

The TIMES of... SKINKER DEBALIVIERE

Vol. 37 No. 5

February - March 2008

www.stlouis.missouri.org/skinkerdebaliviere/sd_times

The oldest neighborhood newspaper in St. Louis

FREE

Independent and all volunteer-run since 1970

Friends Campaign Kicks Off

By Linda and Andy Cross, Friends Campaign Chairs

2008 will be a landmark year for historic Skinker-DeBaliviere Neighborhood. We will be celebrating the neighborhood's 100th anniversary! The Skinker-DeBaliviere Centennial Planning Committee has begun working to create a celebration and awareness of the creation and ongoing history of our neighborhood.

Many neighbors remember a time when residents were fighting hard to keep our beautiful neighborhood from fading away. There were vacant properties, yards were overgrown, and buildings were boarded up. Back in those times, the Skinker-DeBaliviere Community Council was formed, and it is still going strong, more than 35 years later, hosting meetings, communicating with neighbors, organizing events, and securing our future. The Community Council is one of the core reasons why our neighborhood has not only survived, but also thrived. It is your support that makes our success possible.

Businesses, organizations and neighbors all contribute to the success of the neighborhood in many ways, including tax-deductible gifts to the Friends of Skinker-DeBaliviere Campaign. As a special incentive, neighbors who donate to the Friends Campaign at the \$100 level or above will receive a set of gift cards with our historic Centennial Celebration logo. These will be handy for contacting friends and family to invite them to the celebrations. The notecards will be available for sale as well. To contribute to the 2008 Friends of Skinker-DeBaliviere Campaign, send a check to SDCC Friends Campaign, 6008 Kingsbury, St. Louis, MO 63112.



Photo by King Schoenfeld

Culture Cafe and Bookstore Opens on Delmar

by Lana Stein

The Diversity Gallery occupied one of the retail bays at the Pageant for a number of years. In an expansion move, its owners crossed Delmar to the just completed new building at 6152 Delmar. It is now the Culture Cafe and Bookstore. It still features African American art, some of it local, and masks and sculpture. The lovely objects d'arte have a home in a clean well-lighted place. They are all for sale at prices ranging from \$125 to \$2,500. Patrons have the opportunity to enjoy this art while enjoying tea, coffee, or a sandwich in the cafe section. The house specialty is a chicken croissant sandwich, which is very easy on the palate. There are also homemade desserts. I tried the peach cobbler with whipped cream and it is only with considerable will power that I didn't order seconds.

The cafe is a family affair. Rubina Patton, who has lived on 61xx McPherson for over 35 years, acts as hostess and cook. Her daughter, Leslie Christian Wilson, is also an owner/guide. Another daughter, Roxanne, was present and one of Mrs. Patton's sisters also joined us. Mrs. Patton indicated that she had done catering but this was the first restaurant operation she had overseen. The cafe now has a liquor license and will serve beer, wine, and mixed drinks. The grand opening was on Christmas Eve. Come spring they hope to have a sidewalk cafe as well.

The Culture Cafe's hours are Tuesday - Saturday from 10:00 am until 7:00 pm. Mrs. Patton and her daughters hoped that Skinker DeBaliviere neighbors would stop by, look at the artwork, and have something to eat. For those interested, there is also natural hair braiding.

My lunch at and visit to the Culture Cafe and Bookstore was pleasant and filling. Although it rained most of that day, the cafe was bright, light and open. Our East Loop dining possibilities have again expanded and Mrs. Patton and her family hope you check it out.



Love in the Loop

By Debbie Murphy

Celebrate love in The Loop. Enjoy a romantic dinner for two. Shop together for that unique gift. Participating Loop restaurants are offering Valentine's Day specials. Couples with reservations will receive a red rose with their meal. The Tivoli Theatre is offering discounted tickets for Valentine's Day shows to couples dining in the Loop.

Many restaurants and shops participate in Love in The Loop by offering discounts and specials. For more information, or to request a free Loop brochure listing more than 120 specialty shops, eclectic restaurants, galleries and more, call 314 727-8000.

This vintage poster highlights the real estate activity preceding the homebuilding that really got started in 1908. For more information on the upcoming Centennial of Skinker-DeBaliviere, go to page 5.

2008 SKINKER-DEBALIVIERE

HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOOD CENTENNIAL CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- MAY 11, 2008 HOUSE TOUR
- JUNE 7, 2008 10TH ANNUAL BREAKFAST
GARDEN TOUR
- OCTOBER 4, 2008 KINGSBURY CENTENNIAL
CELEBRATION PARTY
- OCTOBER 11, 2008 CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION
AT FOUR CORNERS

CHECK THE CENTENNIAL LOGO ON THE SKINKER-DEBALIVIERE WEBSITE. FOR UP TO DATE PLANNING INFORMATION AND TO VOLUNTEER GO TO:
www.stlouis.missouri.org/skinkerdebaliviere/centennial

Editor's Notebook

by Lana Stein

This is the year that political scientists go crazy. Presidential elections. As this is written, the races for the party nominations are still wide open. I hope all of you participate in our primary on Super Tuesday, February 5. A lot of issues have been covered in numerous debates. However, there is one issue that is forgotten, perhaps forgotten for several decades now. Has any candidate mentioned the plight of our central cities? De-industrialization, migration, and declining revenues make governing a city very difficult. The Great Society provided considerable aid but over time and various successors to LBJ the amount of that aid has dwindled. The central city contains a disproportionate share of the region's poor and that share is often growing. Everyone wants to help the middle class but there are many far removed from that category.

Remember to cast your vote to be part of the discussion about our country's future priorities.

Oral History Project

THE TIMES is currently planning a special project to preserve the history of our neighborhood by recording its oral history. Marj Weir and Jo Ann Vatcha are seeking participants for three upcoming small group meetings to be facilitated and recorded by Missouri Historical Society staff Jody Sewell. The meetings will be held during February and March, 2008.

THE TIMES has begun working with the Missouri Historical Society on this exciting oral history project. An edited version of recorded interviews and small group sessions will be put on DVD for distribution with our updated history of the neighborhood, to be published this year, in time for the Centennial Celebration on October 11.

- "Strategies for Stabilizing and Strengthening the Neighborhood" (e.g. TIMES, Delmar Committee, Community Garden, Arts Council, Residential Service, Historic District, etc.)

- "Community Gatherings" (e.g. Art Fair/House Tour, block parties, Dinner Theatre, New Neighbors Parties)

- "The Skinker-DeBaliviere Community Council" (e.g. residents and other participants, leadership, Washington University, St. Roch, etc.)

Individuals who wish to be considered for participation in one of the meetings should contact Marj Weir at 863-5188, email weir.marj@charter.net or Jo Ann Vatcha at 726-6974, email jvatcha@gmail.com. In addition, Lana Stein is scheduling individual interviews of long-time residents and prominent neighbors. To contact Lana, call 721-7532, or email lstein@umsl.edu.

Calendar

February 5: Primary Election Day. Don't forget to vote for your candidate of choice.

February 6 and 7: People's Health Centers is offering free electronic income tax and circuit breaker filing for senior citizens from 1 to 4 p.m. on Feb. 6 at the William L. Clay Sr. Leisure Living Community, 5623 Clemens; and from 2 to 7 p.m. Feb. 7 at BJK People's Health Centers, 5701 Delmar Boulevard in St. Louis. For more information, call 314-460-3648.

February 2, 9, 16, and 23: Tax Return service is also available from The St. Louis Tax Assistance Program, which has been offering FREE electronic income tax return preparation and tax information for eleven years. If your income is under \$37,000, you may come to one of five sites: Ranken Tech, 4431 Finney, St. Mary's HS, 4701 S. Grand, Believers Temple Word Fellowship Christian Church, 2115 Chambers Rd., St. Patrick Partnership, 800 N. Tucker, or Lewis and Clark Career Center, 2400 Zumbuhl Rd., St. Charles, any Saturday during February, 8:30 a.m. through 11:30 a.m. For more information, go to www.stlouistap.org.

February 11: SDCC Board Meeting, 7:00 p.m., 6008 Kingsbury

February 18: SDCC "Bowling for Dollars". Monday afternoon, President's Day, 12 Noon to 4 p.m., SDCC Bowling Party at the Pin-up Bowl. Tickets are \$10, with shoes included. Food and drinks available for purchase. Call 862-5122 for more information.

February 6 & 20: Skinker-DeBaliviere Community Housing Corporation, 6:00 p.m. 6008 Kingsbury

February 21: 3rd Annual 7th District Police Community Relations "Officer Appreciation Lunch" featuring the Officer of the Year, Pageant Theatre, 11:30 a.m. This special event will also commemorate PO Norvell Brown who was lost in August, 2007 in the line of duty. For tickets, contact Mark Jaffee, 367-5650. Tables of 10 are \$150; single tickets are also available for \$15.

March 5 & 19: Skinker-DeBaliviere Community Housing Corporation, 6:00 p.m. 6008 Kingsbury

March 10: SDCC Board Meeting, 7:00 p.m., 6008 Kingsbury

2007 TIMES CONTRIBUTORS

2007 contributions to your neighborhood newspaper hit an all-time high of just over \$2,000. The co-editors, business manager, and all our writing and photography "staff" are very grateful that you continue to value our efforts. We promise not only to continue our popular columns, but to add new features and make as sure as we can that all issues of interest are covered in our pages. In April, we will be starting our 38th year of continuous publication. In 2007, we began appearing on the SD website, and in 2008, we will be adding more archives, thanks to your generous contributions. Also in 2008, we will be participating in the Centennial Celebration by publishing a compilation of history and interviews about our uniquely great neighborhood.

If you have not contributed and wish to do so, please send your check to the Times at 6168 Westminster 63112.

Carl & Jamie Allen, Holly Anderson & Janice Davis, Jennifer Barton, Roy Bell & Pat McLafferty, Nicole Blumner & Warren Rosenblum, Jim & Sally Boggeman, Rachel Boxdorfer, Darcell Braylock, Frank & Betty Burke, Ann Smith Carr, Ken Cohen & Margie Brammeier, Cynthia Colvin, Andy & Linda Cross, Leah Dyer, Joe Edwards, Nancy Farmer, Gale & Jim Fitzpatrick, Lucille Foster, Erich & Anna Friesen, Jim & Sue Gamble, Dave Garin, Judith & Fred Giraud, Elouise Goodum, Laura Gorman, Lu & Sam Green, Sarah Greenwood & Andy Geller, the Gustafsons, Karen Hageman, Daniel Hanson, Norb Hart, Jim & Jan Hatch, Dee & Gary Hayes, Peggy Hermes, Gene & Delores Hoefel, Joe & Beth Hogan, Robert & Lynn Huson, Lisa Iglauer, Robert Kelly, Lyda Krewson & Mike Owens, Paul & Katie Kurtz, Rich & Venita Lake, Gwen Lazard, Virginia Leguy-Feilleux, Rachelle L'Ecuyer, Bob & Judy Little, Loretta Lloyd, Ed & Joy Mack, Bob Mahon & Maggie Hart Mahon, Karen McClure, Dan & Jill McGuire, Sean & Angie Meara, Eric Mumford & Devora Tulcensky, Steve & Robyn Nagle, Marvin & Linda Nodiff, Betul Ozmur & Billy Handmaker, James Parrot & Fran Schroder, Matt & Maggie Peters, Al & Shirley Polk, Hitch & Mary Powell, Julieanna & John Renner, Jeff & Jamie Ryan, Art Santen, Dan Schesch, Dave Schmidt, Vince & Lois Schoemehl, Debra Schwartz & Howard Brick, Mike Sheller & Kim Pitliangas, James Shepard, Renni Shuter, Robert & Rosemarie Smith, Lana Stein, Michael & Ann Stephens, Katrina Stierholz & Mark Banaszak, Rose & George Storey, Paul & Jaina Stuhs, Pat & Carrie Sullivan, William Taylor, Greg Thomson, Scott Thorberg & Michelle Curtin, Isabella Treitel-Knapp, the Underwood Law Firm, Neville & Jo Ann Vatcha, Don Walker, Brad & Marj Weir, Will & Laura Winter, & Tony Wyche & Sara Howard.

The TIMES of... SKINKER DEBALIVIERE

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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:

Tom Hoerr	Venita Lake	Lana Stein	Marcia Kerz
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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 April-May issue: March 15, 2008. Please send copy by e-mail to jvatcha@gmail.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.

News of Neighbors

By Rachel Boxdorfer

As we begin the new year we are pleased to note that one neighborhood family is starting the new year with a little less sleep, but a lot more fun! Congratulations to **Cari and Jamie Allen** of the 61xx block of Westminster on the December birth of their second child, Tyler Allen. Very proud big brother is J.D. Allen.

A large part of what makes living in the Skinker-DeBaliviere Neighborhood so wonderful is the people. Neighbors know each other, socialize and never hesitate to roll up their sleeves and do the work that needs to be done to make the world (or a little corner of it) a better place. Every now and then, some of those people are recognized for their hard work. We're pleased to share news of two of our neighbors who were recently paid tribute for some of their efforts.



Congratulations to DeGiverville resident, **Venita House**, who received the Susan S. Barnes Volunteer of the Year award for her outstanding service with Talking Tapes/Textbooks on Tapes. House has served as a Talking Tapes Volunteer Reader for more than 13 years and primarily records high school textbooks. The subject areas of

her recordings include history, psychology and science; and an always favorite topic for House is English literature. The Center for Women in Transition honored Parkview resident **Mary Abkemeier** in November for her volunteer and community service. The organization works with recently released nonviolent offenders, stressing one-on-one mentoring, combined with transitional housing and life skills training and services for children. Congratulations to Mary!

Jennifer Olmstead of the 61xx block of Westminster reports that she 'loves' her new job as the District Coordinator for the Urban Land Institute - St. Louis District Council.

Dan and Monique Hudspeth hosted a 70th birthday for Dan's step-dad and former SD resident, **Jim Kropp**. Mom, Susie Kropp, and many old friends and neighbors joined in the festivities, resuming an old tradition in the neighborhood from the 70's and 80's of having a New Year's Day party.

Saying goodbye is never easy. Long time Skinker-DeBaliviere residents **Ken Cohen and Margie Brammeier** of the 61xx block of Kingsbury will be pulling up stakes and moving to Maplewood.

We look forward to still seeing Ken and Margie at many neighborhood events.

Many Skinker-DeBaliviere residents (as well as music fans from all over the St. Louis area) were spotted on Christmas Eve embracing their last opportunity to shop at the legendary **Streetside Records** in The

Loop. Streetside closed its doors for the final time making way for a **Chipotle and Noodles and Company** restaurants.

In other business news, **Andrew and Kim Yawitz** of the 61xx block of Westminster will be opening '**The Gramophone**' in The Grove Entertainment District in Forest Park Southeast Neighborhood. The Gramophone will feature live music of rotating genres - including jazz, blues, funk, bluegrass and rock - several nights per week, along with sets by local and national DJs. A full bar will serve draught beers, wines by the bottle and the glass, classic cocktails and signature drinks, and the space will be also available for private events.

And for all the women out there; please note the **Women of Skinker-DeBaliviere** is an unofficial, informal group of fun and interesting women from the neighborhood who get together monthly for dinner and conversation. The January dinner was at **Seki** on Delmar and in February the group will be holding a wine tasting at **Parker's Table** in Clayton. The group had a wonderful event there last fall (Parker's Table is owned by **Jon Parker** of the 60xx block of Kingsbury). For information on the wine tasting or to be updated on any of the Women of Skinker-DeBaliviere dinners, please email Jennifer Olmstead at jenniferolmstead@sbcglobal.net.

Unfortunately, some sad news as we begin the new year in Skinker-DeBaliviere. Our heart felt condolences go out to **Carla Duncan** on the sudden passing of her husband **Roger** in December. Roger Duncan was active in the neighborhood and

could be seen at many events, including; Wintermarkt and the McPherson Community Garden. Roger and Carla were also instrumental in the organizing of the concert series at Ivory Perry Park. Roger's knowledge and enthusiasm about gardening will be greatly missed by his fellow gardeners at the McPherson Garden this year.

Our sympathies also go to the family of **Vanessa Ball**. Vanessa passed away after a long illness and was cared for and blessed with the strength and love of her family as she bravely fought her illness. Her children, her life long companion Donald Bester, and her mother, Roosevelt Ball of the 61xx block of McPherson, and all of the Ball family will miss Vanessa very much.

The Skinker-DeBaliviere Community Council has announced four new members of the board of directors: **Brenda Davis, Sean Meara, Vincent Flewelling, and yours truly**.

One of our new members, Sean Meara, was recently in the spotlight as a volunteer for the Big Brothers/Big Sisters organization. As a big brother, Sean accompanied Nick, a fellow city resident, to professional sports, jazz concerts, camping excursions, and just being there for him. Nick is a recent graduate of St. Mary's HS, and has joined the National Guard. He wants to be a Big Brother someday. Sean was proud to attend his graduation and intends to remain a friend and support. If you would like to support the organization or become a mentor, call 361-5900.

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".

28th Ward Regular Democrats Announce Meeting Schedule

Since the late 1960s, the 28th Ward Regular Democratic Club has been an open ward organization. Its members vote on endorsements for most elective offices. To be a member, one must live in the ward or own a business in the ward. The dues are \$15/year. Payment of dues and attendance at two meetings in the past year make one eligible to participate in endorsement votes.

There are usually seven meetings a year and a Christmas Party

in December attended by many elected officials. Regular meetings are held at John's Town Hall in the Dorchester, 665 S. Skinker. A number of regulars often have dinner and/or a drink before the meeting begins at 7:30 pm. The dates for the 2008 meetings are as follows: Jan. 17, Feb. 21, Apr. 17, May 15, June 19, Sept. 18, and Oct. 16. A number of members are from Skinker-DeBaliviere.

Alderman Lyda Krewson, Committeeman Joe Keaveny, Committeewoman Betul

Ozmat, and President Art Perry encourage you to attend a meeting, especially in this critical presidential year. There is a speaker at each meeting to address a matter of general interest. Alderman Krewson discusses legislation at the Board of Aldermen and developments in the ward. Frequently, the 64th district state representative, Rachel Storch and/or the 4th district state senator, Jeff Smith will provide details of lawmaking in Jefferson City. Mayor Francis Slay attended a recent meeting, and elections usually bring a number of interesting visitors. For more information, contact one of the above, or Brad Weir, ward treasurer, at 863-5188.



Alderwoman Lyda Krewson of the 28th Ward



The hot
calendar
for cool culture



produced by the
Regional Arts Commission

Skinker-DeBaliviere Scouts 'Do Their Best' Scouting for Food

By Ligaya Figueras

Cub Scouts from Pack 98 collected hundreds of pounds of food from Skinker-DeBaliviere residents during the 2007 Scouting for Food drive held this past November. The 22 boys from Pack 98 were among the more than 30,000 Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts and Venturers who

helped to collect over 2 million cans of food for area food banks.

On November 10, the boys went door-to-door to distribute bags throughout Skinker-DeBaliviere. They were led by Pack 98 den leaders Kerry McEvoy, Rachel Boxdorfer and Karen Shaughnessy

and Pack Master Norb Hart, and accompanied by their parents and siblings. The Pack was assigned the area bounded by DeBaliviere to the east through Parkview to the west, and from Forest Park Parkway north to Delmar.

The Scouts, who are all students attending St. Roch School, returned the following Saturday to collect bags filled with canned goods and other non-perishables. They took the donations to Engine House No. 29 located at Vandeventer and Forest Park Parkway. Scout leaders from several Boy Scout Troops, along with area food bank volunteers, sorted hundreds of cans of chili, soups, meats, tuna, vegetables, fruits and sauces, as well as pasta, rice and evaporated milk. The food was transported to the St. Louis Area Food Bank for distribution at more than 480 food pantries throughout eastern Missouri and southwest Illinois.

The St. Louis Area Council Boy Scouts of America organizes Scouting for Food, the nation's single-day food drive, because the event teaches youths the value of helping others. "I knew that we were giving food to people and it gave me happiness inside," says eight-year-old Charlie McGroarty, a Wolf

Member in Den 1 of Pack 98 and a resident of 61XX McPherson.

Scouts take an oath to "do my best at all times" and Pack 98 certainly did their best this year. According to Paul Winters, the leader of Troop 98, which is also chartered at St. Roch School, Pack 98 collected 360 boxes worth of food, about 50 more than in 2006. "The Troop is thrilled to have their help and participation in the Scouting for Food effort," says Winters. "They took the initiative to extend the area to Parkview this year, and their efforts helped increase the yield at our station." The overall 2007 collection was 5.6 percent larger than last year's drive based on information released by the St. Louis Area Council Boy Scouts of America. 2007 marked the 23rd year of this St. Louis tradition.

Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts participate in fun activities and service projects throughout the year. If a boy from the area wishes to get involved in scouting at the Boy Scout level (ages 11 and older), he and a parent can stop by a troop meeting and talk with Winters. Troop 98 meets Wednesday evenings at 7:30 p.m. in the gym at St. Roch. Parents of interested boys ages 7-10 should call the Greater St. Louis Council Headquarters at (314) 361-0600.



(Back Row) Elia Barker, Eric Webster, Joe Schwartz, Mitchell Stephens, Ian Shaughnessy, William Kramer (Middle Row) Matt Grady, Nolan Lodholz, Gavin McEvoy, Max Friesen, Owen Shaughnessy, William Jefferson (Front Row) Christian Boxdorfer, Donovan Hill, Ian Intagliata, Spencer Harvey, Jack Krone, Karl Lodholz, Anton Gudiswitz, Zachary Harris (Not Pictured: Charlie McGroarty)

New to Skinker DeBaliviere, Well Almost!

by Rachelle L'Ecuyer

When Heidi Dean married Kingsbury Square homeowner, Prem Chander in September, she got something old and something new? she was moving back to her old neighborhood to where she and Prem have decided to start their new life together.

Heidi's family lived on the 6100 block of McPherson starting in 1977. Heidi attended Crossroads School when it was on Lindell in the early eighties and later when it moved to the former Bettendorf store on DeBaliviere, where it remains today. Although she graduated in 1985, Heidi kept close ties with the school and later served on the Board of Trustees, "I served for six years, ending in June 2007. I'm still in touch with the school we're going to the Chess Team Trivia Night in February," says Heidi Dean. Both Heidi Dean and Prem Chander have provided ongoing support to the school over the years.

When asked if she had any fond memories about the neighborhood, Heidi says, "I used to wander all over Forest Park with our family dog. She was really good, so I'd let her off leash, which I would never do these days. Once, she fell in the Grand Basin at the base of Art Hill, which was utterly terrifying.

But she was fine, and those walks were the beginning of a lifelong wander walking habit. Another one is sledding on Art Hill - a cliché, but it's true, I still remember how completely fun that was."

Now, Prem Chander, came to our neighborhood via Detroit via India! He has been in St. Louis for a number of years and wanted to be

affordable (still expensive) compared with CWE and they were closer to Forest Park. Important factor was that Kingsbury Square was close to where my wife (then girlfriend) grew up and her friends resided in that general area." Chander said when asked about his choice of places to live. Chander sites Forest Park and Atlas Restaurant as two of his favorite local destinations.

When asked how she feels about being back in the area Heidi says, "Great - I love the vibe and architectural beauty of the area, and it's wonderful to be so close to the park again. I'll be riding my bike around it, with a pitstop for refreshments in the West End, when it's warm enough. My one complaint is the frustrating lack of convenient grocery shopping, but I was spoiled rotten in South City - I was within five minutes of three grocery stores, two pharmacies, a PetSmart and the best Target in town."

Prem and Heidi had a whirlwind summer and fall, their wedding brought guests as far away as India, France and California and now they are planning a visit to India themselves sometime this year. All of this activity will slow down soon and you will probably

see them out walking their dogs, Jim and Georgie, so stop and say "hello" and welcome them (back) to the neighborhood!



Soaps, Salads, Sandwiches
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Centennial Planning Update

By Jo Ann Vatcha

A Centennial Planning Committee has been meeting and recruiting additional talent to create and implement some exciting activities which have been scheduled for 2008. **Katie Kurtz**, Historic District Review Committee Chairperson, and **Andy Cross**, Beautification Committee Chairman, are the designated co-chairs of the Centennial Planning Committee, with help from many others in the community.

Andy Cross will be officially announcing the brand-new Centennial logo in the "Friends of Skinker-DeBaliviere" fundraising campaign, now underway. Andy's original artwork features our Forest Park "neighbor", the statue of St. Louis. Contributors of \$100 receive a free box of notecards featuring the new logo; the notecards will also be available for sale, as will other Centennial mementos, still to be selected.

Venita Lake and **Arline Webb** are co-chairs for the house tour, which will be held on May 11, Mother's Day, as were the past house tours, Arline is investigating sources for items like window stickers, magnets, t-shirts, and more.

Rachel Boxdorfer, **Dan Hudspeth**, **Jon Parker**, and **Darcell Braylock** are also working on plans for the big day. **Cindy Ormsby** and **Karleen Hoerr** are the link for the Kingsbury Party, to be held on October 4. **Marj Weir** and **Jo Ann Vatcha** are working with the Missouri Historical Society on the publication of neighborhood history, including an oral history DVD. In addition, **Lana Stein** is scheduling interviews of long-time residents and prominent neighbors, and **King Schoenfeld** will help gather old photos and home movies of the neighborhood throughout its history, for inclusion in the reprinted history, the DVD, and THE TIMES throughout the centennial year (and beyond).

For The Big Celebration on

October 11, all hands will be needed to make this a very special event. The committee hopes to include many former residents in this "homecoming", and **Rachelle L'Ecuyer** is helping plan special recognition for current residents who also grew up in the neighborhood. New neighbors are also very important to the celebration! Recently recruited volunteers include **Jon Dahl** and **Mary Powell**, with many more to come!

In addition, **Washington University** and our great churches **St. Rochs**, **Grace Methodist**, and **New Cote Brillante** will be participating. **Loretta Lloyd** has volunteered to create an email list, and **Tom Urbom** will be putting our new logo and calendar of events on the SDCC website. THE TIMES OF SKINKER-DEBALIVIERE will be contributing articles throughout the year covering neighborhood history and to commemorate the events that are being planned for this banner year.

If you would like to be involved with the centennial celebrations, contact Katie Kurtz at 727-6377 knkurtz@swbell.net, or Andy Cross at 721-6060, mccross@swbell.net. To help with the House Tour, contact Venita Lake at vlake@mindspring.com. If you have photos or old home movies, contact King Schoenfeld at basileus@swbell.net.

To be added to the email distribution list, send your email address to: lloyd53@sbcglobal.net. If you are interested in participating in a small group "oral history" meeting, contact Jo Ann Vatcha at jvatcha@gmail.com or Marj Weir at weir.marj@charter.net.

For individual interview ideas, Lana Stein may be contacted at lstein@umsl.edu.

In our next issue, a full list of events and volunteers will be included. For updates, you may also visit the Skinker-DeBaliviere website, www.stlouis.missouri.org/skinkerdebaliviere/centennial.

Wanted: Nominations for Skinker-DeBaliviere House Tour

By Venita Lake

This year marks the centennial of the development of the Skinker-DeBaliviere area, and we are planning a series of events to celebrate our neighborhood, past and present. One of the first events will be a house tour, similar to those held in conjunction with the art fairs held on Mother's Day in the 1970's and 80's.

Plans are just beginning, and among of the first things we need are nominations for houses to be on the tour. If your home or the home of someone you know is something special, we would like to hear about it! What is "something special"? Maybe it's one that has all of the original fixtures or one that has been recently renovated. Maybe it's one that you have gone past and wondered about the interior and the recent work that appears to be going on. Or you are curious about condos, two-families, or new in-fill housing and want to take a peek.

Give us your ideas and especially

your recommendations! We would like addresses, owners' names, phone numbers, and any comments about what makes this special.

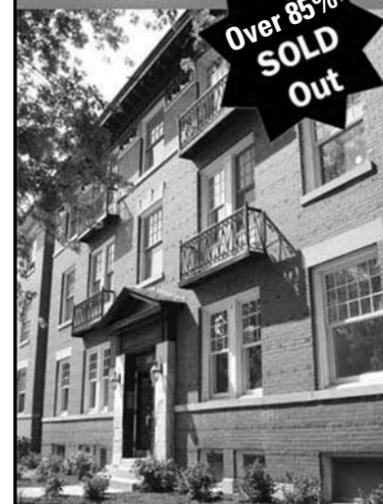
What's involved for the home owner? The tour will be on Mother's Day, May 11, 2008, probably from 11 until 4. We will provide house sitters and ticket takers. Other ideas are still in the works, but we plan to show from ten to twelve houses and hope to visit homes and make our selections by the end of March. We will want to take some publicity photos. And we'll leave it up to the home owner to make the beds and do whatever else is necessary to show off on tour day.

To recommend a house, call Venita Lake at 727-7378, email at vlake@mindspring.com, or drop a note to her at 5851 Waterman, 63112. Also, call Venita if you are interested in working on the planning committee or would like to be a house sitter on the day of the tour.



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Charles E. "Scully" Stikes, Ph.D., LPC, a licensed counselor/psychologist and educator, spoke on the topic: "Chaos or Community: Where Do We Go From Here?" at this year's Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemoration Program, held at Grace United Methodist Church on January 13, 2008. This annual event is dedicated to the memory of Virgil "Jack" Wright, who was an inspirational leader and president of SDCC for many years, and helped found the event. There were presentations by Kenya Ajanaku, Storyteller, and Grace and Peace puppet ministry, as well as Des Peres Big Picture Elementary School and Bethel Lutheran School.

This year's commemoration was jointly sponsored by Grace United Methodist Church, Grace and Peace Fellowship, New Cote Brilliance Church of God, and the Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council and was chaired this year by Liz Johnson, working with a committee of Gwen Lazard, Rev. Kurt Lutjens, Rev. Mark Williams, Rev. Mikki Merritt, Shirley Polk, Arline Webb, Ronie Haliburton, Kate Nash, and Darcell Braylock, SDCC Executive Director. The program closed with the traditional singing of "We Shall Overcome."

Extraordinary/Ordinary Person Sought

Gitana Productions is seeking nominations of ordinary citizens who have bridged connections between Africans and the broader St. Louis community for the prestigious seventh annual "Deeds Beyond Race: Extraordinary/Ordinary Person of the Year" award.

St. Louis is home to upwards of 7,000 to 8,000 Africans from Nigeria, Ethiopia, Kenya and other countries. In recent years, a large number of refugees have come to St. Louis from Somalia and Liberia.

The "Extraordinary/Ordinary Person of the Year" will be honored at "Complacency of Silence: Darfur," an original theater performance written by St. Louis playwright Patton Chiles. The play will use actual words spoken by people involved in the Darfur crisis as well as documented stories for authenticity. Nine performances will be presented at the Saint Louis

University Theatre from May 23 through June 8, 2008.

"This award recognizes the extraordinary efforts of ordinary people who bridge racial, cultural and religious divides in their day-to-day lives," said Cecilia Nadal, president of the board of directors of Gitana Productions. "We honor people who really make a difference in our region by helping to bridge gaps that divide us. Gitana is committed to demonstrating the vital connection between global awareness and local humanitarianism." Nominations should include a one-page essay describing how the candidate voluntarily reaches across ethnic and religious lines with good deeds and why he/she should receive the award. Nomination essays may be sent to Gitana Productions, PO Box 300280, St. Louis, MO, 63130. Visit www.gitana-inc.org. Deadline for entry is February 28, 2008.

Closer to Home

By Norbert Hart

The highway and traffic folks have asked all of us to consider changing our driving habits for surviving the 40 construction. For us, this might entail considering different sources of supply, so to speak. Since for us getting away from the current primary construction location means going North or East, some alternatives may not come readily to mind. So, we will set some out without getting near all inclusive.

Pharmacy options might be the best known, with Williams at BB & FPP. However, there is another independent on W. Pine (same name; Pine & Newstead) and a Walgreens on Lindell (near Boyle). Across the street from Walgreens is a strip mall of sorts which includes Schnucks and Office Depot, among other stores. An independent Firestone facility is there too, with a franchise Firestone just further east at Jefferson. Reliance Automotive is on Kingshighway, with service and parts. Another auto parts alternative is the Autozone on Kingshighway (which is also good for house cleaning products for upholstery and leather). Just down from AutoZone is a Sherwin Williams paint store, featuring paint plus accompanying hardware items. Additional hardware is available at our own Able Lock & Hardware (Delmar) + 2 additional independents on Sarah (New Market (@Laclede) & St. Louis Shade & Hardware (@ West.). Before leaving Kingshighway we should mention Straubs, which is great for speed and the butchers.

When the construction gets "closer to home" next year, and given the possible traffic on FP, we should think of options and possible solutions now. Please forward any ideas to me (Norhart@sbcglobal.net) or Sean Meara, co-chairs of the transportation committee.

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DECEMBER 2007 SDCC Minutes, 12/10/07, 7 pm

1. Welcome / Introductions: The meeting was called to order by President Bob Mahon at 7 pm, with self introductions. Robyn Nagle recorded.

2. Minutes 11/12/07: On motion of Mike Taylor, second by Joe Keaveny and unanimously carried, the Minutes from 11/12/07 were approved.

3. Financial Report: Alice Stanley provided an overview of the financial position, noting the new and simplified report format. Karin Hagaman requested that future reports include a balance sheet, and Cheryl Adelstein requested that year to date budget information also be included.

On motion of Arline Webb, second by Gwen LaZard and unanimously carried the financial report was approved.

• 2008 (Proposed) Budget: Darcell Braylock distributed a copy of a proposed budget for 2008. Upon review, it was immediately determined that the copy provided was incorrect,

and did not reflect the figures adopted by the Financial Committee at the previous meeting. A budget with the correct figures will be provided to the Board in advance of the January 14th meeting. Bob Mahon requested that Board Members review the budget and provide input and/or questions, to "fine tune" the document in advance. As well, a cash flow analysis will be included.

4. Executive Director's Report: Darcell Braylock noted that a copy of the 2008 Board Meeting Schedule was included in the Agenda packet, and advised that she had nothing further to report. Bob Mahon requested that for future board Meetings, a written Executive Director's report should be included in the Agenda packet.

5. Aldermanic Reports: Frank Williamson, 26th Ward reported on the following:

- The Alanson Building is open and running.
- A restaurant (Jamaican) will soon be opening in the space formerly occupied by Marion's Barbeque.

- A meeting is scheduled with owner/operator of the Delmar Express market (Hamilton/Delmar) to address issues relating to liquor sales/consumption. In response to a question from Norb Hart regarding follow up on this issue after last month's Board Meeting, Darcell advised that the issue had been discussed at the Commercial Business District Meeting, and a letter sent to the City (Bob Kraiberg) regarding the conditions of the liquor license.
- The upgrade of the Delmar MetroLink station has been delayed, but is due to start any time. Arline Webb inquired if the recent decision in the MetroLink litigation would have any bearing on this project; Alderman Williamson advised that he didn't think there would be any additional delay as a result.
- The Historical Society will have renderings of the modifications to the former Jake's restaurant in January.
- Gwen LaZard inquired about the former car wash; Alderman Williamson advised that

- there is no action at this time (primarily due to the owner's high asking price/storage of exercise equipment inside).
- 6. Other Business:
 - Nominating Committee Report: Bob Mahon reported that the Committee will be recommending the following slate of officers for approval at the January 14th Board Meeting: Bob Mahon, President; Kate Nash, Vice President; Alice Stanley, Treasurer; and Beth Bender, Secretary.
 - WinterMarkt: Andy Cross thanked everyone for food donations and volunteer service, and Washington University for musical performers. Overall, sales were down approximately 50% from prior years, but attendance was reasonable given the terrible weather.
 - 7th District Police Report: Officer Katherine Rund reported that overall crime is down throughout the District, but that the major activity is burglaries.
 - Washington University Police Department: Robert Himstedt reported that they are aware of

- the increase in burglaries, and have instituted extra patrols during the holidays.
- Per Norb Hart's request at last month's meeting, written reports on the commercial Business District Committee meetings will be included in the board Agenda packets.
- Arline Webb reported that the Centennial Celebration Committee has met, and is working on events during 2008, including a House Tour on Mother's Day and a neighborhood celebration on October 11. Any interested individuals and/or organizations are welcome to volunteer/participate.
- 7. End of the Year Holiday Celebration: On motion of Joe Keaveny, second by Alice Stanley and unanimously carried, the Board Meeting was adjourned to the end of the year celebration.
- Kate Nash, Secretary Our new SDCC Board Members
Rachel Boxdorfer
Vincent Flewellen
Brenda Davis
Sean Meara



Halloween 2007 Winners at the Annual Halloween Party at St. Roch's. Art Santen's leadership produced another memorable event, with judge Alex Lowenstein, a Washington University student, costumed with a black judge's robe and a white wig!
Best costumes 2007: Parker Stus, Pterodactyl Chelsea Harris, Punk Rocker Keon Henry, Scream Angela Krenshaw, Pirate Zachary Harris, Punk Rocker Jamie Hogan, Transformer Raven Harmon, Sleeping Beauty Zoe Harmon, Wicked Witch. Other winners included Emma Stanton and Hanna Volz.

Wet Weather Can't Dampen Wintermarkt Spirit

By Andy Cross

Despite rain in the morning and light rain in late afternoon, the 2007 Wintermarkt was a success. Many vendors pulled their tents and canopies together to ride out the cold side-by-side. Although booth vendor sales were down from previous years, the vendors said they had a good time and were glad they came.

The West End Arts Council food booth was busy, and hot drinks were a big hit this year, along with delicious soups from the St. Louis Gast Haus. Our largest ever selection of musical performers put on an excellent show, thanks to the support of WU. This year, West End Arts Council set a canopy on the 4 Corners stage, along with the sound system. Performers included: The Chimers of St. Roch School, under the dedicated direction of Regina Morris. Also from St. Roch, the 9:00 mass choir performed with spirited director Keith Ballentine. From SU, we had three fantastic singing groups: The Mosaic Whispers, an all-female a capella group, The Amateurs, an energetic co-ed a capella group, and an annual favorite, The Pikers, an all-male group complete with



musical antics and choreography. Irish musicians Mary Walsh on flute and Natasha Sanford on accordion had the crowd dancing, and German accordionist Charles E. Block gave the festival an authentic flavor.

Many festival-goers commented on how the weather was appropriate for a winter festival, and fortunately there was no precipitation for the majority of the event. The 2007 Wintermarkt attracted many people

from outside the neighborhood, as well as our diehard neighbors, and we are grateful for everyone's support. Thank you to the dedicated set-up crew, food booth crew, and to the vendors who set up in the rain and closed up in the sleet! Thank you to all the volunteers and to those who donated to the food booth, and to all who help make this outdoor event a success.

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IN YOUR EAR

by Hawkeye Z. Hoerr

OK, this is not going to be another article about the closing of Highway 40.

I don't know about you, but I am so tired of the 40 hoopla. I mean, give me a break. Political candidates are assassinated in precarious countries, global warming threatens cities and species, a wild tiger escapes at a zoo and kills someone, and presidential candidates file charges and recharges. All this is happening and yet what are the headlines about? Yep, the closing of Highway 40.

I used to think that the old news axiom, "If it bleeds, it leads" was the worst thing possible in journalism. Regardless of the tabloid or channel, each daily update started with a shooting here or a killing there. I've been doing a series of presentations for Wachovia employees who might be moving to St. Louis, and invariably someone asks about us being the crime capital of the country. Give me a break! Each time I hear this I'm tempted to jump over the table and strangle the questioner with my tie. That wouldn't help our image in this area, of course, so I wisely resist the temptation. All they need to do is pick up a rag or turn on the tube, though, and this specious calumny is promulgated. (How's that for a mouthful?)

Anyway, "If it bleeds it leads" used to be the media manta. Any shooting anywhere was newsworthy. Forget medical advances or educational gains, ignore altruistic

acts or neighborhood renovation, pass over world peace and a cure for cancer, but let's spend three minutes interviewing the sobbing spouse or parent of someone who was killed. I pay for cable to get this?

Where was I heading? Oh yeah, anyway, "If it bleeds it leads" has been replaced by "Traffic Trumps." Forget that political tragedy and ignore that escaped tiger, let's talk about Highway 40 and what to do! Honestly, there are times when I yearn for a good old report on crime and an interview or three.

Really, how big a deal is the highway closing and for whom? Who lives out there anyway? I mean, have you ever been out THERE? Why would someone choose to live somewhere where a third of your house was really the garage? Why would a person elect to live where the only trees that you see are those on television? Who would want to live where the housing was boring with a capital DULL?

OK, I grant you that a few folks out there are good and worthy. They're a minority, but they're the kind of people we want to be east of Skinker.

Apparently 170,000 cars a day traveled highway 40 (past tense),

so let's assume that 1% of them pass our muster. Alright, that may be a high estimate, but bear with me, dear reader. So how do we get those 1,700 people from the hinterland to civilization? What are those commuting lifeboats? I'm a native St. Louisan so I know the thoroughfares of this town like the back of my forehead. Off the bat, then, forget Clayton and Olive Avenues.

Those were congested to begin with, and will be even worse now. Whenever I'm on those streets, I always wonder why someone wants to make a left turn (three right turns are always easier) but some do, and the impact of traffic is horrendous. (Personally, I think the problem could be solved if all businesses were located on the north sides of the streets. No one would ever have to turn left. I wonder why no one else has ever thought of it!) OK, so we've ruled out these tiny streets. Now what? Our 1,700 amigos and amigas are still out west, clamoring to be free. Ahhh, those of you from other towns are thinking the obvious: "Hawkeye, you old sage, have you forgotten mass transit?" Pray tell, Mass transit, indeed, naive ones! This country was based on a separation between church and state, so no way am I going to advocate bringing church rituals into the solution. I apologize to the 1,700 but if we ease into Mass Transit, what's next? Genuflecting garages? Sanctimonious streetcars?

Biblical busses? Communion cannot be part of commuting. Prayer has a role, understood, but no way am I going to endorse Mass as part of the solution.

So what does that leave us? Relax, it's Hawkeye to the rescue! The solution is as simple as can be; it's right before our very eyes. Think CONGA LINE.

Yep, everyone coming from

there to here meets in the morning, let's say at Chesterfield Mall, with their IPODS already fastened to their arms. Everyone is in sync - granted, this will take a bit of coordination - the IPODS begin slamming their musical missives and the group begins to move. The group, actually, is a line. It's not a long line, really. If you figure that each person averages two and one half feet in depth while standing erect (or, more appropriately, dancing erect), the 1,700 person line only extends a bit over 4,000 feet. That's less than a mile.

There they are, standing together, one after the other, near Chesterfield Mall. Each person is wearing the iPod, their two hands on the two hips of the individual in front of them. (Or is it one hip?) The IPODS begin to do their thing and the CONGA LINE comes alive. There it is, swaying from side to side ambling up and down the road. Our CONGA LINE is on the side of the being repaired highway, not taking up much space, to the amusement of the construction workers. Since all the IPODS have the same song, in fact, the workers can hear the music too. So there they are, pouring concrete and painting traffic lanes, moving their bodies to Ricky Nelson singing "I'm A Traveling Man." Simple, eh? Our 1,700 westco anointed friends making it to civilization each day via their line de conga. They get here a bit later, granted, but they always arrive with smiles on their faces. Plus, exercise is good for the heart, so I'm told, and conga-ing for two years will mean that everyone loses weight and is healthier. Insurance rates decrease as a side benefit. I must say, I know that there are many bright people working in government, but I have to wonder. How could someone not have thought of this before now?

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