

The *TIMES* of... SKINKER DEBALIVIERE

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Nov. - Dec. 2007

FREE

The oldest neighborhood newspaper in St. Louis

Independent and all volunteer-run since 1970

Save the Date for our Neighborhood Centennial

Did you know that the first homes in Skinker-DeBaliviere were built in 1908? There was great interest in this land adjacent to Forest Park, following the World's Fair. Learning of this important milestone, SDCC is forming a Skinker-DeBaliviere Centennial Planning Committee, a group of neighbors who will work on planning events and commemorations for our neighborhood's centennial year, 2008.

So save the date for the big celebration, October 11, 2008, a festival to be held at the Four Corners.

All residents are invited to help plan for an exciting year of events, culminating in the October 11 celebration. An organizing meeting will be held at 5:30 p.m., Wed. November 14, 2007, at the SDCC Office, 6008 Kingsbury. For more information, contact Katie Kurtz at 496-5083, email at knkurtz@swbell.net or SDCC at 862-5122.

The Loop Holiday Walk - December 1, 2007

Experience that small town holiday feeling while walking among the stars of the St. Louis Walk of Fame. Decorated with old-fashioned holiday lights, The Loop offers one-of-a-kind gifts in its boutiques and galleries. Treat yourself to an international shopping, entertainment, and dining experience. Scheduled activities include: Frosty the Snowman in Blueberry Hill's Live Window, Santa at the Market in The Loop Holiday Bazaar, Holiday Sales, Open Houses and more. For more information, go to www.VisitTheLoop.com.

Wintermarkt Returns December 8

By Rachel Boxdorfer



Wintermarkt, a local reimagination of a German Christkindlmarkt, a traditional German festival and outdoor crafts sale, returns to Four Corners at Kingsbury and DesPeres on Saturday, December 8th from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Local artists, hand made gifts, toys, and decorations for sale. Artists include jewelers, glass blowers, photographers, and this year demonstrations by a blacksmith.

Neighbors and artists are invited to participate in a number of ways. First of all, everyone is invited to attend and to shop. Artists in the neighborhood may also want to participate by having a booth. And residents are encouraged to help by donating baked good items on the morning of the event or to volunteer at the event. For information on volunteering, providing baked goods, or to reserve your booth, call the SDCC office at 314-862-5122. Guests are encouraged to do their holiday shopping at the event while enjoying live music from many local St. Louis choirs,

bell chimers, and acappella performers. There will also be baked goods available, hot cider, gluhwein, roasted chestnuts, bratwurst, hot dogs, and more to keep shoppers energized!

In addition to all of this activity, Greatting Horse Farm will be on hand offering carriage rides through this historic neighborhood, allowing visitors a wonderful opportunity to view the beautiful architecture found throughout the Skinker DeBaliviere neighborhood. This charming festival is reminiscent of the centuries old tradition in Germany, where, around the time of the holidays, artisans, bakers, and craftsmen of the villages would gather in the public square for a sale of their handiwork. This outdoor market tradition becomes a festival, with treats to enjoy at the sale and at home. The event takes place regardless of the weather.

The West End Arts Council is able to produce the Wintermarkt event with support and assistance from the Regional Arts Commission, Saint Louis Gast House, Parker's Table, and Washington University. Proceeds from the event benefit the local artists and the West End Arts Council.

For more information call the Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council office at 314-862-5122 or Rachel Boxdorfer at 863-5691.



Patrons sitting outside famous Blueberry Hill Restaurant.

Delmar Loop Named one of America's 10 Great Streets

By Debbie Murphy

The American Planning Association named the Delmar Loop in University City and St. Louis as one of 10 Great Streets in America. APA announced the first 10 Great Streets selected under their new designation program, Great Places in America. The program recognizes and celebrates excellence in planning across the country.

This is a great honor for The Loop and recognizes it as one of the outstanding pedestrian streets in the U.S. The other nine Great Streets recognized were Bull Street in Savannah, Georgia; Canyon Road in Santa Fe, New Mexico; Main Street in Northampton, Massachusetts; Monument Avenue in Richmond, Virginia; North Michigan Avenue in Chicago, Illinois; Ocean Drive in Miami Beach, Florida; 125th Street in New York, New York; St. Charles Avenue in New Orleans, Louisiana; South Temple Street in Salt Lake City, Utah.

The Loop is one place where city and county borders no longer matter, and the efforts of Joe Edwards and the Special Business District organizations have reinforced redevelopment planning by University City, as well as City of St. Louis officials and the Delmar Commercial Committee of Skinker-DeBaliviere. As committee chairman Jo Ann Vatcha stated, "it's especially nice that the APA recognized that The Loop covers both U City, as the City of St. Louis, as we have worked very hard to promote and maintain consistent standards and expectations for Delmar from DeBaliviere to the City Limits and cooperatively all the way to the U City Lions. It's also great that Joe Edwards was acknowledged for his landmark planning and organizing skills."

The American Planning Association noted that "street-level storefronts drive identity and success" and the street was selected "because of the sustained efforts of local business, government, and the community to achieve successful physical and economic revitalization." Their website, www.planning.org/greatplaces, also features several photos and recognizes Joe Edwards for his entrepreneurial efforts and for organizing the Special Business Districts, adding holiday lights, awnings, and other street improvements, and planning the proposed trolley, making the Loop "not a cloned street, but a vibrant place with a character all its own." Joe Edwards' newest building at 6164 Delmar will soon open with "Diversity Gallery and Cafe", and The Loop's special character is being celebrated both here and across the country.

Envelope, Please

Our holiday envelope, inside this issue, is for our own special cause, THE TIMES OF SKINKER-DEBALIVIERE. This all-volunteer newspaper has been published continuously for over 37 years - it's the "oldest neighborhood newspaper in St. Louis."

Did you know that all our writing and all our distribution of nearly 3,000 newspapers is done by volunteers? Our shoestring budget is managed very well by Business Manager Lois Schoemehl, and take a moment to see all the new contributors we've added, thanks to our great neighborhood volunteers. Special thanks to all of you who take the time to deliver the TIMES on your block! And this month we're delighted to welcome two new TIMES deliverers: Sean Meara substituting for ailing Bruce Smith on the 5800 and 5900 blocks of Pershing, and Randy Vines, at the Forest Park Condos on Washington. This year we also have several new advertisers, but also ambitious plans for archiving our past issues, plus our regular expenses for layout and printing.

And, if you'd like to volunteer to help, let us know. We'll be happy to have your writing, your photos, help with delivery or decision-making. Happy Holidays!

Editor's Notebook

by Lana Stein

Planning for our Second Hundred Years

As this is being written, plans are beginning to celebrate Skinker DeBaliviere's centennial. There is a great deal to celebrate – the preservation of historic homes, the neighborhood's strength in diversity, enhanced safety, being close even more so thanks to MetroLink. Our history has not been problem-free and there will be new issues to tackle as the years pass but we are unique. We broke a mold and some other neighborhoods in St. Louis are doing it as well.

Massey and Denton wrote a book called "American Apartheid" that is widely cited. They maintain that once a neighborhood becomes 30 percent black, it will tip and become all black. When I moved to our neighborhood in 1989, it was 58% black. But, it never tipped. A strong community and strong churches and university produced an American anomaly and it continues to work.

The rebuilding of Delmar has certainly enhanced us as has the remarkable beautification in the neighborhood. However, sometimes there are limits on what can be done and they are city limits. Recently, two students from Washington University visited me and a number of others to see what programs had taken place and what needed to be done. They expressed concern about elderly neighbors who had difficulty paying for home repairs. That can be a concern because there are any number of residents who have lived here 40 years or more and are now on very fixed incomes. Another concern is empty houses. There are a number here but if the owner pays the taxes and has the grass mowed, there is nothing we can do to see that there are occupants again. In other words, there is no city ordinance for this situation.

Another problem is a home badly needing repair. Even if the situation appears dangerous, the process is long and onerous to get compliance. There is a home on my block that is a hazard and it continues for months on end. Despite the obstacles in our path, I would say the future looks bright. Hopefully, the planning effort will take hold. For it to succeed it needs the involvement of all sections of the neighborhood and must be reflective of our diversity. The Times will do its best to inform neighbors of what activities are taking place. The SDCC must be sure to reach out so that our diversity is not a hollow mask.

The TIMES of... SKINKER DEBALIVIERE

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

Deadline for February-March issue: January 15, 2008.
Please send copy by e-mail to jvatcha@peoplepc.com or by disc to 6008 Kingsbury, St. Louis, MO 63112.

Readers are welcome to send us e-mail or letters commenting on any of our content. Send to jvatcha@peoplepc.com or lstein@umsl.edu.

Calendar

November 10th: Neighborhood Food Drive. Residents to leave nonperishable food and personal hygiene items in bag(s) outside, with yellow flyer attached. Pickup between 10:00 am - 12:00 pm. Items to be used to replenish food pantries at neighborhood churches.

November 14: Skinker-DeBaliviere Centennial Planning Committee is a newly forming group of neighbors who will work on planning events and commemorations for our neighborhood's centennial year, 2008. An organizing meeting will be held at 5:30 p.m., Wed. November 14, 2007, at the SDCC Office, 6008 Kingsbury. All residents are invited to help plan for this exciting year of events. For more information, contact Katie Kurtz at 496-5083 or email at knkurtz@swbell.net or SDCC at 862-5122.

December 1: Loop Holiday Walk on Delmar. Kids can have their pictures with Frosty the Snowman in Blueberry Hill's Live Window and Santa at the Market in The Loop. Other events include a Holiday Bazaar, Holiday Sales, Open Houses and more. For more information, go to www.VisitTheLoop.com.

December 8th: WinterMarkt, in 4 Corners Park. For more information, contact Rachel Boxdorfer at 863-5691 or SDCC at 862-5122.

December 13th: Police Appreciation Luncheon, SDCC Office, 11:30 am - 2 pm. To volunteer or attend, call SDCC at 862-5122.

Dear Peace-maker and Supporter-of-the-arts,

Veil of Silence, by Andrew Michael Neiman and Suzanne Renard, is a new play whose arrival on the St. Louis stage November 2nd may break the usual rules of political etiquette. It's impolite, it seems, to take on a war while it still rages. Our national discourse appears confined somewhere between the bland proclamations on car magnets and the smug sarcasm on late night TV. Language is used or mis-used to keep the war "over there." But war always comes home.

The most courageous and credible voices speaking out about the current phase of the "Global War on Terror" are those of returning veterans. The writers of Veil of Silence are not veterans. We have, however, listened deeply to the stories, memoirs and poetry of soldiers who have experienced war most profoundly. The pictures that linger are very different from the official story promulgated by those in command and the industries which are the sole beneficiaries of war.

In this play, the protagonist brings the horrors that haunt him—the destruction of a civilization at the expense of our collective soul—into plain view.

Veil of Silence is a project of the St. Louis chapter of Veterans For Peace, which is accepting donations to cover production expenses. While we have kept our budget as frugal as possible, creative efforts like this one are costly. Our hope is to enlist people interested in supporting a piece of live theater which offers a window into the devastating costs of war, and which calls for an honest examination of our complicity, the first step on a long path to redemption.

Veterans For Peace is a 501c3 organization. All contributions to this project are tax-deductible. A letter will be sent for each donation. Any surplus after expenses are met will go to fund the Iraq Water Project—www.iraqwaterproject.org

If you would like to be a co-producer of this production, described by early readers of the play as "thought-provoking and powerful," "right on the mark," "painful and beautiful," please contact us. We would be happy to answer your questions about the budget, VFP, the break-down of contribution levels and benefits, or the play itself.

If you know of others who would find this project compelling, please spread the word and let us know how we might contact them. Checks can be made out to Veterans For Peace,

with "Veil project" in the memo, and sent to: Chuc Smith, Veterans For Peace, 1524 Eastmont Place, St. Louis, MO, 63130.

PERFORMANCES will be at The Black Cat Theatre, 2810 Sutton, 63143—on November 2 through 4th and Nov. 9 through 11, (8pm, Fridays and Saturdays and 2pm, Sundays.)

Sincerest thanks,
Suzanne Renard

(314) 315-5129 • suzannerenard@gmail.com



News of Neighbors

By Rachel Boxdorfer

Wedding bells rang for **Louisa Hitchcock**, daughter of **Jim and Helen Hitchcock**, of the 61XX block of Kingsbury, on October 13th at St. Roch Church. Louisa married Rob Spampinato of New York. The couple honeymooned in Italy and resides in New York. Congratulations to Louisa and Rob and the entire Hitchcock family.

Down the street from St. Roch, we are pleased to welcome **Mark Williams** as the new pastor at Grace Methodist Church.

Welcome Babies! The 59XX block of Pershing welcomed baby **Isabella Rose**, born on October 2nd. Isabella is the daughter of Washington University history professors **Krister Knapp and Corinna Treitel**.

Sammy and Nora Scott-Simpson are the proud parents of a third boy, **Ezra Harrison Scott-Simpson**, born September

12, 2007. His brothers are William, 5, and Tyler, 3.

Changes- After 44 wonderful years on the 61XX block of Kingsbury, **Bob and Betty Newsham** are moving away. Their new home isn't far though; they'll be enjoying a gorgeous view of Forest Park from The Dorchester. Neighbors of course are sad to see the Newshams leave but look forward to still seeing them in the neighborhood.

And with that, a welcome is due on the 61XX block of Kingsbury to **Len and Susanne Knese**, who are moving two blocks from their home on the 61XX block of Washington. It's fair to say that while Kingsbury is happy to have them, Washington is sad to see them go!

More news from 61XX Washington- The very talented **Ligaya Figueras** was recently

named a Contributing Writer to Sauce Magazine and Art Calendar Magazine. Ligaya will be writing a new monthly column for Sauce called "What in the World?". The column will highlight unusual or exotic food ingredients. Look for Ligaya's business management articles to appear in Art Calendar, a business magazine for visual artists, starting in February. And of course, her writing can also be seen here in The Times of Skinker-DeBaliviere!

On the mend- We are happy to report that **Delores Hoefel** of the 61XX block of McPherson is recuperating nicely from knee surgery. The 61XX block of McPherson is also happy to welcome **Sarah and Gelle Greenwood and family!** Also, **Lizzi Hereford** of the same block will be appearing in The Nutcracker at The Fox Theater in December. Way to go Lizzi!

Knees are apparently the "in" thing this season, as **Lana Stein**, of the 5900 block of Pershing, also had knee surgery and is already out and about, walking with her dog Max.

Sadly, we need to report that **Jesse Brown**, of the 59XX block of DeGiverville passed away on September 24th. Mr. Brown was an active and valuable neighbor to Skinker DeBaliviere. He was president of the 5900 DeGiverville Block Unit, Chairperson of the Hamilton Community School, and President of the Block Unit 1035 Community Garden on the 5800 block of Westminster, across from Lucier Park. Our condolences go out to Mr. Brown's family and friends, especially his wife of 23 years, **Mary LaVerne Brown**.

Have you got some news to share? Please send your items to Rachel Boxdorfer at rboxdorf@cbgundaker.com with the subject line "News of Neighbors".

Betty and Bob Newsham: At the Heart of Kingsbury

by Candace O'Connor

In 1963, Betty and Bob Newsham moved to the 6100 block of Kingsbury, dug in their heels and stayed, fighting for the neighborhood through a long string of troubles: crime and urban decay, redlining and residential flight, storms and shallow-rooted sycamores. Now, they have quietly moved - though not far, to a 15th-floor perch in the Dorchester Apartments.

Nobody on Kingsbury can quite believe they are gone. If you think of a block as a body, says neighbor Margaret Hermes, "Bob and Betty represent the warm heart and, without a doubt, Betty has served as the eyes of 6100 Kingsbury."

"They believed in this neighborhood and helped hold it together during the turbulent times," adds Pat McClafferty, a 6100 resident. "What more can you do for a neighborhood than raise your own children in it?"

When the Newshams first heard about the big house for sale on Kingsbury, they were living in Richmond Heights with eight children, and their ninth was on the way. The price - \$13,750 - was right, and they already knew Jim and Anne McCarthy, who lived across the street.

"But when we saw the house, it was raining and water was just pouring into the third floor; there was a big hole in the steps going up. It was really a wreck," says Betty Newsham today. As they later discovered, it had housed a Washington University fraternity some years before.

Undaunted, they took a bigger mortgage, fixed it up and moved in. Their children - John (who died in 1996), Pete, Mimi, Paul ("Herman"), Joe, Jane, Peggy, Ann and Kitty - all attended St. Roch School and found plenty of friends. At one time, 108 children under 16 lived on the



block. They played step ball; decorated a "shoe tree" with worn-out sneakers; and celebrated Flag Day on the barricade with peanut-butter sandwiches.

"Do you remember Pete Fossell, the fruit-and-vegetable man?" says Betty. "He sold candy, too, and would cash the kids' baby-sitting checks. We had a birthday party for him, with cake and sandwiches, every year on July 17."

But she also recalls tough times, when some Rosedale folks fled to the suburbs and crime picked up. With other determined residents, Betty fought for stability through art fairs and the Residential Service. She became a vigilant street watcher, spotting suspicious activity and getting to know the local police.

She and Bob, who spent most of his career as a mechanical engineer for Granite City Steel, also played an active role at St. Roch Church. With several members, Betty participated in a quilting club that donated its proceeds to charity, while Bob

took part in the St. Vincent De Paul Society.

At times, the Newshams faced tempests in their private lives, like the storm that swept through the neighborhood one summer day, blowing down an old sycamore crushing their parked car. Or the 2006 power outage that they braved, refusing to leave and sleeping on their back porch.

"They have been such friendly, stable and helpful neighbors," says Joan Bender of 6100 Kingsbury. "You could always count on them."

Their old home now has new

owners: Lenn and Susanne Knese, formerly of the 6100 block of Washington. Still, Bill Christman's sculpture park on 6000 Kingsbury will continue to display one Newsham memento: the back-yard whirlingig that Bob built for his 11 grandchildren.

"There always seemed to be a lot of action in this neighborhood and a lot of people with common problems who got along real well," says Bob, reflecting on his 44-year tenure. "I don't know how it happened, but it's always been a great group of people. We enjoyed it here, and we'll miss it."

HISTORIC DISTRICT ALERT

What: Skinker-DeBaliviere/Parkview/Catlin Tract Historic District

Where: Generally, DeBaliviere to the City Limits; Lindell To Delmar (excluding Kingsbury Square)

Why: Because the District represents a high concentration of architecturally significant buildings dating from 1900-1930.

How Does This Affect A Property Owner:

1. Exterior changes to a building's exterior visible from the street require St. Louis City Cultural Resource Office permit (CRO). Includes but not limited to: doors, windows, porches, railings, gutters, roofing, brackets, cornices and soffits. For a complete list of standards, go to: stlouis.missouri.org/citygov/planning/heritage. Some of these alternations will also require a permit from the St. Louis City Building Division.
2. New construction including garages, additions and fences require building and CRO permits.
3. Demolition of all structures require permits.

Whom to Call for Questions:

1. Cultural Resource Office 622-3400 OR 2. Skinker-DeBaliviere Community Council, 862-5122 or Katie Kurtz, Chair, Hist. Dist. Review Committee, 727-6377

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Alanson Building Celebration

By Gary Boehnke, Executive Director

Six years ago, the Skinker DeBaliviere Community Housing Corporation made a bold move when we acquired the Alanson Building, 5888-98 Delmar. The housing corporation board believed that was one of three properties that were impeding development in 58 & 59xx blocks of Delmar east of the Metro Link tracks.

The Housing Corp formed a project team (Board members Steve Kramer & Jennifer Olmstead, later joined by Sean McGroarty) that moved quickly to hire an architect (Grice

Group), select a consultant ("CPDC" Community Program Development Corp) and chose a Contractor (R. G. Ross). These were the first of the many PARTNERS that would help make the redevelopment of the Alanson Building happen. Design was completed in the next six months. They added attorneys (Polsinelli Shalton Welte Suelthaus) and an accounting firm (Rubin Brown). Each one of these partners worked to put the project together over the next three years. City financing through the Affordable Housing Commission was approved, but that was just the beginning. Financing the project was, to say the least, a challenge.

Many routes were looked at: low income housing tax credits, Federal & State historic tax credits, bonds through the Industrial Development Authority of the City of St. Louis. In the end, the Affordable Housing Commission and the federal and state historic tax credits were approved.

While we were working to put the Alanson project together, Delmar Properties (a subsidiary of St. Louis Design Alliance partners Dave Mastin and Jeff Mugg) bought the vacant lots in the middle of the south side of the 5800 block and did a nice commercial project; they also bought 5901 Delmar and razed the old "County Store." John Mathews bought and redeveloped the building at 5850 Delmar. The Housing Corp still did not have a complete financial package for the Alanson. Then Delmar

Properties (Dave Mastin & Jeff Mugg) became co-developers with the housing corporation. They brought significant experience and financial guaranties to the project. With their help we were able to make the redevelopment and financing feasible. The last partners were added - National City Community Development Corp. & Enterprise Bank as equity and financing partners.

Today the Alanson Building is complete! This 3.2 million dollar historic redevelopment project has changed the Delmar landscape, adding 8 affordable residential units and four commercial spaces to the community. The residential units are large, with two bedrooms, two baths with washer and dryer in each unit. Leasing and management are done by Charette Community Management. For information or to see one of the residential units, call them at 531-4663. Already six of the units have been leased. Soon new businesses will be occupying the commercial spaces, leasing for this is being handled directly by our office at 6008 Kingsbury. Call me at 862-5122. Already, we've leased the corner unit to Sir's B Que and next to it, Not Just a Book Store. With this completion, the housing corporation looks forward to many more successful projects.



Housing Corporation celebrates completion of Alanson Building. From left, Gary Boehnke, staff, board members Sean McGroarty, Harriet Hubbard, Richard Wilkes, Karleen Hoerr, and Alderman Frank Williamson. Other housing corporation members are Joe Keaveny, Jennifer Olmstead and Matt Peters. Photo by JoAnn Vatcha.

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Tour of Missouri Speeds through Skinker-DeBaliviere

By Ligaya Figueras



Photos by Ligaya Figueras

S-D residents witnessed the largest sporting event ever held in Missouri when professional elite cyclists sped through Skinker-DeBaliviere on September 16th in the Tour of Missouri bike race.

An estimated crowd of 60,000 spectators lined St.

Louis streets to cheer on the riders as they completed seven circuits around the city in the final stage of a 6-day, 600 mile bike race across Missouri. This inaugural race began in Kansas City and also featured Clinton, Springfield, Branson, Columbia, Jefferson City and St. Charles.

The 10.6-mile route for Stage 6 started at Union Station and headed west on Forest Park. It then turned north on DeBaliviere and east at Delmar. The route headed south on Euclid, cutting through the heart of the Central West End, turning east on Lindell/Olive to downtown. Riders reached speeds of 50 mph.

A number of Skinker-DeBaliviere residents came out to support the riders, including Billy Handmaker

and son Lev (61XX Washington), who watched the event from the Crossroads Fan Zone on DeBaliviere. "It's so cool!" shouted eight-year-old Lev above the music blaring from the Magic 108 radio station truck in the school parking lot, "My favorite team is the Jelly Belly team." Crossroads students and parents gathered at the school to cheer on the 104 cyclists from more than 20 countries, representing 15 different teams.

Another popular viewing location was the Fan Zone at the corner of Delmar and DeBaliviere sponsored by Big Shark Bicycle Company. There, Maggie and Matt Peters (59XX DeGiverville) and their six-month-old daughter Sally watched the race with fellow neighbor Sara Howard and baby Olivia, who cooed from stroller as the peloton whizzed by, followed by a colorful array of support vehicles.

After the race, Mike Weiss, the owner of Big Shark Bicycle Company, heralded its success. "The organization and execution of the event made it an exceptional race competitively and a fabulous spectator sporting event. Every comment I have heard from the riders, staff and spectators indicated that professional cycling in the United States is in demand, and that the Tour of Missouri exceeded everyone's expectations." According to Weiss, who worked to promote the race for the event management company Medalist Sports, "The riders were impressed with the safety and organization of the race as well as by the beauty and challenge of the terrain throughout Missouri. The riders were extremely appreciative of the support, enthusiasm and sheer numbers at each finish and along the way."

Laura McCarthy
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Gateway Gardening Contest Winners

By Andy Cross



Photo by Linda Cross

Andy Cross, Quonisha Shavers, and Mary Hellwig were contest winners at the 2007 Gateway Gardening award ceremony held at Missouri Botanical Garden.

This summer many Skinker-DeBaliviere residents were recognized for their community gardening skills by Gateway Gardening at their annual awards ceremony on July 14, at the Missouri Botanical Garden.

Jesse Brown, garden leaders of Block Unit 1035 Community Garden, won a prize for "Outstanding Individual Raised Bed Garden." Block Unit 1035's garden is located on 5800 Westminster, across from the Hamilton School and Community Education Center. Sadly, Mr. Brown passed away early this fall. His garden is a tribute to his perseverance and creative gardening.

From the McPherson Community Garden, located on the 5900 block of McPherson, neighbors Valerie Holt, Desiree White, and Ann-Marie Lodholtz, all won prizes for "Outstanding Individual Raised Beds."

New Trees and Gardens

By Andy Cross

The SDCC Beautification Committee has planted and watered many trees during this dry summer of 2007. Many of these trees were replacements for trees lost to storms or development. At the cul-de-sac on DesPeres at Washington, old junipers were removed by the City. With permission, we replaced them with three Loblolly Pines with maintained flower gardens at their bases. The City planted a tulip tree, and in the adjoining green space, we replaced two flowering crabapples.

At the DesPeres/Pershing pocket park, we replaced two red buds lost to the ice storm, and planted a sassafras tree. All three have colorful flower gardens at their bases, with rock borders. Along the sidewalk, another missing tree was replaced with a flowering plum, to match the other flowering plum trees.

On the 5700 block of DeGiverville at the cul-de-sac, we replaced a red maple lost during Metro construction. A flowering

McPherson Community Garden won second place in a new contest category, "Best Use of Native Plants", by GROW NATIVE, the Missouri Dept. of Conservation and the Missouri Department of Agriculture. The goal of GROW NATIVE is to educate and increase the number and use of native plants to help our environment and beautify our surroundings with natural, beneficial plantings.

A very special award was given to neighbor Mary Hellwig. The Hoblitzelle Mission Award is given to community gardens which excel in outreach and service in their area. Mary is a dedicated member of the Columbia Peace and Hope youth garden. Mary helps underprivileged children and their families grow healthy plants and to eat nutritious meals.

Congratulations to all our neighborhood "green thumbs".

crabapple, rose-of-sharon, and another red maple were planted along the sidewalk which borders the parking lot.

At Laurel and 5700 Pershing, an old iris garden was lost to Metro construction. For the 2007 Breakfast Garden Tour, we rebuilt and replanted that garden with iris, daylilies, lambsear, zinnias, marigolds, new soil and a decorative retaining wall.

Planting trees and gardens is the small part of the job. Keeping them weeded and watered, in triple-digit weather and multiple droughts, is the big challenge. Along with last year's trees in Lucier Park, the Beautification Committee will water, weed, and mulch these trees for two years, until they are established. The mulching will never stop, and in heavy droughts, they will be watered again. This attractive variety of trees will bring shade and beauty to many parts of Skinker-DeBaliviere for years to come.

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SDCC Annual Meeting Report

By Darcell Braylock

SDCC held its Annual Meeting on Monday, October 8th, in the Fellowship Hall at New Cote Brillante Church. Approximately 100 people enjoyed a potluck dinner before Darcell Braylock, SDCC Executive Director, and the Chairs of the SDCC committees provided an overview of the past year. It was very clear that SDCC is a dynamic organization, working hard to preserve and enhance the Skinker DeBaliviere community.

It was then time to recognize some of the people who have worked so hard and contributed so much to our community, beginning with the block captains. The neighborhood churches were also recognized for their contributions: Grace and Peace Fellowship, Grace United Methodist Church, New Cote Brillante Church, and St. Roch Catholic Church. The following individuals were also recognized for their outstanding volunteer contributions: Sara Cross and Margaret Nagle, Outstanding Youth Volunteers; Gwen LaZard, Arline Webb, Alice Stanley, Katherine Nash, Josh Peck, Cheryl Adelstein, Liz Johnson, and Shirley Polk, Outstanding Volunteers; Reverend Mary Harvey, Ronie Haliburton, Georgi Fox, Dan Koff, Paul Hohmann, and Katrina Stierholz, past SDCC Board Members; and Dan Schesch, SDCC Past President. The final presentation of the evening was a very special one to Andy Cross, as Outstanding Community Volunteer, who accepted his award to a standing ovation.

Sarah Cross and the Creation of the Skinker DeBaliviere Dog Show

by Lana Stein

Sarah Cross is 10 years old and a fifth grader at St. Roch. She is intelligent and committed and she loves animals. What is remarkable about Sarah is that she created a very popular neighborhood event three years ago when she was just 7! She clearly has inherited some organizational skills and determination from her father Andy, the neighborhood's premiere volunteer activist. But, Sarah adds something special to the mixture. She is very caring about animals and about people and their feelings.

Sarah loved her dog Dixie. But, Dixie was not a pure breed so that much as Sarah wanted her to compete in a dog show, there was no show for her. She loved Dixie so much that she decided to have her own dog show, a show for all dogs. She discussed some strategies with her friend Gretchen Boxdorfer. Interestingly, Gretchen's dog Trenton won the most ribbons at that very first show. Both Dixie and Trenton are gone now but Sarah dedicated the second show to Dixie and the third to Trenton.

Sarah thought of the dog show seven months before it actually took place. After clearing a date with the SDCC office, her preparations began. She was so enthused that she wanted to buy dog treats and do flyers right away. Her parents convinced her to wait for closer to the date of the show.

Sarah wanted everyone attending the dog show to feel

included. Every dog would get a ribbon and a prize would go to the dog that garnered the most ribbons. The dogs were judged in categories such as smallest dog, biggest dog, friendliest dog, dog with best trick. Anyone could suggest a category at the beginning of the show. Sarah tries to have a category for every dog so that the owner can be "happy about their dog."

Sarah's dog show flyer is distinctive. She designed it herself and tried to put dog faces in each letter. About 50 dogs and 70 people came out that first year. This year there were 100 dogs. When the category of friendliest dog was announced, one third of the canines present swarmed the stage.

Sarah had faith that people (and dogs) would come to this event and she was certainly correct. The dogs have all behaved and interacted well and it is a very fun time. And every dog is a winner. This year, neighborhood vet Steve Brammeier attended and brought frisbees and other toys for the dogs.

In June of 2008, the fourth annual dog show, Sarah will be



Photo by Linda Cross

accompanied by her family's new dog, Griffin. He's a Boston terrier-beagle mix. He'll get to meet the 100+ Skinker DeBaliviere dogs and owners that live in Four Corners for the dog show, a show created by a seven year old for the benefit of all. It is no wonder that the SDCC honored Sarah Cross with an award at their annual meeting.

SDCC Minutes 9-10-07, 7 pm
1. Welcome / Introductions: The meeting was called to order by President Bob Mahon at 7:00 pm, with self-introductions. Robyn Nagle recorded.

2. Presentation by Metropolitan Sewer District (MSD): Jim Derby, principal engineer, provided general information about MSD, including informational handouts, and noted MSD's emphasis on capital improvement/replacement over the next 20 years. He also provided information about maintenance and assistance programs: (314) 728-6260 for assistance (live contact), and/or www.msdstl.com. In response to a question, Mr. Derby clarified that the burden to pay for the capital improvement projects will fall on ratepayers -- \$14/month over next few years.

3. Minutes, 8/13/07: Continue to 10/8/07.
4. Executive Director's Report: Darcell Braylock reported on the following:

- * Upgrades: Computers and the financial systems in the SDCC are currently being upgraded. A more comprehensive report will be given at the Annual Meeting.
- 5. Financial Reports: Alice Stanley provided an overview of the reports, noting the following:
 - * The financial reports were approved.

- 6. Alderman Reports:
 - * Frank Williamson, 26th Ward: (1) Continuing to work on nuisance properties; (2) successful back-to-school give-away program; (3) in response to questions concerning the Harambe home repair program, Alderman Williamson advised that there was only \$75,000 allocated for the program this year, but that he is trying to get more next year, while Darcell noted that 3-4 homes participated during the summer; (4) in response to questions concerning the townhouses under construction at Westminster/Laurel, Alderman Williamson advised that the zoning is appropriate, and that it is his understanding that the units will be built only as they are sold.
 - * Lyda Krewson, 28th Ward: (1)

The Balloon Glow will be held in Forest Park on Friday, September 14th, and the Balloon Race on the 15th, with both events being held at the Golf Course due to construction on Art Hill; (2) the Tour of Missouri bike race will be held on the 16th, with some signs starting to go up - traffic will be a mess.

7. Community/Neighborhood Reports:
* 7th District: Lt. Steve Martin: (1) August had the lowest crime rate in 17 years, with the exception of burglaries (12 - mainly unsecured garages); (2) using foot patrol, and hoping for a possible decrease in burglary with patrol of alleys; (3) specific individual targeted/seen (Kevin Crimera), and residents asked to contact SLMPD if he is seen in the neighborhood - call 231-1212.

- * Washington University PD: (1) Aware of burglaries in area; (2) students are back, and so far no major problems; (3) Safety Seminar on 9/20/07 at Regional Art Commission; (4) Kate Nash raised concerns about resources for foreign students, and Alice Stanley raised concerns about students walking through neighborhood alone at night - were advised that the officer working on student contact/public information.

- * Chris Howard (NSO/28th Ward): (1) Reported that another meeting is scheduled with the property owner of 5839 Pershing, and would appreciate any information on the tenants; (2) property at 5928 Waterman is vacant, with contractors working at night, so it's difficult to check on permits but working on abatement - Norb Hart advised that it was his understanding that the owner is in area (mother-in-law in building to the east); (3) requested that residents please report youth congregating on overpass over MetroLink, and that tennis shoes have been taken down off the power line; (4) Bob Mahon noted that the property at 6200 Pershing is basically abandoned with a visible problem with rodents - Lyda and Chris advised that the City is working on abatement, and that it is

difficult to enforce the ordinance regarding vacant properties.

- * Rosedale Neighborhood Association: Arline Webb distributed a report on this year's "Rags to Riches," noting that this year was the largest event yet (49 houses, 11 vendors, and higher price). Advertising on the internet (First Civilization) probably helped increase attendance. The food venue was moved to 4 Corners Park, had some problems (including Health permit), so food sales were a little down. Shirley Polk raised issue of toilet facilities - will address this issue next year.

- * WEAC: Andy Cross reported that WinterMarkt is scheduled for December 8th, and that a Committee meeting will be scheduled as soon as possible. He also noted that WEAC is co-sponsoring the upcoming Concert Series, with Darcell recognizing Jeff Stone's help in lining up bands. There has been lots of interest in the concerts, particularly Lamar Harris on September 29th. Food will be available for sale, provided by Loop restaurants.

- * Great Rivers Greenways: Joe Gudiswitz reported that there hasn't been too much progress on St. Vincent and Centennial - still working on the trail from UMSL to DeBaliviere.

- * Transportation: Norb Hart reported that the Kingsbury alley (6100) is being paved, and there are some possible improvements at Skinker/Waterman. Grant Writers: Brenda Davis reported that Darcell and the grant writers met last Fall, and have been working on grants including the Enterprise foundation for work-readiness training for youth in the neighborhood. They are also working on a grant with Bank of America, and hope to identify funding for the Grace UMC summer program with computers/youth.

- * SDCHC: Gary Boehnke reported that the Alanson Building is complete and residential tenants are moving in. There are no commercial tenants as yet, and they are working on parking issues. Parking problems with the use of LUCER

Park (football program) were also noted, and Darcell was asked to contact Hamilton School to see about the possible use of the school parking lot.

- Additional Issues:
 - * Norb Hart raised issue of the townhouses under construction at Westminster/Laurel, whether project should come through SDCC. Katie Kurtz responded that the project has been discussed for several years, but the current project did not come through SDCC.

- * Alice Stanley raised the issue of the soccer park lighting grant. Joe Gudiswitz responded that the project hasn't moved too far forward.

- * Shirley Polk raised the issue of the Food Drive, and will meet with Darcell to establish the date for announcement at the Annual Meeting.

- 8. Annual Meeting: October 8th at New Cote Brillante, with the potluck dinner beginning at 6:30 pm and the Annual Meeting following. Committee Chairs have been asked to make short presentations (no more than 5 minutes), which will be followed by presentation of awards.

- Board Retreat: Washington University will host the Retreat at the new Rosedale (North) Campus on Saturday, October 20th. Cheryl Adelstein will arrange for a facilitator, and details will be provided at a later date.

- 9. New Business: A resident of the 6000 block of Kingsbury expressed concern over parking and other problems on Kingsbury on Thursday evenings relating to "Joe's Cafe" (Bill Chrisman), and questioned whether the sculptures and art in front of the building were consistent with the historic district ordinance. She also cited a lack of response from the City to date, and is planning on pursuing this issue to higher levels. Darcell indicated she is willing to facilitate a meeting between Bill and the residents to see if the problems can be resolved, and asked that the complaint be submitted in writing.

- 10. Adjournment: Robyn Nagle, Assistant

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Transit Plaza to Transform Delmar Loop MetroLink Station

By Jo Ann Vatcha

The Delmar Commercial Committee recently met with Metro's Carol Schmidt and Dave Sanders, Project Manager, to learn the details of the construction of the transit plaza project at the Delmar Loop Metro Station. The committee had worked with Metro on design several years ago, when the streetscape was being installed, but plans for revamping the bus lanes and access to the station were put on hold. Now, the "transit plaza" will at long last be a reality. A few changes have been made to the scale and scope of work, and we learned the following:

1. Bids are due October 24; construction staging will begin as early as November, ending in April.
2. Des Peres will be closed approximately 4 weeks for the construction staging.
3. First step will be to move all bus stops to the Metro parking lot.
4. The new "plaza" area in the triangle at Des Peres and Delmar will have landscaping, benches, lighting, new trash containers (9 of them, to be emptied by Metro), and a kiosk/signage about attractions and directions for the Loop businesses.
5. Alternating strips of colored paving will enhance the design and clarify edges, paths for walking, waiting areas. New bus shelters will be added along the west side of Des Peres, and new metal fencing will be added all along the curved lot owned by WU. Alderman Krewson asked and committee agreed to reduce the 6' fence to 4', a more neighborhood-friendly look. WU's representative, Cheryl Adelstein, attended the meeting, but let us know later that WU felt the fence should remain at 6 feet.
6. After the improvements, all busses will depart from the west side of Des Peres. No bus stops will be located on the east

side of the street. Busses going east will turn north at Rosedale, then right on DesPeres, make their stops at the transit plaza and turn east on Delmar. Busses going west will make the same turn on Rosedale, make their stops at the Des Peres Transit Plaza, then turn right (west) on Delmar. All bus riders will be on the same side and will be able to easily see which bus to take.

7. Improvements will be made to the crosswalk. Committee suggested adding signs, "Yield to Pedestrians."
8. New restrooms for drivers will be added on the northeast side. Newspaper machines will be moved behind the new permanent building housing the restrooms. Committee suggested putting some additional bike racks there, too. More bike racks are located in the parking lot north of the station
9. Committee also would like to see changes to the "smoking area" at the top of the stairs leading to the tracks. Metro does plan improvements to the landscaping and path, with the current ponding condition to be repaired. This would be a great opportunity to change the loitering patterns of smokers and others who frequent the railing at street level, where patrons come up the stairs from MetroLink, and especially at rush hour, making the scene uncomfortable and sometimes intimidating for visitors and local travellers alike. Committee and Metro agreed that security should continue to be visible, with the committee suggesting more training

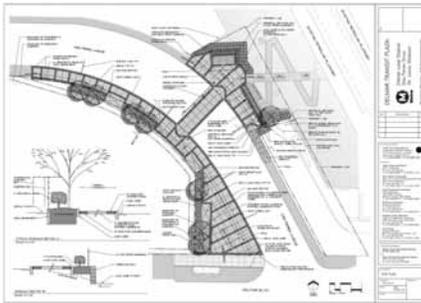


Photo by King Schoenfeld

Delmar Bridge

Kozeny-Wagner Company has been awarded the contract for the rebuilding of the Delmar Blvd. Bridge over MetroLink by the City of St. Louis, Board of Public Service. This necessary work was (happily) postponed during the shut-down of the Forest Park Parkway, at the request of our Alderman Lyda Krewson. Now, with the parkway once again open, and before the I-40-64 closure impact, is the right time to rebuild the bridge. Also at Krewson's urging, the project will involve only one side of the bridge at a time, so one lane in each direction will still be open and traffic will be able to go over the bridge during construction, expected to last about a year. Two weekend MetroLink shutdowns will be necessary as each side is demolished, one at a time. The Wabash Station building, now owned by Joe Edwards, will be monitored closely during construction!

for the private security guards to move along those who loiter at the station.

10. A public art installation will be planned for the triangle. Committee requested that a neighborhood resident be included in the selection committee advising Arts in Transit, along with a business person representing the Special Business District. In the past, AIT worked closely with the committee. Contact will be made with David Allen, Director of Arts in Transit, to include this neighborhood input.

11. New lighting for the station and plaza is planned. Joe Edwards suggested using "color-corrected high pressure sodium lighting" bulbs, which should be carefully planned to light up the station and street while crossing and going toward and on the steps to the station.

The committee was generally pleased to see the drawings and elevations and hopes that construction will be finished by next spring. If readers have questions, please to contact Ald. Krewson at krewson1@stlouiscity.com or committee chairman Jo Ann Vatcha at vatchaj@stlouiscity.com.

"Voices from Darfur: Personal Stories of a Genocide"

Gitana Productions, in partnership with the American Friends Service Committee will host "Voices from Darfur: Personal Stories of a Genocide" on Tuesday, November 6 at 6:30 p.m. in the St. Louis Room of the St. Louis University Busch Student Center, located at 20 N. Grand Blvd. A national speaking tour, it has been organized by Save Darfur in Washington, D.C.

"Voices from Darfur" will feature Daoud Hari, a Dafuri refugee, and other survivors who will discuss their experiences. The program also will include a short documentary film on the Darfur crisis. A local component of the program will be a brief discussion of "Life Over Debt Relief in Africa," presented by Lori Reed, International Programs Coordinator for the St. Louis American Friends Service Committee. This event is intended to educate the public about the harsh realities of life in Darfur and to empower people to take action to help stop the genocide and support debt relief in Africa.

Ngoma, a local group of musicians and poets who interpret rhythms of the African diaspora, will perform at the event. A typical meal served in the refugee camps will be shared with participants.

This program is not recommended for children under 13.

The symposium is the first of several events hosted by Gitana to bring attention to the plight of Darfur, Sudan. In May, 2008, St. Louis playwright Patton Chiles will present "Complicity of Silence: Darfur," an original theatre performance created and produced by Gitana Productions. The play uses the words of real people and documented stories for authenticity. Nine performances will be presented at the St. Louis University Theatre from May 23 through June 8, 2008. The play is the 10th in a series of annual "Faces of Love" cultural events brought to St. Louis by Gitana Productions.

Gitana Productions, Inc. is a not-for-profit arts and education organization dedicated to increasing cross-cultural awareness and collaboration by bringing international music, dance and drama to the St. Louis community. It conducts extensive outreach at the community level, developing educational programs which enhance multicultural understanding. For more information, call Gitana Productions at 314-721-6556 and visit www.gitana-inc.org.

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IN YOUR EAR

by Hawkeye Z. Hoerr

Good afternoon, class. I'm glad you could make time in your busy social calendars to join me today. Some of you look a bit worse for the wear but, hey, when I was your age I enjoyed wearing too. Please take out your pencils or open your laptops, and we'll get started. For those of you who wear both suspenders and a belt, take out your pencils and open your laptops.

You may recall that when we last met, we were in the midst of a great discussion when the bell rang. We were trying to determine the definition of life. Hundreds of years ago, I'd pointed out, it was hard for many people to determine what was living and what wasn't. After all, people believed in - swore that they saw and communicated with - angels and trolls and all kinds of hobgoblins. Life was considered flesh and blood but it was also considered the supernatural. Apparitions were simply viewed as a parallel kind of life, but alive to be sure. The clergy often reinforced the notion of a parallel and living world, and used it for their purposes.

Beginning around the twentieth century, that changed. That is, even the devout believers defined life as comprised of flesh and blood. You were either living or dead, pure and simple. Oh, lots of people believed in ghosts, some still do, but they wouldn't say that those doppelgangers are alive. They might not be dead but they sure aren't alive. Alive is limited to plants and animals. Ahem, Jane, please stop talking to your neighbor.

Most recently, though, and this is where our class ended, that thinking has become a bit fuzzier. If alive is defined as something that moves and can regenerate itself, what about a computer virus? Think about it. Computer viruses jump from file to computer to file; they inhere themselves in computers and in email; they replicate. No, they don't eat quarter-pounders or listen to Fleetwood Mac, but neither do whales. Further, it gets even trickier: We have designed computers which move, which need substance (in this case, electrical power), and which reproduce. Are they alive? If not, why not? And if you read any of Ray Kurzweil's works - The Age of Spiritual Machines is my favorite - it's hard not to become convinced that in the near future we won't be able to distinguish between human beings and the holograms in our midst. Indeed, Kurzweil would say that we won't even need to do so; we won't know and it won't matter.

So how we define life has once again been expanded. We may look at life as broader than animal or plant. Life can be almost sub-atomic or life can be larger than life. By the way, write this down, please, on the next exam, be prepared to answer, given some of the criteria I've just described, whether an idea can truly be alive. Oh, and welcome, Mr. Sanrea, I'm glad you could join us today. Please see me after class to let me know why you are late - again.

OK, back to life. All of the visions that I've described, except the ghosts, maybe,

are limited to good old planet Earth. Sure, heaven transcends Earth, but not counting Heaven or Hell, we always envision life as being on our planet. That's only logical because it's all that we know. We see artists' renditions and sometimes photos of other planets, but we really don't know. The images we see show gaseous blobs or dry and rugged terrains. So far we haven't found any Starbuck's or pyramids on another planet. We haven't even found grass or ants. Surely we are alone in the universe.

You may or may not buy the notion that Noah got two of everything before the flood came. Personally, I think it's pretty silly but then I think it's pretty silly that we elected Bush. So there. But Noah or not, the rest of the universe is quiet. We are here, alone. Guess what: wrong.

After all, class, it demonstrates an awful lot of hubris to think that God created us in his image. If there was a God, why would he keep this image? Would God want to have to shave each day or get braces to have straight teeth? Would God endure acne? OK, sorry, class, I digress. What does God look like is for another week.

Let me come back to life and whether or not we're alone. I know that it's easy to believe that we're the only occupants of this universe. After all, we haven't heard from anyone else. It's hard enough to get mail delivered to the right address, much less a message from E.T. Our telescopes have seen nothing and our project SETI (Search for Extra-Terrestrial Intelligence; google it) computers have only found silence. But students, that is a very, very short-sighted approach. We are part of a vast enterprise, and we have to keep that in perspective. "How vast?" you ask?

There are one-half trillion stars in our Milky Way galaxy. That's right, it's trillion with a T. That's 500,000,000,000 stars. Think about the number five hundred trillion for a moment; that's a million times one thousand, times one thousand again, times five hundred. Yeah, that's way big. And our galaxy is only one of billions of galaxies! The Hubble telescope has discerned areas that

contain 80 billion galaxies, and there are many, many more galaxies that are beyond Hubbles' purview. Are your minds boggled yet, oh intrepid students?

Another way to state that is that there are as many as one-half trillion stars in our Milky Way galaxy. The difference? Well, there really isn't any; a star is a sun and a sun is a star, but often we think of them as different. We think that stars are gas spheroids that burn at thousands of degrees of heat. Suns, though, are gas spheroids that burn at thousands of degrees of heat and have planets orbiting them. Ah yes, planets. Planets! Can you see where I'm headed, class?

Our sun is a medium-sized star with nine planets in its orbit. (Sorry, I refuse to decommission dear Pluto from its planet status. For that matter, I still think Mickey Mantle is a hero.) So if an average sun has nine planets, and there are 500 trillion stars in our Milky Way galaxy, it's reasonable to assume that there are four and one-half quadrillion planets in just our galaxy. Are you paying attention, Henry?

Of course, not all of those four and one-half quadrillion planets will have life. What might be a reasonable guess? Well, in our solar system only one of nine planets, just 11%, supports life (at least that's what we think now). So let's assume this is the norm. Of those quadrillions of planets across the universe, maybe only 11%, have life. Ready? That gives 9,500,000,000 planets that might have life. Or maybe it's just 1% of all of them, just nine and one-half billion planets. Gasp, class. There are no guarantees, we know that, but still, it's pretty hard to think that life would be oh-for-nine and a half billion, isn't it?

So, stay with me here, Henry, let's assume that there is life elsewhere. Probably lots of it. But what does that mean? Just like those earlier periods in mankind's history when life was defined much more broadly, we're there again. Think life as defined very broadly. We really don't know what these other life forms might look like or how'd they behave. The only thing about which I am very certain - and if you disagree with this, I'm sorry, but you'll lose 10% of your final grade - is that these other life forms would not look like us. Indeed, Stephen Jay Gould, the late Harvard anthropologist, said that if evolution began all over again on our planet Earth, if it started again with the exact same conditions, what would evolve would look and be quite different than what's here today. Our design, really, the result of our evolution, is certainly a function of environment, living forms adapt to their surroundings, but it is also a function of chance, millions upon

millions of rolls of dice gave us who we are today. No way would that exact evolution and configuration result today. And it's like that these other planets are very different than Earth, thus further reducing the similarities between their and our life forms.

For that matter, and I'm getting on some thin ice here, I know, but I'm not convinced that the physical laws of nature will always apply in the same ways. Oh sure, I believe in gravity and I know that the speed of light is a constant (186,000 miles per second equates to 5.9 trillion miles per year), but I wonder about everything else. Why couldn't a life form - note that I am not saying "human," please - live off ammonia? Why couldn't a life form consist of mercury or take sunlight as its only food? Why couldn't a life form communicate by thought? Would a life form need to have a physical presence?

I don't know what's out there, class, but I am confident that something is out there. But given the vast distances of space - it would take many lifetimes to reach the nearest stars, oops, I mean nearest suns - we may never know. That answer might be hundreds and hundreds of years away, and long before then we might self-destruct, either being eradicated quickly in a nuclear holocaust or slowly under the weight of our increasingly deeper carbon footprints. Given that the Earth is billions of years old, it's pretty obvious that things change quite quickly. After all, five hundred years ago the "New World" was still largely unknown, and there was no email. No one can predict what will be here in five hundred years or whether, in fact, a here is still here.

Class, I see some of you squirming and looking at the clock, and I see that it's almost time for dismissal. For your assignment, I'd like you to jot a couple of paragraphs in response to a question. Neatness and spelling count, of course, but I'm really looking for your synthesis and creativity. Ready? What impact would it have on us if we were to learn that life, intelligent life, existed outside our solar system? You're limited to one side of a piece of paper or 500 words. Please submit your response to me before we meet again. I look forward to hearing from you. Readers: You can contribute too. Send your pithy answers to Hawkeye at rhoerr@AOL.com.

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ST. LOUIS' ORIGINAL BOWLING & MARTINI LOUNGE IN THE LOOP

Food Served 'til **2:00 am**
Appetizers • PIZZAS • Burgers
Bacon, Egg & Cheese Biscuits
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Mon. - Thurs. 3pm-3am
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6191 DELMAR, 314-727-5555



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- Vegetarian Specials
- Appetizers
- Trout Almondine
- 21 Sandwiches
- Jerk Chicken
- Chili
- Salads
- Soups
- Desserts

Pancakes • Biscuits & Gravy
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