms. Lewinsky, Mr. Starr, and newly-appointed Secretary of State Ross Perot, and physically blocking Gephardt from continuing his speech.

Smiling to all as if nothing untoward had happened, the president began, "But any policy is only as good as the individuals implementing it. Great effort and thought have been given to selecting St. Louis' EEE Emperor. We wanted someone creative but not blotched by ward politics or encumbered by too much wisdom. We wanted someone who would readily make new mistakes. Won't you join

me then in welcoming the newly appointed Emperor of St. Louis, Hawkeye Z. Hoerr?" At this a murmur ran through the press corps. This was a new name, not on their radar screen.

The President continued, "Although Hawkeye Z. Hoerr is not a common name, we at the White House have been following him for years. He is uniquely qualified for this position as I indicated earlier. Unlike so many inside the Beltway, he will not suffer from too much intelligence or too much ambition. We first came to know him," the president now turned to his left, "from reading his column in *The Times of Skinker-DeBaliviere*. Much of what he has written over the years, actually since I was Governor of Arkansas, has informed our policies and influenced our initiatives. I now give you Emperor Hawkeye Z. Hoerr."

The crowd grew quiet as Hawkeye strode to the microphone. A tall, thin bearded fellow, balding in a mature sort of way, looking a bit like Tom Selleck, he began to speak. "Thank you Mr. President," he began, obviously a bit nervous. He unbuttoned his coat,

thereby exposing a garish black tie with yellow smile-faces as its pattern. "I appreciate the confidence that you have placed in me. I have lived in St. Louis for all my life and have watched the politicians, like plans for renovating downtown, come and go. I have seen the football Cardinals leave town only to be replaced by the excessively-expensive and equally bad Rams; I have seen the river boat Admiral sold and repurchased at a higher price; I have seen highways drive apart our neighborhoods and political boundaries subdivide us and create winners and losers where even the winners lose. I have seen expediency chosen over common-sense and the leadership vacuum grow even larger. But today that ends!"

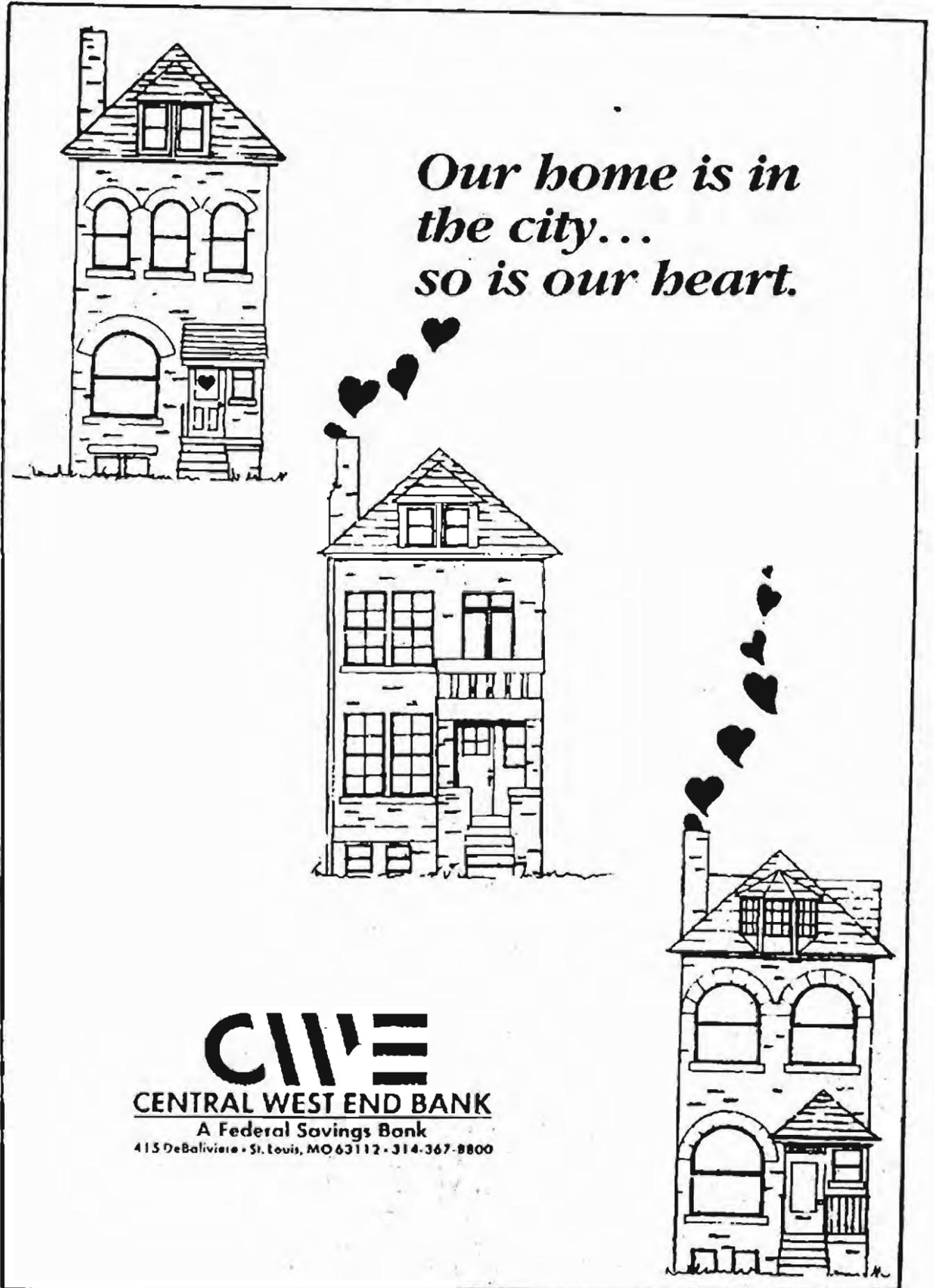
He was speaking loudly now and knocked over a glass of water on the podium. Ignoring the dripping water, he stepped back and surveyed the crowd, "As the Prez said, I am announcing ten initiatives, all to be done within one week. And in the future, each week will find ten new directions, all to also be accomplished in seven days. We have waited and waited and now is the time to act! These steps

will make St. Louis a better community for all of its citizens."

The reporters sat in stunned silence, hardly believing what they were hearing and seeing. Slowly Hawkeye turned to his right and pulled a curtain aside, showing ten initiatives, all in red bold letters on a giant chart, all spelled correctly. He read aloud: "With the Emperor powers given to me, I hereby decree that the following shall take place no later than seven days from today." He looked at President Clinton who was looking only at Ms. Lewinsky. After a pregnant moment Hawkeye cleared his throat causing the President noticed him and give him a thumbs-up signal. Hawkeye smiled at them both and then spoke to the stunned reporters, referring to the chart..

"First," Hawkeye said, "every McDonald's restaurant in St. Louis will be closed and replaced with a Ted Drewe's frozen custard stand. Gasoline is not cheap and we shouldn't have to drive to South St. Louis to partake in the best dessert known to man. Food is love.

Continued on page 7



*Our home is in
the city...
so is our heart.*

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