

The TIMES of... SKINKER DEBALIVIERE

Vol. 38 No. 3

Sept. - Oct. 2008

www.stlouis.missouri.org/skinkerdebaliviere/sd_times

The oldest neighborhood newspaper in St. Louis

FREE

Independent and all volunteer-run since 1970



Centennial Celebration

Join your neighbors and friends for our big centennial celebration on October 11, at the Four Corners at Kingsbury and DesPeres. The party will begin in the afternoon and go on into the night with live music, great food, speeches, activities for all ages. Food and drink and commemorative items will be for sale. T-shirts with our neighborhood centennial logo will be available for sale soon. Look for flyers with an order form to get yours. Our historic district committee is creating house plaques with the centennial logo and the year each house was built. These will be available to order soon as well.

If you would like to help plan the final details for the big party, volunteer in a booth, or otherwise contribute to the celebration, contact Andy Cross at 721-6060, email mccross@swbell.net, or call Katie Kurtz at 727-6377, email knkurtz@sbbell.net.

Help us build the Centennial Email List! You will be kept up-to-date on the plans for the Skinker-DeBaliviere Centennial Celebration if you provide us with your email address. Simply email weir.marj@charter.net and say "Add me to the Centennial Mailing List" (or words to that effect). If you don't use email, be sure to keep an eye out for flyers and posters about the big event on October 11.

Rags to Riches: The Ultimate Yard Sale



Don Walker, who has lived on the 6100 block of Westminster for over 45 years, was the original Rags to Riches host.

On Saturday, September 6, 2008, Rags to Riches, the "ultimate" yard sale, will be held throughout the neighborhood. Sponsored by Rosedale Neighborhood Assoc. and Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council, sale times are 8am - 2pm. Registration Fee is \$15 in advance, \$20 day of event. Forms are at the SDCC office, (314) 862-

5122. Additionally, there will be BBQ and beverages for sale at Four Corners of Kingsbury and Des Peres, outside the SDCC office; all proceeds go to the Rosedale Neighbors Association. Vendor Sale Spots are also available for rent for \$20, advance reservation only, on the Grace United Methodist lot at Skinker and McPherson.

New at Hamilton

Greetings! My name is Todd Williams and I am the newly appointed principal at Hamilton eMints Academy and Community Education Center. I am thrilled to be a new member of the Skinker-Debaliviere community. You should be proud to know your fearless leader, Darcel Braylock actually took part in my selection as principal..and she has been my biggest supporter ever since. I am proud to serve as the leader of your community school.

Hamilton, as most of you know, is rich with tradition and history. Some of our St. Louis' most influential leaders have graced the halls of Hamilton during the past ninety-four years. In fact, many of you reading this article can remember spending your elementary years at Hamilton and know quite well the greatness that was birthed in that unique and majestic building. Hamilton has greatness built in and through it. It has never left.

During the 2008-2009 school year, Hamilton will serve over 350 preschool through fifth grade students and over 200 families in the St. Louis Public School District. Our goal is simple..for every student to read at grade level, be proficient in mathematics and communication arts, and be productive, active learners in the our society. The same goals, minimally, that all parents have for their children.

"...Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure..."

-Marianne Williamson

In return, I offer experience, enthusiasm, and can-do attitude to assist in any way I can to your efforts in maintaining the excellent reputation and standard of living that you have earned in the Skinker-Debaliviere community.

Please feel at liberty to visit Hamilton, as many of you have, and see how we are striving to become the best choice in urban education. I hope to see all of you soon!



Times Archives On-line!

By Marj Weir

For many years we have wanted to be able both to preserve the old issues of *The Times of Skinker DeBaliviere* and its predecessor, *The Paper*, and to provide easy access to those issues for everyone who wants it. We are finally realizing that goal. As part of the Centennial celebration fundraising, we have been able to afford to have the issues of *The Paper* and *The Times* scanned to digital format. (a sincere Thank You to all those who have donated to date. It's not too late to help. Special Thanks to Art Santen and Venita Lake for saving all those issues.) So far we have been granted enough money to have the 1970's and 1980's processed. After the Centennial celebration on October 11, if there are funds left over, we hope that some of it can be devoted to completing the task for the 1990's and the early 2000's.

After 2003, the production of *The Times* has been done in a digital form, so those issues are already available on-line. By the time this issue reaches you, the issues from the '70's and '80's should be available for your viewing at: http://stlouis.missouri.org/skinkerdebaliviere/sd_times.html

http://stlouis.missouri.org/skinkerdebaliviere/sd_times.html

You'll need a computer, however. These issues are in PDF format, which most computers can read. This format allows you to enlarge a page for on-line reading. It also makes it relatively easy to print an issue on standard letter paper if you wish. We are working on an index to the headlines, pictures, and ads in these issues, so that finding things will be easier. I am also working on an extract of all *Vicissitudes*, *Window on Washington Heights*, *Parkview Perspective*, and *News of Neighbors* columns with a name index. Although it's a lot of work, it's really fun to read and to remember all the great people who have worked so hard to make this a great place to live.

If you have any interest in helping with the indexing of these digital issues, please contact me at 863-7558 or at my email address: weir.marj@charter.net. It will help if you have a computer on which you can prepare documents, but even some orderly pencil and paper analysis would be very useful.

Editor's Notebook

by Lana Stein

Our Centennial celebration is coming: Saturday, October 11, at Four Corners. Elected officials will be present, there will be food and beverages at costs, and bands will entertain. Centennial mementoes will be available for purchase, along with the neighborhood history. Please come and join the party and the recognition of a very special neighborhood that defied the conventional wisdom to become stable and integrated. All our problems are not behind us but we've come a long way!

Thanks to our generous donors, especially the Premier Donors Washington University, Joe Edwards, and the Skinker-DeBaliviere Housing Corporation, we will have a great celebration and funding available to archive the entire history of the TIMES. As a special surprise, for the occasion, we will be publishing a Special Edition of the TIMES highlighting all the Centennial activities and including the names of all those who have made donations to our 100 year celebration. It's not too late to be included! If you don't get a flyer or an envelope and would like to donate, send it to TIMES of SKINKER-DEBALIVIERE, 6168 Westminster, with the note "For the Centennial Celebration."

For the other important event of this autumn, all the pundits are saying that this will be a critical election, a possible turning point in our country's history.

On behalf of the Times, I am urging you – regardless of your predilection – to register and vote on that first Tuesday in November.

You can register at our Charing Cross Library on Skinker at your convenience. Now is the time for all good people to come to the aid of their party. With seeming unending conflict and an economy in freefall, it's time to act. Sometimes only a handful of votes can make a difference. Don't be in the position of saying, "if I only had. ..." In the presidential primary in February, the 28th ward was the highest voting. Let's do it again and have the 26th up there too! Make a difference.

Calendar

September 3 and 17, 2008: Skinker-DeBaliviere Community Housing Corporation, 6:00 p.m. 6008 Kingsbury

September 6, 2008: Rags to Riches. For more information, call 862-5122.

September 8, 2008: SDCC Board Meeting, 7 p.m., 6008 Kingsbury

September 15, 2008: Deadline for Special October Centennial Edition issue of *THE TIMES*. Contact jvatcha@gmail.com or call 629-2505.

September 22, 2008: Washington University Concert Martin Chalifour, concertmaster of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, will perform in "The Four B's: Beethoven, Bach, Bartok, and Brahms," a free concert on Sept. 22 at the 560 Music Center. For more information, see article below.

September Concerts at 4 Corners 6:00-9:00 p.m. All are welcome at no charge. • September 13–Youth N Roots • September 20–Kim Massie • September 27–Boogie Foot

October 2, 2008: Washington University Debate Watch party. The program begins at 7:30 p.m.; the debate will start at 8 p.m. and last 90 minutes. A 30-minute question-and-answer session with the panel will follow. Light refreshments will be served. The event is free of charge, but an RSVP is required. RSVP to 935-5752 or to communityevent@wustl.edu.

October 4-5, 2008: New Exhibit at Bill Christman Studio, Kingsbury near Des Peres, for more information, call Bill Christman at 314-862-2541.

October 4, 2008: Kingsbury Centennial Party. For more information, contact Katie Kurtz at knkurtz@swbell.net.

October 11, 2008: Centennial Celebration in Four Corners Park. For more information, contact Andy Cross or Katie Kurtz, or SDCC at 862-5122.

October 18, 2008: Westminster Centennial Party. For more information, contact Mary Powell at mfp1214@hotmail.com

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The Times welcomes unsolicited articles and letters. Because of the small size and volunteer nature of the writing staff, the quality and range of the Times has always depended in large part on submissions from non-staff area residents. 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 Special October issue: September 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@gmail.com or maxlana@sbcglobal.net.

"The Four B's: Beethoven, Bach, Bartok, and Brahms" Free Concert Offered at the 560 Music Center

On Sept. 22 at 7 p.m., renowned violinist Martin Chalifour, concertmaster of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, will perform in a free concert with pianist and Washington University faculty member Seth Carlin, Canadian violinist Taras Gabora, and Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra members Jonathan Vinocour, viola, and Bjorn Ranheim, cello.

The concert, "The Four B's: Beethoven, Bach, Bartok, and Brahms," will be held in the E. Desmond Lee Concert Hall of the 560 Music Center, located at 560 Trinity in University City.

Chalifour, considered to be one of the finest violinists in the United States, has offered to perform with his former teacher, Taras Gabora, to support and promote



the University's Music Department. Chalifour's daughter is a student at Washington University.

The concert is free and open to the public and will include a dessert reception after the event. Attendees will have an opportunity to meet and greet the performers and learn more about upcoming concerts and events at the 560.

Congratulations to Rachel Boxdorfer, on being named a "2008 Five Star Best in Client Satisfaction Real Estate Agent." Rachel, who is an agent with Coldwell Banker Gundaker, is a three-year winner of this prestigious honor. St. Louis Magazine works with Crescendo Business Services, an independent research firm, to find out which agents have most consistently wowed their clients. The survey is done by mail and phone, with all results screened for confidentiality. Nominated agents are then reviewed by a blue-ribbon panel of local industry experts. The resulting list of FIVE STAR Real Estate Agents is an elite group representing less than 4% of licensed agents in the St. Louis Area.

News of Neighbors

By Rachel Boxdorfer

The ABC News Network visited the McPherson Community Garden on July 29th as part of a national story on Community Gardens. The story was about Americans using community garden as a way to cut food costs and eat healthy. The reporters talked to Garden leader **Andy Cross** and Gateway Greening President **Gwen Hayes Stewardt. Bill (Willie) and Rogerine Kinds** and their grandchildren **Taylor Stewart and Chris Booker** were also featured. Mr. and Mrs. Kinds have been residents of the neighborhood for forty years and have been active in many ways. To see the full story go to: <http://abcnews.go.com/Video/playerIndex?id=5529357>.

We all know that St. Louis has a strong jazz history and as previously mentioned in this column, Skinker-DeBaliviere residents **Kim and Andrew Yawitz** opened a new concert club in March. The **Gramophone** is located at 4243 Manchester Avenue in The Grove neighborhood. We are happy to report that the Gramophone has been recognized as the City's Best Jazz Club on AOL City's Best awards! Free jazz is offered every Tuesday at 9 p.m. in conjunction with Jazz St. Louis, as well as other jazz shows on select weekends. Interested parties can learn more at www.thegramophonelive.com.

Congratulations to **Cheryl Adelstein**, Washington University's director of community relations and local government affairs, who recently received a Hadassah National Leadership Award. The award is presented to members whose leadership accomplishments reflect the organization's dedication to volunteerism. Previously executive director of Central Reform Congregation, Cheryl also serves as Washington University's representative to the Skinker-DeBaliviere Community Council and the Delmar Commercial Committee.

Enjoying the National Night Out festivities this year were **Ryan and Morgan Moore**

and daughter **Maggie**, new neighbors on the 5900 block of DeGiverville. Ryan has joined Washington University's Department of Political Science and Morgan is a physical therapist at the Rehab Institute of St. Louis.

A special welcome goes out to the new principals at Hamilton School and Des Peres Big Picture School. **Todd Williams** will be at Hamilton School and has already been attending some neighborhood events like National Night Out and is eager to know the neighbors. **Evelyn Woods** will be taking over as principal at the Des Peres Big Picture School. We look forward to getting to know both of them and working with them on future endeavors!

Les Mason will be taking over soon as the new Neighborhood Stabilization Officer and we look forward to meeting him. We also thank **Chris Howard** for all his help with the Skinker-DeBaliviere neighborhood!

Sadly, we need to report that our neighbor, **Albert Moore**, of the 6100 block of Washington passed away on August 7th. He leaves his wife **Jackie**, who has been a longtime resident on Washington. We send our deepest sympathies to the Moore family.

It would not be a News of Neighbors column without the announcements about the births of our newest neighbors! The Michaelson family of the 5800 block of Pershing welcomed **Isaac Wilhelm Raymond** to their family on April 7th. Proud



Gabriella and Isaac Wilhelm Raymond Michaelson.

parents are **Paul and Angelica Michaelson**, and his very excited and 'sassy' big sister is **Gabriella Michaelson**.

More recently, the Glenn family

of the 6000 block of Kingsbury shared news of the August 4th arrival of **Eaysa Glenn**, little sister of **Zakiya** and daughter of **Janean and Ron**. Congrats to everyone!

Do you have some news to share? Please send your items to Rachel Boxdorfer at rboxdorfer@cbgundaker.com with the subject line "News of Neighbors." Thank you!



National Night Out.

Helping Save the Wolves... With Pocket Change

by Rachel Boxdorfer



At certain points in our life, we all hear or see something that leads us to believe we should take action in order to help. But how often do we follow through with this idea? And how often would you expect a group of eight and nine year old boys to see a need, make a plan, and follow through with the plan? Well this past spring, that is exactly what happened to a group of St. Roch Cub Scouts.

On March 1st, the third grade Cub Scouts of Pack 98 took a trip to the Wild Canid Center in Eureka, Missouri (founded in 1971 by Marlin and Carol Perkins). The boys were in awe of the beautiful wolves: Maned, Red, and Mexican Gray Wolves, Swift Foxes, and African Wild Dogs. The research and work that is done at the facility helps to keep these beautiful animals from becoming extinct. The boys loved the day they spent there and could all quote statistics about the wolves. They had many stories about what they witnessed with the animals. They were also moved by the fact that the Wild Canid Center, which is always in need of donations, was in need of even more contributions as they prepare to move their facility to a new property which they will have to purchase and develop for the wolves.

They decided they should do something to help. In the course of just one day of school, they discussed their ideas and wrote a letter to their principal requesting to do a fundraiser for the Wolf Sanctuary. Later that day, they met Principal Gloria Openlander

and worked out the details of their fundraiser. They even took notes in the meeting. By the time the scouts saw their leaders after school at their Cub Scout meeting, they had an entire plan; approved by the principal! The boys were so excited. They had a lot to share with their leaders and none of them could get it out of their mouths fast enough!

In order to put the plan in motion, the boys designed posters and canisters with incredible artwork and messages about saving and helping the wolves. They placed canisters in every classroom at their school (some parents took them to work as well) and encouraged students to bring change or small donations to put in the canisters. Each week, for three weeks, the boys collected money, thanking the classes as they went through the school.

Following the three weeks, the boys had raised \$430.80 (not bad for small change). They invited a representative from the Wild Canid Center to attend a meeting and they were able to present their donation. With their donation, the boys were able to 'adopt' three wolves and will continue to learn about the wolves in the coming year. They were truly inspired by their visit and look forward to future visits to the Wild Canid Center. The parents and leaders of these boys are equally inspired and impressed by the initiative taken and their passion for this noble cause. May it move us all to take action where we see fit in our daily lives.

The St. Louis Walk of Fame has now extended east of Skinker into the City of St. Louis. This summer there are three new stars on the 6100 block of Delmar. Max Starkloff, whose "advocacy secured legislation for public improvements like curb cuts, disabled parking, and the passage of the landmark "Americans with Disabilities Act" in 1990." Starkloff has made a difference in the lives of countless disabled across the country, founding Paraquad in his home city of St. Louis. Cedric "the Entertainer" Kyles, who grew up in St. Louis and graduated from Berkley High School, displayed his unique and award-winning wit at the induction ceremony. And Bob Pettet, famed St. Louis Hawks basketball star, "named one of the 50 greatest players in NBA history" will be inducted later this year. There are now 116 stars on our St. Louis Walk of Fame, initiated by Joe Edwards. To learn more, go to visittheloop.com.

10th Annual Garden Tour



Jim Parrot and Fran Schmoker

garden photos by Andy Cross



Rheba Symeonoglou

The 10th annual breakfast garden tour for 2008 was linked to the celebration of the Skinker-DeBaliviere Centennial. This year the tour visited backyards on the 6000 and 6100 blocks of McPherson. The first four backyards were connected with low fences and easy access so each yard flows into the next. The Tiedes, Boxdorfers, Hudspeths and Crosses have all worked on each other's yards to create this shared space. Rachel (Bender) Boxdorfer, Dan Hudspeth and Andy Cross are all second-generation Skinker-DeBaliviere residents (actually, Dan is a third-generation). Just a couple of years apart in age, they played together as children, attended St. Roch, lived nearby each other, and now their children are also the same age and they play together and attend school together.

Other backyards included Laura Gorman's woodland ambience experience, with many textures and shades of green viewed from an open deck. Rheba Symeonoglou's knowledge of plants and her delicate touch make her yard a botanical garden: "it is a habitat for birds, butterflies and various insects, all interacting with one another." Jim Parrot and Fran Schmoker's deep green shade garden is rich with fruits and bamboo. Ingrid Murphy and Ron Slater's



Laura Gorman

collections of trellises, planters, and clever architecture are filled with things to discover. Dick and Beylinda Hereford's progressive shade to sun border garden is designed to attract butterflies and hummingbirds.

At each backyard, tougoers received a puzzle piece and a picture on one side and a letter, along with a fact about how the streets of Skinker-DeBaliviere got its name. When participants collected all the pieces, the letters of the puzzle spelled "Centennial", and the puzzle picture on the other side formed the image of the Statue of St. Louis. The cooperation and open sharing of our neighbors is one of Skinker-DeBaliviere's greatest strengths, and it is a pleasure to experience this each year on the Breakfast Garden Tour.



Sarah Jane Cross, Andy Cross, Katrina Stierholz, Mark Banaszak, Linda Cross, and Emily Cross at the Missouri Botanical Gardens.

A Gnome in the Garden

The McPherson Garden's 1st attempt at a scarecrow scored 2nd place for Best Scarecrow in Gateway Greening's Urban Garden Competition held in July. Emily and Sarah Jane Cross created a large garden gnome for the McPherson Garden entry. The gnome was not alone, with four scarecrow friends made by Valorie and Brian Helt and their children. Brian and Valorie placed two small scarecrows in their raised bed, and two more are climbing the curly willow in the front of the garden.

for first place for Best Use of Native Plants, sponsored by Grow Native!, a division of the Missouri Department of Conservation. Grow Native! is educating Missouri residents with choices of plants which are beautiful and beneficial for our environment.

Ann Marie Lodholz was awarded an outstanding raised bed prize for the McPherson Garden. Mr. Haliburton of the Block Unit 1035 Community Garden also won an outstanding raised bed award. In the established community garden category, the McPherson Garden received an Honorable Mention. Congratulations to all the community gardeners.

The McPherson Garden also tied

Dog Show Winners All

By Lana Stein

On Tuesday, June 17, dogs and owners gathered at Four Corners. They found the Cross family making chalk drawings of dogs on the sidewalks. Sarah Cross was again in charge. The mood was light-hearted and many attractive dogs participated. A lovely Shiu Tsu puppy won the top prize.

As usual, a good time was had by dogs and owners. Sarah had treats for the dogs as well as prizes and her grandma made cookies for humans in the shape of dogs. Dogs rule!



Gloria Helt (holding Marta's dog Muffin) and Marta Schneider (with the Best in Show Prize).

Kingsbury Animal Hospital Adds Vet

Dr. Steve Brammeier, DVM is proud to welcome Dr. Erica Fry, DVM to the staff of Kingsbury Animal Hospital, located at 420 North Skinker. A 2005 graduate of the University of Missouri College of Veterinary Medicine, she is excited to be returning to the Midwest.



Dr. Fry's special interests include preventative and internal medicine; she particularly enjoys the challenges of feline internal medicine.

Along with Dr. Pamela Clary, DVM, the Kingsbury Animal Hospital veterinarians have over 50 years of combined experience. The inclusion of a third doctor to our staff allows us to also offer appointments with a veterinarian every weekend.

Kingsbury Animal Hospital began in an abandoned gas station at Skinker

and Kingsbury. With the help of architect Tom Cohen, Dr. Brammeier realized his professional dream of practicing in a purpose built, state of the art facility, when a new building was completed in 2004. The new facility was designed for efficiency in delivering veterinary medical services, but also creating a pleasant space for both the patients and their owners.

On Saturday, June 7, Kingsbury Animal Hospital celebrated its 30th anniversary. Dr. Steve Brammeier welcomed clients and friends to the celebration. An art auction was held to benefit Barkley House at the veterinary school of the University of Missouri. Delicious morsels were placed throughout the facility.

Skinker-D Gastronomy

Sweet Potato Pie is a Favorite for Cookbook Writer

by Ligaya Figueras



Shirley Whitney Polk, resident of 57XX DeGiverville, published her cookbook *What's Cookin' in the Kitchen* in 2006.

one or two." In 2006, she compiled the recipes into a cookbook titled *What's Cookin' in the Kitchen*, published by Cookbooks, Inc. The book is divided into sections (appetizers, beverages, soups, salads, vegetables, main dishes, breads and desserts) and includes helpful serving multipliers and back-of-the-book nutritional facts. Her sweet potato pie recipe is an adaptation of her mother's pie. "My mom was always cooking at holiday seasons - Thanksgiving, Christmas. She always did a sweet potato pie." For more information about the cookbook, call 314.361.2094 or e-mail sppalp@aol.com.

To be considered for future issues, contact the author at figueras@sbcglobal.net

Shirley Whitney Polk, a resident of Skinker-DeBaliviere for over 40 years, has always enjoyed cooking. "When I was young, I watched my mom cook for our family—three brothers, three sisters and my father. That's where I learned how to cook," says Polk.

Inquisitive about cooking, she would request recipes from family, friends and "whoever might give

Sweet Potato Pie, Courtesy of Shirley Whitney Polk. Serves 6-8

- 9-inch pie shell
- 3 med. sweet potatoes, peeled & cut into 1" chunks
- 1/4 cup lightly packed light-brown sugar
- 1 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1/2 ea. tsp. ground nutmeg and salt
- 2 Tbsp. molasses
- 1/2 cup half-and-half + 1/2 cup dry sherry
- 2 eggs
- Sweetened whip cream (optional)

Preheat oven to 425°. Lightly pierce the bottom of pie shell with a fork. Bake until set, but not brown, about 7 minutes. Let cool completely on a wire rack. Meanwhile, put the sweet potato in a steamer basket, place over boiling water, cover, and steam about 20 - 25 minutes, until very tender. Spoon into a bowl; beat with an electric mixer or mash until completely smooth. Stir or beat in brown sugar, cinnamon, nutmeg, salt, molasses, half-and-half, sherry and eggs.

Pour into the pie shell. Place the oven and immediately reduce the heat to 375. Bake until the pie is set in the middle, about 35 minutes. Serve pie warm or cold. Top with sweetened whipped cream if desired.

Pi Serves Lunch

Pi, the deep-dish cornmeal crust pizzeria in the East Loop, has recently launched new LUNCH HOURS. In addition to the 7 nights per week the restaurant currently serves its mind-blowing pi, lunch is now served everyday, opening at 11 AM. The kitchen will remain open throughout the afternoon until the existing closing hours of midnight Monday through Saturday, and 11 PM on Sundays.

"With Washington University starting classes the same week we launch the extended hours, and local families back home from vacations, we believe there's no better time to turn it up a notch," said owner Chris Sommers. "We cannot thank our guests enough for the amazing support they have shown us in just our first few months, allowing us to make this move."

In addition to the extended kitchen hours, Pi announced it will extend Green Hours (aka Happy Hour) to include the lunch guests. Green Hours specials will now be offered from 11 AM until 7 PM everyday, in addition to the 10 PM till Midnight hours on Monday through Wednesday.

The Secret is Out: Neighborhood Bistro Atlas Restaurant is Tops among St. Louis Restaurants

by Ligaya Figueras



Atlas Restaurant, the quiet bistro tucked away at 5513 Pershing near Belt, has garnered quite a bit of attention lately. Michael Roberts, chef and co-owner of the neighborhood eatery, was among a prestigious group of culinary professionals to be named a 2008 *James Beard Foundation Award* semifinalist in the "Best Chef-Midwest" category. The restaurant was also recently voted "Best-Kept Secret" in *Sauce* magazine's 2008 Reader's Choice Poll. In past years, Roberts and his staff earned top marks from *The Riverfront Times* for "Best Desserts" and "Best Chef." Atlas was also named "Best New Restaurant" by *St. Louis Magazine* when it opened its doors in 2003.

The Italian-French bistro has earned its reputation by serving fresh, thoughtfully prepared food. "Our focus is on using fresh ingredients at a price point where people can afford it," said Roberts, who manages the kitchen while his wife and co-owner, Jean Connelly, handles the front of the house.

Popular menu items are the fish of the day and the grilled New York strip served with fries. The restaurant is notably vegetarian-friendly: there are always two veggie appetizers (not including

the salads), as well as two vegetarian entrees. In addition, soups are always vegetarian. "Keeping soups vegetarian makes them lighter. That leaves more room for dessert," smiles Roberts who admits to having a bit of a sweet tooth. "We've got nine desserts on the menu and we occasionally do special desserts on top of that."

Roberts buys locally grown food whenever possible and makes weekly visits to the farmers' market in Maplewood and Tower Grove.

Roberts and Connelly are long-time culinary professionals. He graduated from cooking school in 1979 and spent 20 years in San Francisco-area restaurants). Connelly is originally from St. Louis and the couple relocated here to be nearer to her family. Roberts and Connelly purchased a house on 57XX DeGiverville about three years ago.

The location along Pershing Avenue in the space vacated by Sunflower Pizza is the result of happenstance. "It was pure luck," explained Roberts. "We needed infrastructure. You can't go to an empty box and put in a kitchen. We were lucky because it was a restaurant and the previous owner waited for us to get the financing in place."

Even though Atlas is relatively small and tucked away, the restaurant has developed a loyal customer base among West End residents and sees steady business for Grand theatre district events.

Atlas Restaurant, 5513 Pershing, 314.367.6800
www.atlasrestaurantstl.com. Hours: Dinner - Tue. to Sat. 5:30 to 10 p.m. Desserts - Fri and Sat. 10:00 p.m. to midnight.

Pizazz • 'Specializing in room therapy' • 6254 Delmar • 863-7709

By Norbert Hart

We may have lost our Futon Express but in its place we've gained a much wider furniture selection. Pizazz offer a full line of what owner Dan Neenan calls Ikea-esq products, named after a store somewhere up north. The look is contemporary or what might be referred to as 50's "space age."

Neenan puts special effort into value, knowing many of his customers (most of whom come from within a 3 mile radius) are

price conscious. To meet that demand many of the items need assembly. Pizazz seeks to cultivate a niche market with apartment, loft, and city dwellers in general. Neenan is a seasoned veteran in the business, having operated a similar concern in Columbia, Missouri, since 1974.

Now in its 3rd year, Pizazz offers more than furniture, with some products being offered seasonally (e.g. back to school, Christmas,

ect.). Besides desks, chairs, futons, & table sets, Pizazz has poster, lights, accents, rugs, local artist works, and gifts. Many units can be specially ordered to fulfill particular needs, with one example being sofa colors. The selection and range of products can be viewed on the store website, www.pizazzontheloo.com.

Laura McCarthy
REAL ESTATE

124 North Gay Avenue
Clayton, Missouri
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Neighbors Invited to Debate Watch University Hosting Special Off-Campus Event for Community

On October 2, Washington University, along with its sponsors, will host a community Vice Presidential Debate Watch at the 560 Music Center at 560 Trinity in University City.

This off-campus event will coincide with the live Vice Presidential Debate, sponsored by the Commission on Presidential Debates and held at the University's Danforth Campus.

"Due to security concerns, it is very difficult to get on campus to experience the debate atmosphere. This event gives the public a chance to view the debate together and discuss the issues," says Cheryl Adelstein, the University's community relations director. "We are planning for a fun and interactive evening."

To set the mood, the evening will begin with selections from *Of Thee*

I Sing, the Pulitzer Prize-winning satire of American politics. This production, with music and lyrics by George and Ira Gershwin, also will be performed by the University's Performing Arts Department Oct. 24-Nov. 2 at the Edison Theatre. After the conclusion of the televised debate, a panel of professors from the University's Department of Political Science in Arts & Sciences will comment and take questions from those in attendance.

The program begins at 7:30 p.m.; the debate will start at 8 p.m. and last 90 minutes. A 30-minute question-and-answer session with the panel will follow.

Light refreshments will be served. The event is free of charge, but an RSVP is required. RSVP to 935-5752 or to communityevent@wustl.edu.

New Exhibit at Christman Studio Oct. 4-5

By Becky Homan

Skinker DeBaliviere residents know neighborhood artist Bill Christman as a kid on a playground, especially when he's creating new work. Take the "Big Legs" towering over the front door of his studio, at 6014 Kingsbury Avenue, like the lower half of some roadside Paul Bunyon. The now legs stand in the shadow of a new Christman creation - a huge rocket ship that's as wacky and distressed as the artist himself.

After 13 years of displaying work at the City Museum and also hosting live music on Thursday nights in his studio's famous Joe's Cafe, Christman is building a new solo art exhibit. The rocket ship and some 40 other pieces are part of an event he calls "Strange Gods." It opens to the public on Saturday, Oct. 4, and Sunday, Oct. 5, from 2 to 6 p.m. each day. It is free and to be viewed mostly outside in his sculpture garden, where his huge

new wooden face of a smoker oversees a sputnik and assorted other whimsical works of steel, glass, copper and cement. They are industrial salvage and found objects - raised by Christman to the next level.

The exhibit, he says, with eyes half-closed, "is for people who wonder what goes on back here - like that Tom Waits song, 'What's he building in there?'"

"I try to create the kind of experience I had growing up," he continues, "like the quirky mom-and-pop miniature golf courses that no longer exist, and the feeling that around any corner you could stumble on something 'bigger than life.' I'm trying to preserve that sense of wonder, of an American kid from the Truman era."

For more information on the exhibit, call Christman at 314-862-2541.

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Barack Obama Fundraiser at Christman Studio on June 28.

Many of our neighbors had allegiances to one nominee or another during the long presidential primary season. After it was clear that Barack Obama was the presumptive Democratic nominee, a large number of supporters attended a party for the candidate at Bill Christman's studio.

Peggy Hermes and Ethel Sawyer Adolphe were among the hosts. Guests showed the diversity of our Skinker-DeBaliviere neighborhood. Over \$5300 was raised and guests enjoyed good weather and good refreshments in a lovely location for a party.

Barry Liebman, Caroline Heckman and Mark Banaszak.

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A Look Back at the '08 Presidential Campaign

By Tim Schoemehl

A Republican president finds his nearly eight years in office drawing to a close. The Republican Party has chosen as his successor a sometimes-friend and sometimes-rival of the president. Meanwhile, Democrats gather for their convention in Denver to nominate a candidate known as an amazing speaker, but who still has skeptics in his own party. The fall campaign is likely to hinge on public opinion of the current administration, but divisive questions of race and religion also swirl. And the question on everyone's mind is who will win Missouri, which is shaping up as a major battleground state. Sound familiar? Of course: it's the '08 presidential campaign! 1908, that is.

In 1908, Republican President Theodore Roosevelt (who assumed office after William McKinley's assassination in September 1901) was a strong supporter of his friend and ally, William Howard Taft. This was Taft's first run for elected office, but he previously led the US Territorial government in the Philippines, and served as Roosevelt's Secretary of War. Roosevelt had been elected by a landslide in 1904, and was immensely popular. His reputation as a "trust-buster" and opponent of political corruption gave him appeal across party lines. His support for Taft was a major asset in the 1908 campaign, but their friendship would come undone a few years later as they battled each other for their party's nomination.

Meanwhile, the Democrats (meeting in Denver) nominated William Jennings Bryan. This was Bryan's third race for the White House. Bryan's first presidential campaign was in 1896 when he became the youngest presidential nominee in US history at the age of 36. Bryan ran on a message of economic populism and opposition to the gold standard. He was a talented and charismatic speaker and his famous "Cross of Gold" speech mesmerized his audiences. His message was popular with rural voters in the South and West, but rankled pro-business Democrats in the Northeast. Bryan lost the 1896 election to McKinley by 4% of the popular vote.

By 1908, many Democrats were ready to give Bryan another chance. Others were not. With a popular Republican incumbent and defections from members of their own party, Democrats faced a tough election. The best opportunities for the Democrats were potential gains among African-American voters, and lingering questions about the religious beliefs of the Republican candidate.

Since the end of the Civil War, African-American voters had consistently supported the GOP, the party of Lincoln. The segregated South, where blacks were denied their right to vote, was the most reliable base of Democratic support.



However, in 1908 many African-Americans were outraged at President Roosevelt because of an incident in Brownsville, Texas two years earlier. White residents of the town blamed black soldiers at a nearby fort for a shooting that killed a white bartender. Although there was little evidence that any of the soldiers had been involved, Roosevelt dishonorably discharged all 167 black infantrymen stationed at the fort. As Roosevelt's Secretary of War, many held Taft responsible for this injustice. As a result, the 1908 election is the first time that large numbers of black voters began to shift their support away from the Republican presidential candidate. This gradual realignment would continue for several decades and ultimately pave the way 100 years later for Democrats to nominate the first African-American candidate for President. At the time, however, Bryan failed to reach out to potential black supporters, possibly for fear of alienating his party's white southern base.

Questions about the religious views of one of the candidates also played a role in the campaign. Taft was a member of the Unitarian Church, which does not adhere to some traditional Christian doctrines. Taft declined to discuss his religious views publicly, but there was much speculation about them. There were rumors that Taft's wife and brother were Roman Catholics (a major concern more than 50 years before JFK's election), and one letter writer informed President Roosevelt that "it is constantly urged as a reason for not voting for Taft that he is an infidel." After the campaign, Roosevelt responded publicly to this letter, saying that it was like many others

he had received. He denounced it as "an outrage" and "bigotry" to "question... a man's religious convictions, with the purpose of influencing a political election."

While Roosevelt and Taft considered a candidate's religious views strictly private, Bryan's public image was largely defined by his religious convictions. His campaign speeches were infused with religious imagery, and his newspaper interviews include quotations from Christ or the Disciples.

Missouri emerged as one of the closest battleground states in the election. At the time, Missouri had more electoral votes than California, Florida, Massachusetts, or Michigan, and was tied with Texas for the 5th largest number of electoral votes. In prior elections, Missouri had been reliably Democratic. The state supported Bryan in his 1896 and 1900 losses, but in 1904 swung over to the Republican column in Roosevelt's landslide election. Most observers thought Missouri would go back to its support for Bryan in 1908. But Republicans heavily contested the state, and Taft stepped up his campaign appearances during the final weeks before the election. In the end, Taft eked out a 441 vote victory in Missouri. This election established Missouri's reputation as a swing state. The state has continued to vote for the winner of each subsequent presidential election, except 1956, when Illinois neighbor Adlai Stevenson carried Missouri over Dwight Eisenhower.

While Missouri has remained a swing state for nearly 100 years, the coalition that each party needs to win the state has changed. In 1908, Taft carried the City of St. Louis by a margin of 10% or nearly 14,000 votes. This allowed him to overcome Bryan's lead in the rural areas. In contrast, 100 years later, Democrats rely on huge margins of victory in the urban areas, in the hopes of offsetting their losses in rural parts of the state. The Skinker-DeBaliviere neighborhood, newly developing on the western edge of the City of St. Louis, voted slightly more Republican than the rest of the City and the country as a whole. At the time, the neighborhood was contained within two precincts of the 28th Ward. These precincts also stretched north of Delmar to Cabanne and Maple Streets. In the 1908 election, these two precincts produced 453 votes for Taft, 351 votes for Bryan, giving Taft a victory of about 12%. Nationally, Taft carried the popular vote by 9% and won the Electoral College by a vote of 321 to 162.

Both Taft and Bryan remained in the national spotlight for the rest of their lives. Taft beat back a challenge from Roosevelt for the Republican nomination in 1912, but Roosevelt left the party to run on the Progressive or "Bull Moose" ticket. With the Republicans divided, Democrat Woodrow Wilson won easily. Taft finished third, carrying only 2 states and 23% of the popular vote. Wilson appointed Bryan as his first Secretary of State. Bryan's later career would be dedicated to supporting Prohibition and women's suffrage, and in the final days of his life, he would argue against Darwinism in the famous Scopes Trial in Tennessee. When Republicans reclaimed the White House in 1920, Warren Harding appointed Taft as Chief Justice of the US Supreme Court, where he served until his death in 1930.

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IN YOUR EAR

by Hawkeye Z. Hoerr

Do you want to know when you are going to die? That question was posed last month and yours truly has not been a slug. While you've been sleeping late on vacation on the beach, Hawkeye has been an active reporter. He has, I mean I have, asked this question of others. So before we go any further, dear reader, please take a moment and reflect, mirror or not: Do you want to know? I'll return to that question in a bit. (Or is it a byte?)

Long-standing readers of this column understand that it is written with one goal in mind: To solve life's long-standing problems. No hubris here! I mean, occasionally it may entertain, and often it will serve as a latter-day Farmer's Almanac and offer microwave tips or strategies for how to remove fleas from your family dog. But by and large, this monthly dude is an epistemological piece.

I've been writing this column for over 30 years now. That's not an exaggeration. It began in the pre-Reagan days when what's-his-name was president and now, a score and a half of years later, it continues when what's-his-name is president. Many things have changed but much remains the same. Gee, that sounds semi-presidential, at least like something we'd hear from what's-his-name.

So here I am, a bit older and a lot baldier, looking at the last third of my life. I'm at the age where friends come and go, some permanently. I scan the obits daily and guess what: Some of the people listed there are younger than me. But I'm not getting any younger. Artificial this and replaced that aside, the clock continues to tick and it ticks more loudly. (Or is that just my hearing aid being turned up?)

Anyway, as noted, I'm working on the penultimate epistemological question: If you could know when your personal clock was striking midnight, would you want to have this knowledge? Inquiring minds want to know, and so does mine. Thus I zapped an email to friends and asked them what they thought. The answers were interesting and insightful and sometimes poignant. Here's what they had to say.

DW: Interesting that you ask because we went on a car trip this weekend - 14 hours in the car - and I put this very question to the car. My son answered instantly that if he couldn't affect the future in any way, he didn't want to see it or know about it and my husband concurred. I said that I was very interested to see the future but I don't want to know when I die. I would be filled with too much dread and would certainly invest too much of my time and energy in

trying to change it. I also said that there was little I would change about my life if I were going to die in a year (though I would stop renovating the house and I would increase my life insurance) so I don't feel like I need to do much to prepare to die.

EM: I read the email yesterday and my immediate response was, no way would I want to know in advance. It would be like sort of like living with an end goal ahead. Everything I did would reflect my knowledge of WHEN I was headed out. Today I thought about it again. And still, I like the idea of living every day for itself. Goodness knows, I certainly don't do this as often as I should, but when I do, I love it. The whole part of living seems to be the LIVING, not the focus on the dying. I'm sure many people could know when their ending time is and plan their lives to be productive and wonderful. But I prefer ignorant bliss (or whatever).

CO: I would not want to know when I was going to die if it was possible to know in advance. The only reason for knowing would be to make sure that you say all that you want to say and take care of all you want to take care of and do all you want to do prior to the last moment. My intention is live in that manner, so that when I am surprised by my death, I will be serene in the knowledge that I have told everyone what I want them to know, that I have taken care of everything I want to take care of, and that I have done all that I wanted to do.

RN: Good question. Despite the benefit of justifying my doing things I've always wanted to do before dying (the whole bucket list idea), I think I'd ditch the gypsy fortune teller. I would not want to know when I'm going to die, just as I would not want to know my fortune or anything else about my life I would apparently have no control over. It would take all the fun and all of the discovery out of life. Also, I prefer to live my life as simply and unself-consciously as possible, and knowing when exactly I was going to croak would not only make me self-conscious but probably forced, desperate, and certainly unnatural.

EB: While the costs and benefits seem obvious - worry and hopelessness versus the ability to plan, take care of loved ones to the extent possible, prioritize and do the things you most want to do given the time you know you have left - the answer totally eludes me.

JB: Knowledge of death in general is part of the human condition. Without it we would not have the same sense of purpose, including strong obligations to those who live on in the future even after our own death. In fact, knowledge of

death in general and the lack of knowledge of death in particular is important to human freedom. The openness of the future is something that we share with others and is part of what makes justice possible. At some point, however, in the aging process our individual futures no longer seem open, and that is good for us to know and experience in the death of others. Knowledge then is an important good but not given far in advance as a form of fate. So, I would not want to know anything more about my death in particular, and if someone or something forced such knowledge upon me it would be an unspeakable cruelty, a denial of my basic humanity and freedom.

JC: I know that I wouldn't want to know. The only benefit I see would be the whole "living each day like it is your last" idea. However, I see so many downsides: worry, living your life completely differently and many more. I would definitely pass on this knowledge. I asked my wife and she didn't wait one second, and said no as well.

SC: Absolutely not. I fret over enough stuff. I don't need the added stress of figuring out who's going to take care of all my responsibilities when I'm gone and planning my own funeral too.

BH: I would not want to know. Although it sounds hokey and trite, we should all live as if our lives could end at any time, since as we know, people can die way too young and before their time. Knowing when it might actually end might make us live for our death as opposed to enjoying life. There was a great story recently on the radio about a guy in his 20's who had been told that he had less than a year to live and it then turned that he was misdiagnosed. It was funny, touching, and poignant.

LD: Interesting question which I have thought about in the past. My short answer is no and my thought process goes something like this. If I knew when, I would hopefully live my life more fully and more thoughtfully. However, being human and fallible, I'd most likely obsess about my own death, trying to figure out a way to avoid the inevitable event. Not knowing allows me to still maintain the facade of immortality. Intellectually, I know I'll die and I know this could occur at any time. Emotionally, it still seems like something lifetimes away.

SW: Yes, of course! I was taught to face death courageously and affirmatively! After all, like Jake

Blues, we are all on a mission from God!

MD: Maybe six month's notice. But other than that, I don't want to know.

TB: I would absolutely want to know in advance when I was going to die, so I would avoid the time and location. I can also assure you that my room service bill at the Bellagio and my American Express Platinum Card statement would have some very interesting entries on them!

JJ: Definitely. That's a normal fear that like David Halberstam and others we know that it would come quickly without any opportunity to prepare. Death is a natural part of life. I'd like to be able to merge myself into the rhythm of my own death.

So dear reader, how are you feeling about this now? Do you want to know? Tick-tock, tick-tock, tick-tock. Say, is that my imagination, or is it sounding a bit louder?



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