

The *TIMES* of.... SKINKER DEBALIVIERE

Vol. 33 No. 1

April/May 2002

FREE

The oldest neighborhood newspaper in St. Louis

Independent and all volunteer-run since 1970

Bill Kohn Wins State's Highest Tribute



Governor and Mrs. Holden congratulate artist Bill Kohn, recipient of the 2002 Missouri Arts Award.

Bill Kohn is a longtime resident of Skinker DeBaliviere. His home is on 61xx Kingsbury and his studio graces Four Corners, also on Kingsbury. His work has been shown on numerous occasions in St. Louis. He is known for his large, colorful landscapes that depict his travels to India, Peru, Paris, and many other sites.

Governor Holden recognized his artistic contributions by awarding him the 2002 Missouri Arts Award, the state's highest honor for achievement in the arts. Kohn received the award at a ceremony on February 13 at the Capitol Rotunda in Jefferson City.

The governor's wife, Lori Holden, introduced Kohn and called him St. Louis's arts ambassador. He is also professor emeritus at Washington

University.

Kohn's work can be found in numerous public and private collections. This coming fall, the Washington University School of Art will honor Kohn with a retrospective exhibition at the Des Lee Gallery, 1627 Washington Ave. The show will feature large paintings that trace Kohn's artistic evolution from abstraction to figuration to landscape, as well as numerous watercolors based on his travels. At the same time, a concurrent exhibition of Kohn's most recent paintings — inspired by Brunelleschi's Duomo in Florence—will take place at the Elliot Smith Gallery in the Central West End.

Congratulations Bill! We all look forward to the fall exhibitions of our noteworthy resident artist.

Operation Brightside Blitz is Around the Corner

Operation Brightside Blitz Day, scheduled this year in our neighborhood on **Saturday, April 27**, will once again focus on alley clean up. Block captains will receive trash bags to help clean up the debris. Work crews will form in each alley starting at about 8:30 a.m. Trash trucks will be making their rounds starting at about 10:00 a.m.

Flyers will be distributed outlining the procedures for bulk trash pick up as well as yard waste guidelines. Please try to follow those guidelines as we strive to brighten up the community for all of us. Volunteers will also gather at Four Corners Park and be dispatched to those blocks requesting help with their alley clean up. The SDCC Office will be open at 8:00 a.m. to direct volunteers and answer questions.

Once again, all workers are invited to share free hot dogs and camaraderie in Four Corners Park from 11:30 a.m. until 1:00 p.m.

And this year, participate in a "Blitz Bonus" sponsored by Home Depot: Recruit a crew of at least fifteen neighbors to clean up your alley. Take pic-



Brad Weir, Frank Burke, and Betty Newsham, shown here in 1989, working on a continuing neighborhood project: beautifying the barricades.

tures. Complete a Blitz Bonus form (available at the SDCC Office) and submit it with the pictures on or before May 8, 2002. Your crew will receive \$50.00 worth of tools, plants

and/or other materials from the Home Depot at 3202 South Kingshighway. Items can be chosen to continue the improvement efforts on YOUR block.

And don't forget — the neighborhood plant exchange and planting day will be Saturday, May 4th. in Four Corners Park from 10:00 a.m. until noon. Check your flyer for details.

Editor's Notebook

By Lana Stein

I have a few pet peeves to share with you. I rarely utter a complaint about our neighborhood because it is the place where I am very happy to reside.

But, nothing is perfect so here goes. I hate hearing other people's music in my house that goes on beyond a moment. I work a lot at home so that is part of my gripe. Also, my tastes in music are not the most popular so there is a lot out there I'm not thrilled about. Give me Motown or give me Italian opera. I don't think a lot of people mean to be rude; they just aren't aware of how sound carries. If my windows are closed, and I am assaulted by unfamiliar and unwanted sounds, I will remember Alderman Bosley's noise ordinance. We all should.

Cars double park here all the time on all of our neighborhood streets. Sometimes, when picking up or dropping off, it's the only possible thing to do. But, as we all know, it's more common than that. Students do it, long time residents do it, visitors do it. What galls me is when there is ample space to pull up at the curb.

Now these should be the worst things that we ever have to experience in urban living. What is also common and should be stopped are the realtors who discourage clients from looking at homes in the city. It's more common than we think. A colleague picked me up for dinner recently and mentioned that he could never live in this neighborhood; he had children. The schools, the schools but that's another musing for another day.

Calendar

Upcoming Events Calendar

- Monday, April 8** - SDCC Board Meeting, 7:00 p.m., 6008 Kingsbury. All residents welcome.
- Wednesday, April 17** - SDCHC Board Meeting, 6:00 p.m., 6008 Kingsbury
- Thursday, April 25** - Commercial District Committee Lunch Meeting, noon, 6008 Kingsbury.
- Saturday, April 27** - BRIGHTSIDE BLITZ - throughout the neighborhood. Gather for hotdogs from 11:30 a.m. until 1:00 p.m.
- Monday, April 29** - final steering committee meeting for NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN Brainstorming Session, 7:00 p.m., 6008 Kingsbury
- Wednesday, May 1** - SDCHC Board Meeting, 6:00 p.m., 6008 Kingsbury
- Friday, May 3** - SDCC Executive Committee, 7:30 a.m., 6008 Kingsbury
- Saturday, May 4** - Neighborhood Flower Exchange, Four Corners Park, 10:00 a.m. until noon
- Monday, May 13** - SDCC Board Meeting, 7:00 p.m., 6008 Kingsbury
- Wednesday, May 15** - SDCHC Board meeting. 6:00 p.m., 6008 Kingsbury
- Saturday, May 18** - Neighborhood Planning/Brainstorming Day, 10:00 a.m.-noon, location t.b.a. Call 862-5122 for details.
- Wednesday, May 29** - SDCHC Board Meeting, 6:00 p.m., 6008 Kingsbury
- Saturday, June 8** - 8:30 a.m.-Noon. BREAKFAST GARDEN TOUR. Start at McPherson Community Garden. Tour throughout the neighborhood. Call 862-5122 for reservations.

Public Art Coming to Skinker-DeBaliviere

Remember the wild roses that once grew along Forest Park Parkway? St. Louis artists Linda Horsely and Bob Rocca do, too. They proposed to Arts in Transit a project entitled, "Wild Rose Run," an installation consisting of approximately 40 painted steel roses (24"-40" each) for the fence along the Parkway just west of the Forest Park MetroLink station.

The installation will also reflect the passing of the seasons. During the spring, the rose petals will be folded in on themselves to resemble buds. During summer months, the petals will unfold,

depicting roses in full bloom. By the fall, petals will "fall" from the roses and will create a petal carpet.

The commission is part of a series of temporary public art projects done in conjunction with the Cross County MetroLink Extension. For more information about Arts in Transit, call (314) 982-1413 or <http://www.bi-state.org/artsintransit.html>; www.bi-state.org/artsintransit.html.

For more about the Cross County project, visit <http://www.crosscounty.org>

Revitalizing Neighborhoods

I have been Mayor of St. Louis for almost a year now, and as I have visited different parts of the city, I have been greatly encouraged by the strength of neighborhood organizations. Time after time I have see them act as a force to improve the quality of life.

They have been a galvanizing force for change in neighborhoods that have seen hard times; a stabilizing force in a time of great transition; and an uplifting force that provides services such as home repair, commercial development, and even youth programs. Having been to a great number of neighborhood and block meetings across the city, I am more certain than ever that, together, we can bring this city back to greatness.

In order to assist you with the preservation of your neighbor-



Photo by Jan Franzen

hood, my administration will be starting several initiatives over the coming months. These Neighborhood Life Initiatives will be designed to focus attention on various aspects of the quality of life in neighborhoods. They are part of an overall strategy to enable our city to fulfill its enormous potential as a place to live,

(Continued on page 3)

The TIMES of... SKINKER DEBALIVIERE

Editor: Lana Stein and JoAnn Vatcha
Business Manager: Lois Schoemehl

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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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 maybe omitted by request. Calendar listings should be phoned in to the editor at 721-7532, or mailed to 5953 Pershing Ave., 63112.

Deadline for Summer issue: June 1, 2002. Please send copy by e-mail to jvatcha@msn.com or submit typed copy or by disc to 6008 Kingsbury, St. Louis, MO 63112.

The writer is responsible for the accuracy of the data, including times, dates, location, and particularly the spelling of names. The editor retains the right to omit or alter any material.

Joe Edwards Reflects on Rebuilding Delmar

By Lana Stein

It was Monday, April 1, a day filled with sunshine and a harbinger of warmth to come. I met Joe Edwards and we sat outside Blueberry Hill talking about a common interest, the renewal of Delmar east of Skinker. Edwards and his wife, Linda, opened Blueberry Hill in 1972 and they played an integral role in the creation of the Loop as we know it. In the 1990s, Edwards' interests began to move eastward, first to the Tivoli, and then across the Skinker barrier to the Pageant.

Photo by Hope Edwards



I told Joe that I understood why he and partner Pat Hagin would develop the Pageant. After all, Blueberry Hill has hosted many musical groups. Why is he now buying more buildings on the south side of Delmar for a theatre and restaurant? He said it was similar to his involvement with the Tivoli. He read that it was to be torn down, that no developer had an interest in the property. He then purchased it, created a new movie theatre showing 3 films simultaneously, and renovated the upstairs floors as office space for the Riverfront Times. He had similarly assumed

that developers would move to the city side of the Delmar Loop after the Pageant opened (to considerable success). However, the reluctance of the professional development community in St. Louis again became apparent.

Edwards quietly began to acquire property on 61xx Delmar and plans are now being finalized for anticipated usages. Edwards plans to convert the building next to Church's Chicken into retail space at ground level and office space on top. He also has purchased the Olivet Baptist Church.

He is now raising money to convert that structure into a community theatre where several nonprofit companies could perform. The facade of the church will be preserved but there will be a whole new body. Plans for this have already been approved. A small two story building to the left of the church will be converted into a restaurant. The Del Pietro family has been interested in adding one of their restaurants here.

Further east on Delmar sits a peculiar little building perched quite far back from the street. When the Baptist church was a synagogue, the little building was a mikvah or ritual bath. It has been used as a food pantry by the church. On this site, the Regional Arts Commission will build a headquarters.

Complimenting Edwards' efforts, Neal Shapiro has bought the building where J&W Liquor was located. He plans to create retail on the ground level and apartments on the second floor.

The long-awaited street and sidewalk improvements to Delmar west of the Wabash

Station are slated to begin this summer. Edwards feels that this will bring more people to the street and to a hopefully growing number of new shops. He also favors a trolley to carry them along.

The Pageant has already begun to acquaint more people with the eastern Loop. On Friday and Saturday evenings the lines of young people waiting to get in are exciting.

One of my graduate students told me that the Pageant finally gave her a reason to turn east on Delmar (at Skinker). In a few years, people may wonder why they ever hesitated.

Joe Edwards would like Delmar to be vibrant all the way downtown. He has certainly helped to give that effort a substantial push. The Commercial Committee, the aldermen of the 26th and 28 wards, and Arts in Transit put it in motion but Joe Edwards' belief in what could happen and his entrepreneurship have made it a good bet. And we are close by to enjoy it.

Breakfast Garden Tour

The fifth annual Breakfast Garden Tour will be held Saturday, June 8th, from 8:30 a.m. until noon throughout the Skinker DeBaliviere neighborhood. The tour begins at the McPherson Gardens, with a continental breakfast. Participants then follow a self-guided route to selected homes and gardens in the neighborhood. A continen-



tal breakfast is served from 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. The tour also features presentations by horticulturists and other urban gardening experts.

Reservations can be made in advance of the tour, \$10.00 for adults, \$5.00 for children, by calling 862-5122. Tickets purchased on the day of the event are \$12.00.

(Continued from page 2)

work, raise a family, go to school, or start a business.

Some of the initiatives that you will hear about include:

Problem Properties and Nuisance Offenders: A single vacant or derelict property can bring down the value of a whole block, and can also act as a magnet for crime. In order to help give our residents the safe and pleasant neighborhoods they deserve, my administration will soon begin to put in place a series of steps to crack down on absentee landlords and aggressively enforce residential building codes.

We will work with the Police Department, the Neighborhood Stabilization Officers and others to make sure that people who behave unlawfully in our neighborhoods will be prosecuted before they further disrupt the quality of life on our streets.

Crime: For far too long, too many of our neighborhoods have been hindered by crime and

the fear of crime. This must change. That is why I am working with the heads of city, state and federal law enforcement agencies on formulating a common strategy to reduce crime. This unprecedented level of cooperation between the Mayor's Office and our various law enforcement agencies will be a great asset in making St. Louis a safer and more vibrant city.

Efficiency in Government: I want to make sure that City Hall is an asset - not an obstacle - to neighborhood progress. For too many years, City Hall has been a center of inefficiency, bloat, and poor service - hardly the innovative, effective ally that our neighborhoods need.

That is why I have created an initiative called CityView. This will be a management tool, a way to measure what city departments are doing with the resources you provide us. I am currently working with department managers to determine

Housing on DesPeres Contemplated

On Monday, March 25, the Residential Committee of the SDCC sponsored an open meeting at St. Roch's Church Hall to discuss whether housing along DesPeres would be desirable to the community. There is talk of building several houses that are accessible for the disabled at Pershing and DesPeres and there and further north on Des Peres had been part of a conscious effort to add and maintain green space. It was also part of a strategy to reduce density.

Those at the meeting and

those who sent e-mails were mixed in their opinions. Some wanted to preserve green space. Others wanted housing to add to security and the degree of homeownership on 60xx Pershing. At this time, there is no developer selected or specific project plans for the Pershing site or any other along Des Peres. The land at Pershing and Des Peres is owned by the city. A developer would have to purchase the site from the city. Such a purchase requires 20 votes of 28 at the Board of Aldermen.

what services should be measured and the proper ways to measure them. Essential services that residents need most will be highlighted. Trash collection, street repair, and building inspection are some of the services that will be measured. And I can assure you that I will make each and every department head accountable for his or her actions.

None of these initiatives can succeed without the cooperation and support of the residents of each and every neighborhood. Whenever you tell us about a problem property, alert the police to criminal activity, or join a neighborhood organization, you are going a long way toward ensuring that St. Louis's best days are still to come. An engaged and enlightened citizenry is the first line of defense against the evils that can plague a city, and the first line of offense in bringing it back.

Yours sincerely,
Mayor Francis G. Slay

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Neighborhood Chronicles

The Times of Skinker-DeBaliviere

by Jo Ann Vatcha

"The oldest neighborhood newspaper in St. Louis", THE PAPER, later renamed THE TIMES, began with a controversy in 1970. The big story was entitled "Jack in the Box Conflict" and covered an important topic for many urban neighborhoods: tearing down an old building for a fast-food restaurant. The brand-new publication was not just a flyer about a timely topic. Instead, it was typeset, had photographs, news, features, and paid ads: news of schools, the upcoming Art Fair, the Police, a Black Nationalists Culture Center opening, a Bill Kohn art show, clean-up activities, a food editor, and a second major story: "Open Enrollment at St. Roch's", which was about to admit non-Catholics for the first time in the fall of 1970.

That first issue established high standards, which volunteer writers and editors have tried diligently to meet. Emphasis has always been on facts, figures, fairness, often defusing rumors and clarifying important issues, and providing a forum for expressing ideas about improving the community. There have been book reviews, restaurant reviews, recipes ("Macho Menus" ran for years), political profiles, and much more. "Vicissitudes", which recorded the everyday important events of individual people in the area, ran for more than a dozen years. Tom Hoerr's humor column, "In Your Ear", has lasted more than 22 years. Others have covered the Scouts, the schools, and numerous morale-building activities like the Art Fairs and House Tours, and, in more recent years, the Community Garden, the building of the Playground, Operation Brightside, and much, much more.

The TIMES has provided a medium to air proposals and gain the input of residents. The Historic District Ordinance was printed in full (requiring six full



Sue Rothschild, TIMES Editor from 1988-1991, shown here working over a layout.

pages), well before it was introduced to the Board of Aldermen. Every new redevelopment plan, including the early DeBaliviere Place plans, Nina Place, and, more recently, the Delmar Link Redevelopment Plan, have all been fully disclosed and debated, because of THE TIMES.

Often, THE TIMES has dispelled rumors and brought clarity to important issues and everyday problems. A modest article, for example, clarifies a lot. An example is "Crime Down", from December, 1972, in which Jim Hitchcock carefully wrote:

"The incidence of crime in the Skinker-DeBaliviere area followed an irregular pattern from May to October of this year, with no clear evidence of long-range increase or decrease except in home burglaries. There were three murders in August, and one in October, but none in May, June, July, or September. There were

no reported rapes during the summer but two in September and one in October... crimes in most categories decreased in the Seventh District over the same period in 1971, and total number of crimes decreased by 9%."

This precise report never resorted to stereotypes and presented a clear contrast to the TV reports of the 70's (even now), which often refused to see the promise of the neighborhood. And, looking back, this is what people mean when they say "urban pioneers."

It has always been the volunteers who made the publication a success. In the 70's and 80's, without personal computers, writing and layout was often a group activity, often on the 3rd floor of Marj Weir's home. Far and away our longest-serving volunteer, Marj Weir served as editor, wrote articles, did layout, first with scissors and paste, then with computer finesse, and brought others together to participate in reporting about events and people for very nearly the entire 32 years of the paper's existence.

Many, many people have been involved through the years: reporters, advertising solicitors, layout helpers, distributors. Art Santen and Brad Weir have tirelessly delivered bundles of papers to those loyal businesses and institutions and block distributors every single issue. Shirley Polk, Anna Busch, Willie Kinds, Arline Webb, Mike Stahl, to name only a few, have made it possible for every house on every block to receive a copy of THE TIMES. All for free.

TIMES' fundraising activities have often brought together all

parts of the neighborhood to greet new neighbors (and we'll be doing it again this summer) and have fun. One year there was a Prom; the Chocolate Chip Cookie Contests were legendary.

As we enter our 33rd year of publication, we have many new volunteers, who are helping energize the board and the newspaper itself. Tim Schoemehl is helping long-time volunteer King Schoenfeld put together an advertising campaign. Andy Cross, Sole Van Emden, Katrina Steirholz, and Laurie Porterfield, are all helping write and gather information useful and of interest to everyone.

Finally, our Editors are recognized for their many hours of service:

Sharon Meier, 4/70-9/70
 Jody Creighton, 9/70-4/71
 Jean Eberle and Mary Parker, 71-72
 Marj Weir and Chris Lange, 72-75
 Marj Weir, 75-78
 Karen Bynum, 78-79
 Lois Schoemehl and Jo Ann Vatcha, 5/79-11/79
 Peggy Griesbach, 79-81
 Pat McLafferty, 82
 King Schoenfeld, Venita Lake, and Jo Ann Vatcha, 10/82-9/83
 Katie Kurtz, 83-88
 Sue Rothschild, 88-91
 Lana Stein, 92-present

Congratulations to our own Lana Stein, whose new book on St. Louis politics will make its debut in May. Lana will be signing books at a reception at Duff's on May 13 beginning at 5:30 p.m. The 300 page St. Louis Politics: The Triumph of Tradition, also features 35 photographs, including mayors from Rolla Wells on. Lana's previous books include City Schools and City Politics and Holding Bureaucrats Accountable. Lana is Professor and Chairperson of the Department of Political Science at the University of Missouri-St. Louis.



Neighborhood Chronicles: The Skinker-DeBaliviere Community Council

The Skinker-DeBaliviere Community Council is one of the St. Louis area's oldest, still active community organizations. Since 1966, many neighborhood residents have stepped up to the plate and volunteered their time and unique talents to make the community a better place. These are a few of the leaders whose efforts have made a difference.



The Council's first 3 directors, shown here at a celebration in 1986, were: (middle) Jim L'Ecuyer, the first director, 1966-1970; (right) Calvin B. Stuart, director through the boom 70's, 1971-1979, and (left) Richmond 'Skip' Coburn, 1979-1982.



In addition to her years of service as a volunteer, especially with the Women's Crusade Against Crime, Anna Busch, of the 5700 block of Pershing, was Secretary to the Executive Director of the Council throughout the 70's.



Photo by King Schoenfeld

Current Executive Director Laurie Porterfield (standing) and Juanita Wood, Secretary, have managed the affairs of the Council office since 1995.



From the very start in 1966, the Skinker-DeBaliviere Community Council blazed trails with talented leaders from many walks of life. Shown here at the 25th Anniversary party are (from left): Richard Hart, lawyer and one of the founders of the Council; Esther Herron, member of the Council from 1967-1981; Jack Wright, President of the Council throughout the 70's and early 80's; Bob Blackburn, who represented Washington University on the Council from the beginning; and the ultimate neighborhood director, Cal Stuart.



Catherine Forslund served as President of the Council from 1990-95 and worked with Executive Director Nancy Farmer and the City of St. Louis to create a new neighborhood plan.



Shown here are Jim McCleod, Washington University professor, resident of the 6100 block of McPherson, and President of the Council in 1987-88; Esther Herron, receiving a plaque for her many years of service as Treasurer; Karleen Hoerr, Council President from 1983-1987; and Nancy Farmer, Executive Director, 1985-1992, until her election to the Missouri House of Representatives.



Bob Mahon, from Parkview, was President of the Council in 1989.

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Washington University Employer Assisted Housing Program

Washington University has for several years offered employees an incentive to purchase a home in the Skinker-DeBaliviere Neighborhood. The program offers WU employees a 5-year forgivable loan of up to \$ 4,000 or 5% of the purchase price of the house (whichever is less) for points, closing costs, or down-payment assistance. Full-time employees are eligible for this program, if they otherwise qualify for an approved lender's FNMA mortgage to purchase a primary residence in one of three neighborhoods.

In addition to Skinker-DeBaliviere, the program has been expanded to include both Forest Park Southeast and Northeast University City Neighborhoods. As their informational material states, the goal is "to permanently stabilize the

neighborhoods" by encouraging their employees to make their homes nearby.

The loans are forgiven at a rate of 20% annually over 5 years, if the buyer continues to reside in the new home. After five years, assuming the resident stays in the home and remains a WU employee, the loan is totally forgiven and the second mortgage on the home is removed. A previous restriction on resale, giving first option to WU, has been eliminated from the program, at the request of Skinker-DeBaliviere neighborhood residents. Another interesting aspect of this incentive is that it's not just for first-time homebuyers, and anyone in good standing working full-time for WU is eligible. Complete program requirements are available upon request by calling 652-0895.



The Skinker-DeBaliviere neighborhood has enthusiastically participated in Operation Brightside clean-ups since the program was begun by neighbors Mayor Vincent Schoemehl and the first Brightside Director, Lu Green. In this 1982 photo, long-time neighbors George and Karen Brown, who lived on the 5800 block of Pershing, are captured on film directing neighborhood kids in an alley clean-up.

Liquor Store Update

By Dan Schesch

A year ago, the Skinker-DeBaliviere neighborhood had four stores with full liquor licenses on Delmar from DeBaliviere to Skinker. The sales from these stores, especially of single-serve beers, and small bottles of wine and liquor, and people hanging out near the stores, at Washington and Rosedale, Delmar and Hamilton, and directly south in Lucier Park, made many residents feel unsafe. Two stores have closed: With the assistance of the 7th District police, the building housing the store in the 5700 block of Delmar was condemned for occupancy (it had major code violations) and its business license revoked. The owner of the store at Delmar and Rosedale passed away, the heirs did not renew the liquor license,

and sold the building to an adjacent business owner who, I believe, will use it for office space.

A third store, Pete's Market (Sure Sav) at Delmar & Hamilton, which has been/is used by many residents for groceries, accepted several restrictions on its operation, including the elimination of the single serve type sales, after a protest petition against granting the new owners a liquor license was successful in forcing a hearing last year. This was achieved through the substantial volunteer efforts of the SDCC Safety Committee, chaired by Gary Hayes, assisted by Laure Porterfield, other Council members, and the Delmar Committee.

The Courtesy Country Market, which will be the subject of a hearing on April 12, is now the focus of a license protest hearing. Sales there have benefited from the restrictions on liquor sales at Sure Sav and the closure of the other stores. It is hoped that residents will make a strong showing in front of the Excise Commissioner. Even if residents don't have specific testimony about the negative effects of the retention of the liquor license, it is valuable and important that a substantial number of residents attend and show that the speakers have the support and interest of the neighborhood.

Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council Board of Directors Meeting

February 11, 2002 Minutes

Attendance: President Dan Schesch, Directors Peggy Droege, Sole Van Emder, Georgi Fox, Steve Givens, Dee Joyce-Hayes, Paul Hohmann, Joseph Keaveny Gwen LaZard, Lara Lennon-Doyle, Rev. Miki Merritt, Shirley Polk, Tim Schoemehl, John Thomas, Val Tortensen.

Guests: Cindy Betz (Focus St. Louis), Andy Cross (Beautification), Rachelle LiEcuyer, (RHCD), Matt Erlin, Jocelyn Haunston, Larry Isom (Neighborhood Stabilized Officer), George Johannes, David Krautz, Barbara Levin (Focus St. Louis), Avis May (St. Louis Public Schools Community Education), Steve Nagle, Jennifer Olmstead, P.O. Heather Sabin (SLPD), C.L. Smith, Debbie Warshawski,

Staff: Gary Boehnke (Housing Corporation Project Administrator), Laure Porterfield (SDCC Executive Director).

Absent: Ronie Haliburton, Sheri Speed-Gray Meeting was called to order by Dan Schesch, President, at 7:10 p.m.

Welcome and Introductions,

Announcements

Everyone introduce themselves. Attendance sheet passed and people were asked to sign in.

Minutes from the last meeting (January 14, 2002) were reviewed. A motion to accept was made and seconded-approved by all.

Washington University Presentation

Building 1/2 size of original proposal. New alley created to run behind building to Pershing.

Pershing will be two way from Skinker to new alley exit/entrance

Only access to building parking lot (behind building) will be from Pershing.

Questions regarding street restrictions from Pershing to Skinker - don't know answer yet.

Water run off will be underground via grates in rear parking lot.

Parking along Pershing was raised as an issue. Plans are to create additional parking along Pershing side of the building. Possibly residents could use parking lot at night after 10:00 p.m. Steve to follow up.

Questions regarding whether there is enough room on Pershing (along north side of building) for parking on both sides. Traffic Department will make that call.

Timeline is to complete working drawings by May/June and out to bid shortly after.

No decision on retail tenants. Steve will follow up (there has been take of a coffee shop/deli).

Dan requested 11X17 copy of building layout for Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council office and to put on website. Architect agreed to provide.

SDCC Board of Directors February 11, 2002

Committee/Neighborhood Reports

Neighborhood Planning Committee

Everyone welcome March 5, 2002 at 7:00 p.m. Big group meeting, sub-groups are meeting and working together.

Lucier Park Committee

Received grant from Whitaker Foundation for park design. Will bid out contract for park design. Liquor licenses on Delmar (people drinking in park and on the street) a major obstacle to further development. Lucier Park committee collected signatures to initiate a protest against renewal of the liquor license for Country Store. Hearing date will be set.

Commercial District

Continued discussion about liquor licenses

Security Committee

Checking streetlights and alley lights and reporting for replacement. Concerns about Nina Place lighting. Can it be made brighter?

Executive Directors Report

CDA funding will most likely be cut by 1/3 in fiscal year 2003. We must renew our CBDO certification.

There will be a conditional use hearing for a home-based construction business office at 5801 Pershing. Hearing date this Thursday. The Board authorized executive director to write a letter opposing permit and to attend hearing.

Housing Corporation Report

See written report. Working with architect. Concerns over funding.

Executive Committee Report -Dan Schesch

MetroLink: an informal group representing neighborhoods along the alignment of the Cross-County extension has been meeting to discuss better funding plan. Presenting to County Council regarding alternative funding plan this week. Presented at Bi-State Board on Friday; commissioners want to attend County Council presentation.

Other Business

5700 DeGiverville had a tree cut down in cul-de-sac. People can drive across cul-de-sac now. Who cut down tree, why? How can we fix problem?

The meeting adjourned 9:05 p.m.

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Alderman Clay Invites Businesses to Discover Delmar

by Lana Stein

Alderman Irving Clay, who represents the 26th ward, has gone on the offensive to find developers and/or businesses to invest in the 57xx-59xx blocks of Delmar. With 14,493 households within a radius of 1 mile, and literally dozens of new homes being built nearby, the area is poised for development. At a luncheon hosted by the People's Health Centers at 5701 Delmar, Alderman Clay, City of St. Louis Director of Planning, Don Roe, and staff planner Daffne Moore outlined the campaign. The luncheon room was packed with neighbors, architects, developers, and city employees. The luncheon repast was tasty, and the clinic looked as if it had opened only yesterday.

Better still was the message imparted to the guests.

Alderman Clay noted the substantial amount of new family housing created close to Delmar:

Maple Acres along Belt north of Delmar - 28 single family homes have sold for more than \$140,000 each. 20 more are in construction by Jaffee Construction, a \$ 7.3 Million project.

West End Estates on Enright - 55 homes are being built in a \$10 Million project sponsored by Bank of America.

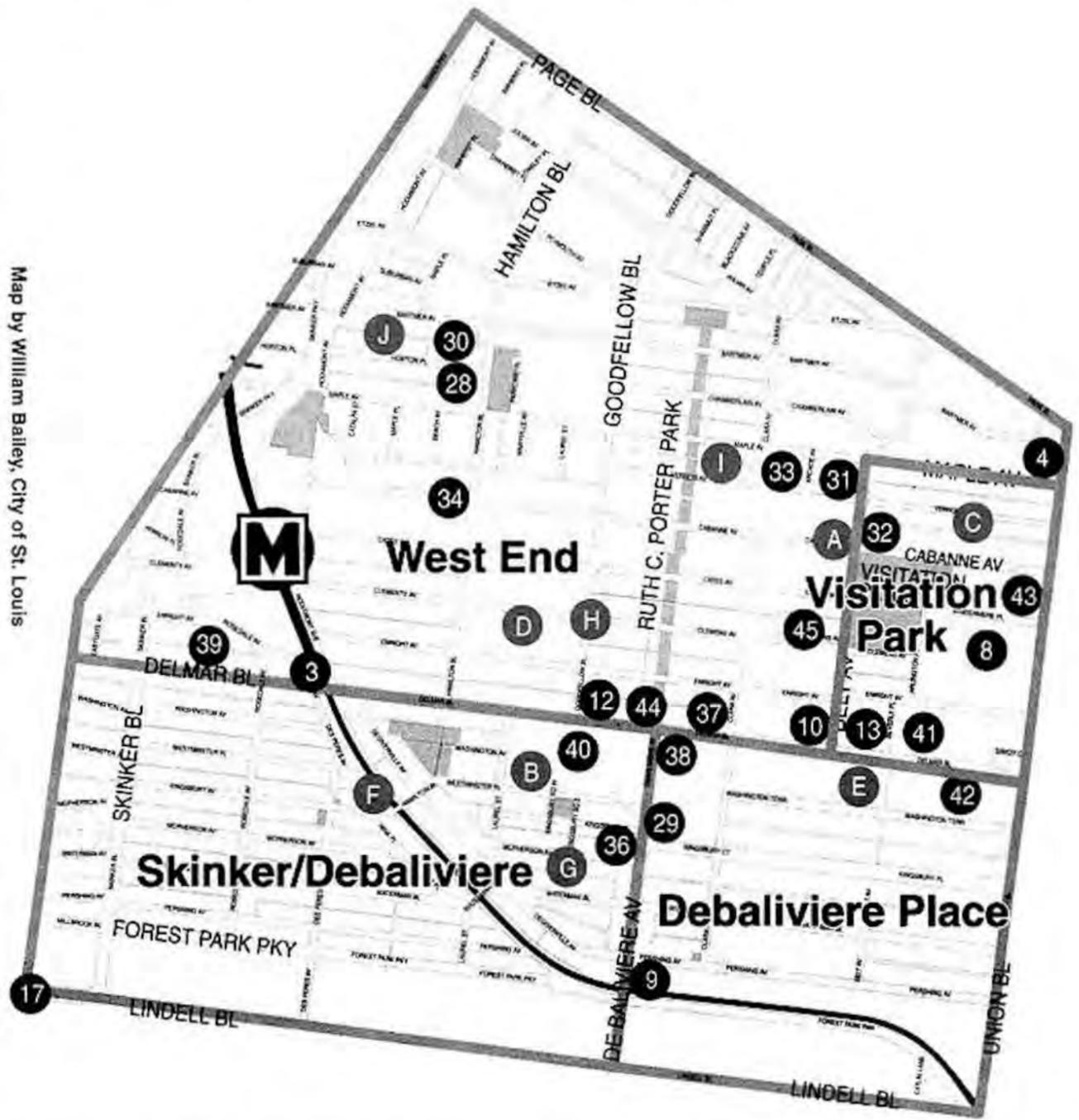
Vernon Estates - 17 new homes representing an investment of over \$4 Million.

Horton Place - 3 completed homes and 9 more in process, some \$2 Million in new housing.

This makes 132 new homes, totalling over \$43 Million in new investment in the West End neighborhood. In addition, the 12 Nina Place townhomes were recently completed in Skinker DeBaliviere Neighborhood.

Also receiving plaudits is the William L. Clay Sr. Leisure Living Community, affordable apartments for senior citizens on Cates and Clemens. This

Map by William Bailey, City of St. Louis



Just north of Delmar, the West End Neighborhood is experiencing major redevelopment, This map shows the various 'subdivisions', totaling more than 132 new homes.

was developed by the People's Health Center, bringing their investment in this neighborhood to over \$11.4 Million, including the clinic, the Social Security Building, and the new senior apartments.

These housing additions raise median income and increase the customer base for potential Delmar businesses. The desire is to see the addition of stores and offices that serve the needs of residents. Potential business development sites include the

old Waldman Glass Store and the stores at the intersection of Hamilton and Delmar. Hopefully, Alderman Clay's marketing campaign will draw new interest to this section of Delmar, now graced by a median and planters, first stage of the long-awaited \$4.1 Million in streetscape improvements being made to Delmar. Look for news of upcoming Delmar celebration, as well as Open Houses at these exciting new developments.

Neighborhood Planning Goes Forward

Work groups continue to meet and organize their portions of the planning process. According to planning committee chairperson Sole Van Emden, the steering committee will meet again on April 29 to work out final details of the presentation materials and visual aids that will be needed for Brainstorming Day, which

will be held Saturday, May 18th, location to be announced. All neighbors are urged to help shape this plan, which will be the key document for future decision-making regarding the neighborhood. For further information, and to learn how you can become involved, contact the council office at 862-5122.



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IN YOUR EAR

by Hawkeye Q. Hoerr

And what did you do over Spring Break? Hopefully you went some place exciting, or maybe you just gazed at Skinker and Forest Park Expressway intersection, consciously forming nice images and memories which we'll all need over the next decade as the area is torn up for the Metro Link construction. Me? You-know-who and I just came back from attending a Shoe Convention. You probably didn't even know that there are Shoe Conventions, right? Well, there are and they're quite a trip. Each year the national organization, T.O.E.S. (The Organization of Elegant Shoes) brings together shoe collectors from all over the world. As conventions go, it's not that large; typically only one to three thousand people attend. "The relatively small size of the convention doesn't begin to capture the extent of its excitement and information," says the First Wife (F.W.). For her, appropriately, it was a religious experience.

This year's T.O.E.S. convention was in Toronto, home of the Batta Shoe Museum. (Regular readers of this column can retrieve my spring 2000 column in which I described my visit there, culminating with the F.W. being asked to be a guest lecturer.) Anyway, the conference began on a Thursday morning with a kick-off presentation (pun intended!) by that famous shoe raconteur, Dr. Leo V. Armstead. Dr. Armstead is a legend among shoe aficionados and claims to have over 3,000 sets of exotic shoes in his collection. Upon reading this fact in the program, the F.W. nudged me and whispered, "Three thousand? What's the big deal about that???" Before she could continue to inform me of the obvious she has nearly that many pairs in only one of her shoe closets Dr. Armstead came to the podium.

As if one, the crowd rose to its feet and began applauding madly. I couldn't figure out why at first until I looked at Dr. Armstead through my binoculars (we were seated sort of, like, way back). His patterned leisure suit was white fabric with pictures of shoes everywhere. His lapels featured drawings of tennis shoes and sandals (that explained, I remember thinking, why the lapels were so wide) while portraits of spike-heels were all over his chest.

His tall top hat featured a real suede slip-on. Sixty-plus years old and looking a bit like a successful business executive straight from a Monopoly game, Dr. Armstead drew even more applause when he pulled up his

pants legs and exposed his shoes: red sequined flats, straight out of the Wizard Of Oz!

The crowd began to chant "Shoes, shoes, shoes!" and clap in unison. Dr. Armstead began to do a slow tap dance, looking a bit like a cross between Anthony Quinn, Fred Astaire, and Madonna. The cheering grew louder and he kicked even higher. I felt like I was at a Rams game; in a way I was.

"Gosh," I thought, "I hope he doesn't click his heels together. Who knows what that will cause?"

The cheering continued, unabated. After what seemed like a long time, but was probably not more than 10 or 15 minutes, Armstead raised his arms, wiped his brow, and asked everyone to be seated. Once the hall was quiet, he had the lights dimmed and began a Power Point presentation of his shoes. He had them categorized, of course, by the Lewey Shoe Decimal System. (This system of categorization goes with the Dewey Book Decimal and Huey Video Decimal systems. Together they form the... yes, you've got it!)

Dr. Armstead started with the 200 series, summer wear, and proceeded all the way through the 800's, combat shoes. The F.W.'s favorites, no surprise, were in the 660.5 series, "shoes to wear to Chinese restaurants." In fact, on about the eight or ninth picture in this series she jumped up and shouted, "I'm wearing these suckers" and held her left foot high in the air, balancing herself rather precariously on a folding chair. She was correct: the image on the giant screen was the same as those on her semitiny feet (and we weren't even eating Chinese!). The few hundred folks sitting near us peered through the darkness, some shining flashlights on her feet, and roared with approval.

After Armstead's talk, when the lights were turned on, about a dozen or so folks, recognizing the F.W. from her picture in her monthly column in Sole Food, the national shoe magazine, asked her for an autograph. Of course, she gladly signed the soles of their shoes.

After the keynote there were many different two-hour presentations from which to choose. Most of them featured shoe collectors talking about their special collections and showing some of their most prized possessions. Since exotic shoes can be quite valuable, most people brought photos or slides of their shoes, rather than the actual precious objects.

One guy from Vermont, however, went against the trend and brought his entire collection of presidential shoes. He had shoes from every U.S. president from Taft through Carter. He was accompanied by a security guard who wore Reeboks. There were also sessions on the care and nurturing of shoes, the economics of

shoe design, shoes as an investment, shoes and music, shoes through the ages, using shoes to spice up cooking, and, of course, the ubiquitous politics of shoes.

Normally the F.W. presents at this conference. Last year, for example, in Memphis, about eighty people came to her talk, "Friendship Among Shoes." She expounded on the importance of organizing one's shoe collection so that like shoes can be by like shoes, i.e. shoes can be near their friends. Too often, she noted, a pair of canvas shoes will be alone in a closet, surrounded by only leathers or, worse, patten shoes. "If we want our shoes to grow and develop," she said at the end, her voice rising in a crescendo and her passion washing over the podium, "we must put them in a situation where they can flourish." She also talked about sending some of her most promising schools to shoe camp, two-week long sessions in the Ozarks where shoes go to meet other kinds of shoes. She decided not to make a presentation this year, though, because she is still too distracted by the spat among her high-heel shoes.

The spat - more of a down-and-out fight, I'd say! - occurred one day, about two months ago, while she was at work. The F.W. returned home to hear a ruckus in closet 14B. When she opened the door, several score of high-heel shoes came plummeting out, still arguing and yelling at one another.

"Children!" the F.W. implored, "What in the world is going on?" At this, 1377sf, a left brown leather, began to cry, talking about how 8769vc, a right black shiny job, had been taking up too much space. "So you pushed him?" asked the F.W. incredulously to 1377sf. With a bit of a sob and a tiny genuflection, 1377sf fessed up. "Violence never solves anything," said the F.W. and punished 1377sf by removing his taps. The closet was in such disarray that it took her several hours to organize the shoes. As she typically does, she cross-indexed the holdings so that every shoe is labeled by and can be located by any one of its variables: color, material, cost, date of purchase, country of origin, educational level, closest kin, or size. Thank goodness for computers and shoe classifying software.

But back to the T.O.E.S. Conference. The F.W. was elated to be among so many kindred spirits and ranked it as one of her favorite all-time conferences, right up there with the nine-day tap dance seminar we attended in Reno.

Me? Unfortunately, here, as in so many other areas, I fall short. I mean, I try to care about shoes and I try to ask her how the shoe categorizing is going or what she's learned from talking to her boots. I even try to be patient when we visit shoe stores on our vacation. Going to shoe stores in

foreign cities when we don't have time to see museums doesn't even bother me any more. I tolerate shoe upon shoe upon shoe and try to be enthusiastic. I try but try as I might, it's just not an area that interests me. Shoe-t.

Heck, when we were first married, wanting to be a good F.H. for the F.W., I even joined the "Shoe Of The month" club. It was fun for a while. On the 15th of each month a surprise package would arrive. Other than them being my size, 10EEEE, I hadn't a clue what kind of shoe was coming; that was part of the fun, proclaimed their advertisements. I remember that a pair of red corduroy boots came in honor of President Bush's election by the Supreme Court. When Gore got the nomination in August, they sent me a pair of pale yellow hush puppies. (I couldn't figure out the significance of the month's selection - and there's always significance - so I called the company. It turns out that they chose this shoe to capture the fact that they thought Albert Gore was one dull dog; get it? Oh well, good thing they're in shoes, not comedy.) Lately, though, I've stopped trying to become a shoe devotee.

Face it: I'm a heel. Realistically, I figure that the F.W. isn't into my collection of aeronautical cigarette lighters, so turn-about is fair play.

The last meeting of the Toronto T.O.E.S. Conference was a plenary session on Friday afternoon, everyone, the thousands of us, sitting together in one giant room in the convention center. Only instead of hearing from Dr. Leo V. Armstead or, even, Ms. Marian B. Padledog (a collector who specializes in shoe strings), we were inspired by Mr. Jose T. B. Garundermeyer. He showed how the right kind of food and exercise had turned some of his sandals into hiking boots.

Next year's T.O.E.S. Conference is in Albuquerque and we've already booked our flights. The F.W. is planning to take photos of her clog collection. At last count, she had between 81 and 83 pairs (the confusion is because a couple of pairs of clogs have applied to become open-toed dancing shoes so we're not sure of their status), cross-referenced by their DNA similarities.

As I write, the F.W. is doing some research on shoe genealogy over the net (www.shoesforever.com). She's convinced that long ago her snow boots were probably related to her racquetball shoes. Personally, I don't see it; I mean, their tongues don't even look like one another. But it keeps the F.W. busy, and that's good. While she's reading stories to her shoes and making sure they have adequate sunlight, I can spend my time polishing my silver jet plane salt-and-pepper shakers. Besides, I hear the Mexican food is quite good in Albuquerque!

