

The TIMES of... SKINKER DEBALIVIERE

Vol. 41, No. 1

April - May 2011

<http://SDTimes.org/index.html>

The oldest neighborhood newspaper in St. Louis

FREE

Independent and all volunteer-run since 1970

TWO GREAT EVENTS, One Date - May 14, 2011 -

Free Electronics & Appliance Recycling

The Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council is partnering with WITS to sponsor a neighborhood Electronics Recycling Fair on Saturday, May 14, 2011 from 10am-4pm, at the Four Corners, Greg Freeman Park. WITS, a non-profit organization, provides training and employment for at-risk individuals in the Saint Louis area. Over 12,000 low-income people have volunteered to earn a computer, TV or other working electronics. More than 75% of the electronics they receive are repurposed and put back to use - the remaining 25% are de-manufactured and the components recycled using zero landfill practices.

While conducting your spring cleaning, be on the look out for recyclable items like old computers, etc... Unacceptable items for recycling include: tires, wood furniture, other wood products, paint and paint cans and household and industrial chemicals.

Suggested drop-off donations (\$5 each) for: computer monitors, laptops and televisions, (\$5 required fee for large appliances and Freon-containing devices).

Everything else may be dropped-off free of charge. All donations of reusable items are tax-deductible. Volunteers needed on event day to help receive electronics. For more information please visit WITS website (<http://www.witsinc.org/>) or call the SDCC Office at 314-862-5122.

SKINKER-DEBALIVIERE PLANTING DAY- MAY 14, 2011. The 15th Annual Skinker-DeBaliviere Planting Day will also be held Saturday, May 14, 2011 from 10am-12pm, at the Four Corners, Greg Freeman Park. We worked so hard to clean up our neighborhood on BLITZ day and now it is time to make it "oooooooooh" and "ahhhhhhh!" Operation Brightside flowers will be available for planting in our parks and other public places, and Block Captains can pick up their ordered flowers.

This is also a chance to drop-off plants that are crowding your garden, or pick-up free plants that your neighbors had to thin out. Wood chips will be available for public planting areas and grass seed packets will be available for small bare spots in lawns.

After we have made our favorite place to live a little greener, join us for free hot dogs and sodas from 12pm-1pm... where you can sign-up to help keep the flowers at Four Corners watered throughout the summer.

A New Web Home for The Times

by Marj Weir

In addition to our paper presence, *The Times of Skinker DeBaliviere* has a new website. Still under development, its address: <http://SDTimes.org/index.html>.

During April we will be transferring our archive of past issues from the city's Skinker DeBaliviere site to this one. This became necessary because the city changed its policy about providing so much web storage.

Allowing us to provide information to our audience during those times that don't coincide with a publication, we can provide more photos than we can run in an eight-page paper. Please email us for suggestions about features we could offer on the site at any of the following:

Marj Weir at Weir.Marj@SDTimes.org, Jo Ann Vatcha at jvatcha@SDTimes.org, or Lana Stein at maxlana@SDTimes.org

Preliminary Thoughts About the Census

by Lana Stein

I have long been fascinated by census data and used to use it in my research. Interestingly, St. Louisans, and those in other cities, appear obsessed with one number-total population. If population fell since the last census, that signifies failure. But, other numbers convey other messages. Indeed, St. Louis lost 28,895 people between 2000 and 2010. But, this is relatively small compared to past decades. The city's white population remains constant at 44%. The black population fell from 52% to 49%. Just over 2% are of two or more races (not specified in the initial data released). The voting age population remains more white than the population as a whole (49%). Why has the city continued to lose population despite the growing downtown and significant programs to rehab or build housing in many parts of the city?

There are several answers: Family size is smaller generally. There are more empty nesters and single elderly living in homes that once contained larger families. Duplexes have become single family and multifamilies have become duplexes. There is also the question of whether those who failed to fill out census forms were accurately captured. Then, the number of vacant units is high, particularly in certain areas. And, there has been continued movement away from areas in north St. Louis.

The question of vacancies leads into an examination of the data regarding Skinker DeBaliviere. The census maintains there are 242 vacancies in our neighborhood - the same as in 2000. Certainly the Great Recession of 2008 has affected us with foreclosures and abandonment of dwellings but are there really that many vacancies? Some doubt it. From 2000 to 2008 our neighborhood seemed to be booming. Housing prices escalated and many found our housing stock desirable. Yet, the



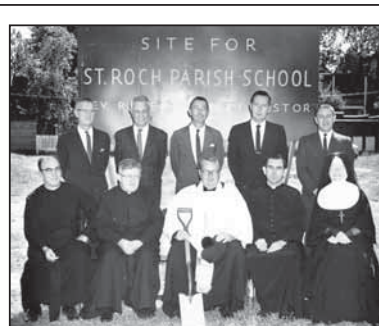
Many two- and four-family buildings in Skinker-DeBaliviere have been converted and rehabilitated as single-family homes and townhouses, reducing not only the number of units, but also reducing the overall number of residents who live in each unit. "Loss" can also mean "downsizing" -- actually a positive for neighborhood stability. This beautiful rehab on Washington is a great example.

2010 census shows a loss of 424 people from the neighborhood, 9.42%.

According to the census, we have 4077 residents. Fifty percent of the residents are white, up 7%. The black population has fallen to 35%. Those of two or more races are 3% of our population and Asians now are 9% of our residents.

There are no data yet on median income or poverty rate. What we do have shows a neighborhood that continues to be diverse, all the pattern of that diversity has changed. We know we have a considerable amount of students and more families with small children. Most important, Skinker-DeBaliviere remains a success story. Contrary to social science theory

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Census



the Skinker-DeBaliviere Community council). The committee has also found a photograph of an Easter Service held in that location. The committee is especially requesting St. Roch kindergarten and/or 8th grade class pictures prior to 1970. Email Arline Webb at almbw2002@yahoo.com or Lawrence Murray at sfjude1@att.net.

A centennial history of St. Roch Parish is being written by parishioner Larry Murray and his committee. A committee is also working on gathering photos from the past to be included in this new book. The goal is to have the book printed in time for the official celebration on Sunday, September 25, 2011. This photo was apparently taken at the groundbreaking for the gym addition to the school. The familiar face of Father Peet is front and center.

In 1911, just 3 years after the first homes were located in the neighborhood, a Catholic parish was formed. The church originally held services at 6008 Kingsbury (current home of the Skinker-DeBaliviere Community Council).

GO! St. Louis marathon races through Skinker-DeBaliviere

The Skinker-DeBaliviere neighborhood was one of five neighborhoods chosen by GO! St. Louis Marathon to cheer along the route on race day- Sunday, April 10, 2011. Each of the five neighborhoods chosen hosts a cheering station and "competes" for a \$1,000 cash prize to go towards neighborhood improvements. The winner is selected by the runners, who will vote after the event for the BEST cheering station (that's us). Neighborhood resident Jennifer Olmstead organized our cheering station. For more information on the GO! St. Louis Marathon visit www.gostlouis.org.

Editor's Notebook

by Lana Stein

About this Newspaper

The *Times of Skinker DeBaliviere* was formed by residents concerned with and passionate about the neighborhood in 1970. It was then and always has been independent of the Skinker-DeBaliviere Community Council. The *Times* reports on the Council and covers its events but it is a separate entity. The *Times* raises its own funds and does not receive Council financial support.

The *Times* welcomes contributors from the neighborhood. It tries to report the news accurately and fairly. It also has columnists who can answer for their own writings. For example, *In Your Ear* has appeared for over 30 years and features a frequently satiric look at local, state or national goings-on. The column is the opinion of the writer, Tom Hoerr, whose piece in the February, 2011, issue, provoked a couple of interesting protests, as well as several readers who found it especially amusing. One email suggested a political slant that might compromise our paper's independence as a non-profit entity. But, upon reflection, we feel this is not applicable to Commentary, much as the pages of the *Washington Post* or the *Post-Dispatch* contain such columnists.

We welcome others who might wish to write an opinion piece and we welcome divergent opinions. The *Times* has tried through the years to highlight and celebrate the diversity of our neighborhood. That goes for political diversity, too. If you see something in the *Times* that you feel is inaccurate or over the top, please send us a Letter to the Editors. The *Times* is meant to be a source of information, of amusement, and a way of staying connected to neighbors. It is only as strong as its readers and those who volunteer to write for it.

Your current co-editors, Lana Stein and Jo Ann Vatcha welcome feedback about whether a regular "Letters to the Editor" column would be of interest. To reach us, email maxlana@sbcglobal.net and jvatcha@gmail.com.

Census

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(Massey and Denton's American Apartheid), we have remained an integrated neighborhood since 1963. Unlike many neighborhoods to the north, whites did not flee en masse. Thanks to our housing programs and the dedicated work of our council and major institutions, we have provided a model. A brief survey of other neighborhoods in

the corridor shows an increase in the percentage of whites in Shaw and the Central West End. The loss in Tower Grove East is only 1%. This points to the desirability of historic neighborhoods such as ours which remain diverse. Perhaps the critical factor now is to work to ensure that diversity so that we don't lose it the other direction.

The TIMES of... SKINKER DEBALIVIERE

Co-Editors: Lana Stein and JoAnn Vatcha
Business Manager: Lois Schoemehl
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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
Loretta Lloyd	Juliet Schoemehl	JoAnn Vatcha	Katie Kurtz
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Layout: Kate Klimt
 Printing: Arcade Printing

Advertising Rates:
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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 next issue: May 15, 2011. 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.

Calendar

Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council Meeting- Monday, April 11, 7 PM

Security Committee Meeting- Wednesday, April 13, 5:30 PM

SD Housing Corporation Board Meeting- Wednesday, April 20, 6 PM

Residential Committee Meeting- Monday, April 25, 6:30 PM

Blue Shotgun Start, a fundraising event for the 7th District Community Partnership, will take place on April 26 at the Highlands Forest Park. \$75 fee includes golf, lunch, beverages, and awards ceremony and auction. Contact Police officer Kathy Suarez at kmsuarez@slmpd.org.

SD Housing Corporation Board Meeting- Wednesday, May 4, 6 PM

Historic Review Committee Meeting- Wednesday, May 4, 7 PM

Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council Meeting- Monday, May 9, 7 PM

Security Committee Meeting- Wednesday, May 11, 5:30 PM

Electronics Recycling Fair & Planting Day- Saturday, May 14, Time 10 AM

Housing Corporation Board Meeting- Wednesday, May 18, 6 PM

Residential Committee Meeting- Monday, May 23, 6:30 PM

Gitana Productions will present FAULTLINES, an original play about domestic violence within the South Asian immigrant community. May 20-June 5, 2011 on Fridays and Saturdays at 8:00 PM and Sunday matinees at 2:30 PM. Cardinal Regali Center, 20 Archbishop May, St. Louis 63119. Visit www.gitana-inc.org or call 314-721-6556.

If you would like to become more involved, have e-mails sent to you regarding neighborhood events and receive information about what is going on, stop in at the council office, 6008 Kingsbury, where all the meetings listed take place. You can reach Jackie Nolan, Asst. to David Whiteman, Executive Director, at jackie.nolan@skinker-debaliviere.com, or call 862-5122.

Mark Gorman: Another Second Generation Resident Active in Our Neighborhood

By Lana Stein

Mark Gorman became a resident of Skinker DeBaliviere when he was eight years old. He has chosen to spend most of his life in our midst. He sees the neighborhood as an extended family. He has degrees from UMSL and the Saint Louis University School of Law but has invested much of his energy in property management and development. He had worked for McCormack Baron Salazar for eight years before becoming self-employed.



Gorman's goal is to keep the neighborhood affordable and diverse. He owns the multifamilies clustered around Pershing and Laurel where he resides. He also owns two six families on Nina Pl. and manages the property of the DeBaliviere Place West Condominium Association on Nina. He also owns a building at 6036 Washington. His current project is the rehabilitation of a single family dwelling on Pershing.

To Gorman Skinker DeBaliviere is an ideal place to live. It is the home place. He's very happy that he has been able to provide some of the youth jobs working on the units he owns or manages. He likes to speak of the area as a village. Finally, he is interested in increasing the level of organization in Washington Heights.

Letters to the Editor

I was happy to see your editorial underscoring the need for a grocery store/farmer's market in the neighborhood. For years, since Pete Fossil stopped driving his truck of vegetables around the blocks, I have longed for such a facility. Then I discovered the proposal by our neighbor, Jon Parker, for the Delmar Food & Farmers Market to be built in the vacant Dobbs Tire property on Delmar, currently owned by Washington University. Such a brilliant idea, I thought, and as I passed the proposal to others, they seemed to agree, indeed were enthusiastic. Now that dream seems less likely to develop. I, for one, am so sad and want to thank Jon and his associates for pursuing it during the past 18 months. It could have brought a unique and creative answer to a real neighborhood need.

- Pat Kohn

News of Neighbors

By Rachel Boxdorfer



Let's start with some wonderful baby news, shall we? **Dan & Lou (Laurence) Yawitz** of the 6100 block of Kingsbury welcomed two healthy baby boys to their family on Friday, March 18th. Max Alexander & Elliot Hugh Yawitz were born after a long day of labor and both the boys and mom are doing really well. Lou had been on bed rest since Thanksgiving and the boys were 36 ½ weeks and about 5 lbs each at birth. Welcome to the neighborhood Max and Elliot! Congratulations to Dan and Lou!

The Kirkwood School District recently announced their Teacher of the Year Awards. A big round of applause for **Mark Banaszak** of the 6100 block of McPherson on being named the Teacher of the Year for 2011-2012 at Nipher Middle School. Mark teaches German to 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students and has been at the school for approximately 18 years. The teacher of the year is nominated by fellow teachers and chosen by the previous Teacher of the Year.

Congratulations to Parkview resident **Jan Scott**, who received one of just four "Women Trailblazers" Awards at UMSL's celebration of Women's History Month on March 23. Other winners were Melissa Alper, Marisa Smith, and Natissia Small. Rabbi Susan Talve was the featured speaker.

These days brings recognition of our neighbors' accomplishments in many different media. Westminster resident **Mike Scheller**, a physical therapist with Paraquad and Washington University, demonstrated moves to ease lower back pain on video, viewable at STLhealthandfitness.com, part of the *Post Dispatch* online news.

Troop 98 Boy Scout Troop at St. Roch Church has had a long successful history and has had countless boys go through the program. Many of those scouts continue on in leadership roles as adults. One of those scouts, **Bert Bender**, who grew up on the 6100 block of Kingsbury, just received the Silver Beaver Award in Atlanta. The award is the council-level distinguished service award of the Boy Scouts of America. Recipients are recognized for the impact they make in the lives of youth through service given to the council. Bert is the second son (and Eagle Scout) of **Rick and Joan Bender** (and also my brother!). Rick received the same award years ago through the St. Louis Area Boy Scout Council. Congratulations from your old neighborhood, Bert!

St. Roch 8th grader, **Sarah Cross**, of the 6000 block of McPherson has been composing her own music for some time now. Recently, Sarah performed one of her original pieces for the school. Later, Regina Morris, the music teacher, helped Sarah record the composition "Good Combinations" and entered it into the Creating Original Music Project at the University of Missouri at Columbia. This is an annual statewide competition that recognizes Missouri students who compose original musical works in a variety of music styles. Sarah received an honorable Mention in the Popular Music Category. Congratulations Sarah! We look forward to hearing more of your original music!

It seems we have many well traveled neighbors in Skinker DeBaliviere. The latest to share tales of her trip is **Arline Webb** of the 6100 block of Pershing. Arline recently went to Cartagena, Columbia for a mini-vacation. She toured the walled city which was only a block from the Caribbean, loving all the vibrant colors of the houses, the flowers, the beautiful clothes, and especially the warm, friendly people. Arlene says that this is where the film *Love in the Time of Cholera* takes place.

Long time parishoners and alumni from St. Roch will be happy to hear that **Lucy Peace** is enjoying her time at the Charless House. Reports are that she is walking again after the surgery to fix broken bones in her foot and that she is handling her cancer treatments well, with no side effects at all. Our thoughts and prayers are certainly with Mrs. Peace.

Continuing education takes place in all sorts of careers. **Jen Barton** of the 6100 block of Westminster recently passed her Senior Professional in Human Resources certification. Great job, Jen!

Amy and Amrit Gill of Parkview, and longtime St. Louis developers, recently celebrated the opening of the Blackhawk Hotel in Davenport, Iowa on January 29th. The Gills have saved many St. Louis landmark buildings, restoring them to their former glory. The Blackhawk Hotel had declined from its beautiful beginning to a problem property for the city of Davenport. It is now restored and a beacon in that city. Other neighbors who were in Davenport for the grand affair were **Andy Cross, David Hart and Jim Shaughnessy**.

I've often said how I hate to report on the deaths of our neighbors in this column. However, it is probably more important to think of it as honoring a life well lived. As is the case with our neighbor, **Betty Renard** of Parkview. Betty passed away on February 17th, 2011 and will certainly be missed. She was a longtime neighbor and active member of St. Roch Church. She and her husband, the late Robert Renard, raised eight children and she was dearly loved by them and by her many grandchildren too.

As the new year seems to be moving along rather fast already, let me share with you a couple of reminders. First of all, if you have not already, don't forget to send in your contribution to the Friends of Skinker DeBaliviere campaign. We are so fortunate to live in the wonderful neighborhood we do and this campaign helps to support our many programs and special events.

Along those lines, please save the date for a couple of important events. The third annual Dine Out for SDCC will take place on Tuesday, June 21st. More information to follow on participating restaurants! And the third annual Skinker DeBaliviere Homecoming will take place on Saturday, October 8th at Crossroads College Prep. As you read this, the Homecoming Committee is hard at work pondering the theme for this fun/fundraising event!

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

FRIENDS OF SKINKER-DEBALIVIERE CAMPAIGN

The Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council is evolving and getting stronger. The board is energized and has a fresh direction; and our new executive director, David Whiteman, is in place.

The mission of Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council is to serve and promote the community and advocate on behalf of the residents to enhance their quality of life. The vision of the Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council is to be the connector, coordinator and facilitator of all aspects necessary to maintain and enhance the diverse, desirable and thriving community of Skinker DeBaliviere.

With this new drive and powerful voice, the council is working to maintain what is great about our neighborhood and improve communication, education, and connections between neighbors and neighborhood resources.

We ask you to join the Friends of Skinker DeBaliviere 2011 Campaign so that the Community Council can continue to be a vital neighborhood resource. Friend levels are outlined below:

- \$100+ Porch Friends (receive an attractive pair of SDCC mugs designed by Andy Cross)
- \$50+ Deck Friends
- \$30+ Step Friends
- \$20+ Sidewalk Friends

Please make checks payable to the Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council and mail to: SDCC Friends Campaign 2011, 6008 Kingsbury Avenue, Saint Louis, MO 63112



Augie, Carl and Nolan Ludholz and Raschid Davidson built this incredible igloo on the 5700 block of DeGiverville. Raschid was shoveling the walk for his grandmother and the igloo more or less began to take shape. The Ludholz boys became involved, and an igloo grew before our eyes. They spent days working on it and repaired it after an overnight collapse of part of it. I am not the only person who took their picture, as they were quite famous during this winter! Sent by Glorianna L'Ecuycy.

From State Senator Joe Keaveny

I would like to thank my constituents who have written to me with regards to the proposed changes to Proposition B, relating to the "Puppy Mill Cruelty Prevention Act." There have already been multiple bills filed to modify or repeal the proposition, none of which do I consider supporting.

I continue to work in conjunction with the Humane Society of Missouri and the Missouri Alliance for Animals to guide me on this important issue. My constituents overwhelmingly supported Proposition B, with a "yes" vote of 78.4 percent in the City of St. Louis, so I plan to represent my district as they voted and repeat their collective voice. Please feel free to contact my office if I can be of further assistance.



State Senator Joe Keaveny with his dog Addie. For more information about current legislation, go to <http://www.senate.mo.gov/media/11info/Keaveny/columns/KeavenyConnectionMarch2011.html>



The newest star on the St. Louis Walk of Fame belongs to Nelly, a noted St. Louis rap artist. Joe Edwards celebrated this special honor with a special presentation to the musician.



Photos by Hope Edwards

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Quality Work At A Fair Price--22 years of serving this community

Andy Cross purchases Kingsbury for Art's Sake

by Jo Ann Vatcha and Andy Cross

When Andy and Linda Cross purchased the building at 5947 Kingsbury, on the northeast of the "Four Corners," in September, 2010, they knew they were carrying on an historic tradition. SD artist and Kingsbury resident Bill Kohn had owned the building since 1974 and used the entire first floor as a studio. Other artists rented spaces in the basement. As an art major at WU, Andy based his entire class schedule around Bill's classes, because Bill was his favorite artist and teacher. When Bill passed away after a battle with cancer, Pat Kohn suggested to Linda that Andy should rent a studio space on the first floor. Pat later encouraged Andy to buy it, with the hopes that artistic pursuits would continue to take place there. In Sept, 2010, Andy and Linda purchased the building and contractors updated the 2nd floor east apartment and completely renovated the 2nd floor west unit. Those units are now available for rent, each with a fine view of the Greg Freeman Park at Four Corners.

In the studio, Andy makes the hand-painted signs that you see in SD announcing neighborhood events, and he rents one of the two smaller 1st floor spaces. He plans to bring the basement areas up to code to make studio space available there again soon. A white-walled open area on the 1st floor has served as a gallery for four of Andy's annual art shows and has also hosted a few informal small gatherings. The Crosses hope to have neighbors and other artists display their work in the gallery area. The West End Arts Council has plans to teach art classes there, including classes for cub scouts. In fact, Andy and Bill Christman are organizing their first art-corners showing starting on May 7. Look for more information soon or just stop by!

The history of what we now call the Four Corners is rich and varied, and the building at 5947 Kingsbury has been home to a number of businesses and activities. Prior to Kohn's studio locating there, the building at 5949 Kingsbury was home to another neighborhood resident's business, Bill Schiller's "Colonial Rug Co." In fact, Bill's name, inscribed on the rear wall by a former employee, remains legible even today. In a recent conversation, Bill Schiller recalled renting the building from Joe Wotka Properties from the late 50s after starting his business on Ivanhoe Ave. Colonial Rug was located for over twenty years at the Kingsbury address, across from a grocery that became a library. But that's another story. The Schiller family lived in Parkview until recently, and Bill lives in a Skinker condo now. His daughter Kiki Chavez resides in the neighborhood, too. Bill and his son Steve, who lived on Westminster for several years and was later married to Laurie Porterfield, who was Executive Director of the SDCC in the 80s, moved the business to Delmar, where the Pin-Up Bowl is now located. They later moved it to Overland and closed the business in 2010 after 54 years in business.

The SDCC's own office at 6008 Kingsbury, on the southwest corner, was also the very first location of the St. Roch's Parish, 100 years ago in Skinker-DeBaliviere.



2010 Halloween at St. Roch Gym. Winners of all ages included: Sarah Cross as "Space Pineapple"; Eric Webster, "Head on a Platter"; Jadyn Bostik, "Pumpkin"; Ayleh Hopper, "Supergirl"; Patrick McGroarty, "Buzz Lightyear"; Alexis Patton, "Pirate"; Helaina Frye Pleasant, "Fairie"; Alejandra Sigla, "Snow White"; Jenna Tiede, "Cinderella"; and Taylor Gibson, "Witch". Thanks again this year to Art Santen, who has organized the celebration and provided names of winners for many years, and this year, special thanks to Kim Gladstone, who provided the photo of winners for 2010.

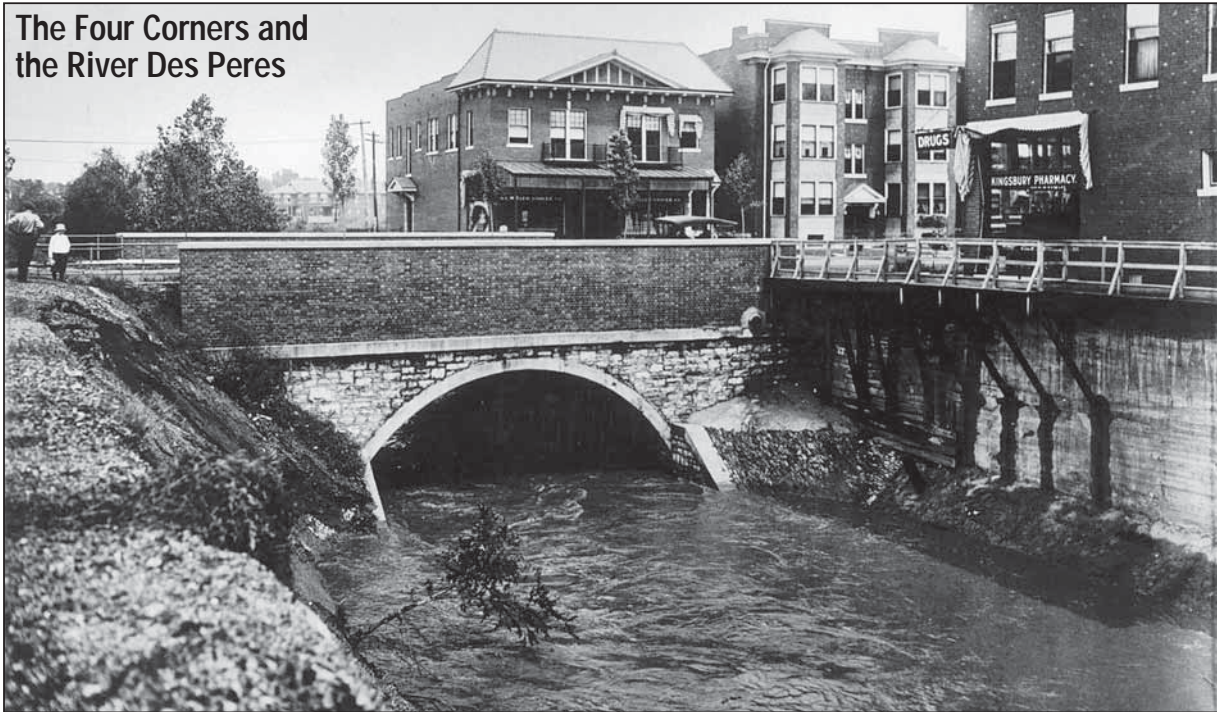
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The Four Corners and the River Des Peres



Editor's Note: Thanks to Pat Kohn, who surprised Andy Cross with this incredible photograph of the flowing River Des Peres at the Kingsbury Bridge, with the art studio at 5947 Kingsbury in the background. Fortunately, we have an account of the time this bridge existed and how it transitioned to the street we know today. The following description of the "gradual civilization" of the River Des Peres is from *THE NEIGHBORHOOD*, by Georgiana B. Stuart, Susan Tepas, and Kathy Harleman. Their 1973 work of research on the history of the neighborhood is also included in *CELEBRATING SKINKER-DEBALIVIERE*, published by the TIMES in 2008 and available at Missouri History Museum Shop or from THE TIMES.

It was on the banks of this river that Madame Papin's land grant was laid out. Almost 100 years before the grant and 65 years before the founding of St. Louis, Jesuits from the Quebec set up a mission among the Kaskaskia Indians who were living at the mouth of a little stream flowing into the west bank of the Mississippi just east of the present Alabama Avenue. This stream came to be known as River Des Peres or River of the Fathers.

The head of this stream is about 7 miles northwest of Forest Park. It meanders southward through Survey 378 draining a total watershed of 70,000 acres. The branch which enters the city near Delmar Ave. flows to the Skinker DeBaliviere area to Forest Park and then eastward to Kingshighway.

Mr. Claude H. Wetmore (grandfather of Mrs. Betty Renard, one of our present neighbors [recently deceased]) has described as problematical river in his book *OUT OF A FLEUR-DE-LIS: River Des Peres*.

The first of these occurrences was the gradual "civilization" of the River Des Peres. It was on the banks of this river that Madame Papin's land grant was laid out almost 100 years before the grant and 65 years before the founding of St. Louis, Jesuits from the Quebec setup and mission among the Kaskaskia Indians who were

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The head of this stream is about 7 miles northwest of Forest Park. It meanders southward through Survey 378 draining a total watershed of 70,000 acres. The branch which enters the city near Delmar Ave. flows to the Skinker DeBaliviere area to Forest Park and then eastward to Kingshighway.

It is a crooked, treacherous thing, this stream, and has borne that reputation since the time when St. Louisans pushed their homes and farms back from the Mississippi's banks; and it has no title to the name of river except during a few months in each year, for in the summer it is a sike, the bed so dry as to offer a comfortable walk, dotted with many rocks which make famous resting places when one is tired. But let a heavy rainfall and an angry, noisy mass tumbles through St. Louis County and the suburbs of St. Louis city, frothing in its effort to reach the "Father of Waters"; yet the desire satisfied, it refuses to mingle with the main channel and impresses its individuality by an extended yellow streak born of the clay which is carried along in its passage.

Drive out any road that takes you beyond the limits and you will meet the River Des Peres in a half-dozen unexpected places, wriggling and squirming like a snake, doubling on itself frequently and at other times seemingly tied in a bow-knot. Let the rain continue a night and a day, and many of the acres of land that had appeared between the vexatious turns are overflowed; a weak steady downpour in the original crooked River becomes a broad wave, moving over wheat-fields and rail-road tracks and reaching out hungrily for the little houses of truck gardeners.

It was the urbanization of the Skinker DeBaliviere area

which finally led to the concrete encasement of this "individualistic" stream under the street which bears the river's name. The first steps to control a river were taken as more and more construction went on in our neighborhood. In 1914 the City Planning Commission reported that extensive building and street paving in the River Des Peres watershed had caused a great increase in runoff of storm water during any rainfall "so that the channel of the stream is not sufficient to carry the volume of waterway and serious flooding occurs."

The storm water problem increased and to it was added a sewage problem. When the Rosedale Skinker section was developed, a small sewer was built along the bottom of the river which carried not only the sewage of this section, but that of the whole area drained from the river by the city limits to Union Avenue and Forest Park. "The growth of this part of the city has been so great, however, that the increased flow of sewage generally over-taxes the intercepting sewer so that even a small rainfall or even a street sprinkling causes a considerable amount of sewage to overflow into the river channel."

Although the river was a nuisance to most adults because of the flooding in stench, most of the time it was an exciting play area for the neighborhood children. Judge Daniel B. Tammany, who grew up and still resides [in 1973] in the 6100 block of McPherson Avenue, remembers the river as it was when he was a child. The river banks were "as wide as a street and about 40 or 50 feet deep." The water, however, was only "as wide as a table" except during the spring rains. There were bridges at Waterman, Kingsbury and Delmar for cars and a footbridge at Pershing. Where there were no bridges, wooden barricades ran along the banks. The barricades didn't keep the children from

climbing up and down the river banks. Judge Tammany and his friends used to dig caves in the side of the banks and roast potatoes there over open fires.

In March of 1930 work to encase section F. of River Des Peres began. This section includes the portion of the river which runs through our neighborhood. During this construction, part of Voges' drugstore, located on the northeast [southeast?] corner of Kingsbury and Des Peres Avenue, collapsed as did some corner houses. Other corner houses were purposely demolished to prevent their untimely collapse. The work was completed in 1931 and the river no longer served to divide the neighborhood. Our "individualistic" river has not been completely "civilized," however, and still brings problems of leaking and settling to basements on corner lots along Des Peres Avenue and even minor street flooding as recently as 1970.



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Being Secure In Skinker-DeBaliviere (2 of 5)

By Dan Hudspeth

Spring is in the air, the birds are a chirpin', flowers a bloomin'. Also our friendly neighborhood thug is restless .With that last line I want to remind each and every one of you to be cautious, pay attention to your surroundings, look that stranger in the eye and smile.

Spring is a wonderful time of year. Time to open up our homes and let the fresh air in. STOP, did you forget to check your windows and doors to make SURE they are closed and locked? There is usually one that was left open, and that makes it too easy for Mister Thug to come right on in. "But officer, I only left for a minute errand." Or how about that ladder you have leaning against your house to do a little fixer upper." Gee officer, I didn't think that Mister Thug would get in thru a 2nd story window. "Lock ALL windows, dead bolt and secure ALL doors. Did you forget the garage? Don't you want to use that \$300.00 lawn mower any more, or ride that \$500.00 bike again? I know Mister Thug would.

With spring weather, we are also starting to do more things around the home on the outside. We have tools lying around, ladders out, lawn mower sitting in an unlocked garage or back yard. Remember

what your momma always said, "Put it away when you're done with it." How would you feel if you had left a tool out and Mister Thug used it to get into your home? Come on people; let's not make it easy for the bad guys. A thief is a LAZY person that does not want to work for his money. Let's make it hard for them to get at our stuff. I worked hard for My stuff and I want to keep it.

Coming very soon to our neighborhood, hosted by the SDCC, is a Nationhood Watch training program filled with all kinds of useful information that WE can use to "help take a bite out of crime." IF THEY WANT IN, THEY WILL GET IN! All we can really do is slow them up as much as possible and hopefully that little old lady across the way saw something and called 911 in time.

Those of you that are interested, hopefully all, may get more info from Jackie Nolan at the SDCC office located at 6008 Kingsbury, you can also e-mail Jackie at jackie.nolan@skinker-debaliviere.com or call (314)862-5122.

Until next time, remember to look up and smile, look out and be aware, lock up and be safe.

Operation Brightside 2011



Above: Karin Hagaman. Left: Mary Powell and Logan Stus.



Below: Austin Richardson

Photos by King Schoenfeld and Jaina Stus.



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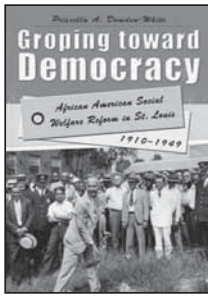
SDCC Bd. Meeting, Monday, 02/15/11
Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by President Katrina Stierholz, 7:05 PM.
Financials: Draft Statement of Activities for January 2011 vs. January 2010 was presented and discussed. Because SDCC is on accrual basis, Lisa Bushur CPA will move some January 2011 transactions to 2010 for the Final 2010 Yearend Financial Report. Cash Balances as of January 31, 2011:
Operations Account \$21,427
WEAC Account \$8,912
Brick Account \$2,275
Park Account \$4,852
Total \$37,466
Executive Director's Report: SDCC had more than 100 applications for the 30 hour/week Communications/Administrative Coordinator position. David Whiteman interviewed the top eight applicants; and Katrina Stierholz, Rachel Boxdorfer and David re-interviewed the top three. David plans to make an offer to Jackie Nolan, the top applicant, February 16.
David requested the Board to approve changes to SDCC's Human Resource Guide to provide the Communications/Administrative Coordinator prorated (3/4th) days off for holidays, vacation, sick and personal days as currently provided to full time employees. After considerable discussion, the consensus of the Board was to not revise the Human Resource Guide without a more comprehensive review of the entire document.
Paul Hales made the following motion: The SDCC Board authorizes the Executive Director to offer salary and benefits to the 30 hour/week Communications/Administrative Coordinator to include prorated (3/4) days off for holidays,

vacation, sick and personal days as provided to full time employees. Norb Hart seconded the motion, and it carried.
SDCC has an opportunity to receive \$1000 from GO! St. Louis if we apply for and are selected as one of five communities to "field a neighbor cheering section" for the April 10 St. Louis Marathon. The Community with the best cheering section (as voted on by race participants) will receive an additional \$1000. Application deadline is Feb. 25.
Nomination of Board Members: Michael Noble introduced Whaewon Choi and nominated her to serve as an at-large member of the board, Karen Godar seconded the motion, and the motion carried. Whaewon and her husband, Aaron Wiles, have been residents of the 5800 block of Pershing for the past five years.
Campaign for Local Control: Lewis Reed, President of the Board of Aldermen, made a presentation outlining how the State originally gained control of the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department during the Civil War - and provided arguments supporting local (City) control of the SLMPD.
World Community Center: Bill Ramsey and Susan Allen made a presentation about the history and current member organizations of the World Community Center. The Center has been home to more than 50 peace and justice focused organizations over the past 35 years. Their building at 438 N. Skinker is currently undergoing significant exterior renovation.
Community Engagement Initiative: Rachel Delcau and Kimberly Schroeder, two of the four Brown School students working with SDCC this spring, gave an overview of the initiative. The 10-week study will seek input from residents to help identify

ways that SDCC can more effectively communicate with and engage the entire Skinker DeBaliviere community.
Community Reports:
Skinker DeBaliviere Community Housing Corporation: Gary Boehnk confirmed that SDCHC has acquired 6188 Westminster with plans to renovate the property.
Committee Reports:
Fundraising Committee: The MLK Day Bowling for Skinker DeBaliviere raised more than \$1000. Friends letters were mailed and distributed the last weekend in January - approximately \$3000 has been received to date. Andy Cross presented the design for the Mugs that will be given to contributors of \$100 or more. Presidents Day Bowling for Skinker DeBaliviere is planned for February 21.
Aldermanic Reports: Lyda Krewson reported on new developments on Delmar, including the new Horseshoe Restaurant at 6100 Delmar, a hookah bar proposed for the lower level that address, and a Del Pietro's Restaurant proposed for the "Shapiro Building" - just east of the Regional Arts Council.
2010 census data is coming out - and will be a major factor effecting redistricting of the aldermanic wards.
City Earnings Tax will be on the Ballot on April 5. Alderman Krewson reiterated the importance of the 1% Earnings Tax in helping the City to meet its budget obligations.
Final design and construction of the St. Vincent's Greenway is proceeding north of Delmar through Ruth Porter Mall.
Final planning for the greenway south of Delmar is delayed pending approval of the Loop Trolley's environmental impact study.
New Business: None

Local Authors & Their New Books

In *Groping Toward Democracy: African American Social Welfare Reform in St. Louis, 1910-1949*, historian [and Westminster neighbor!] Priscilla A. Dowden-White presents an on-the-ground view of local institution building and community organizing campaigns initiated by African American social welfare reformers. Through extensive research, the author places African American social welfare reform efforts within the vanguard of interwar community and neighborhood organization, reaching beyond the "racial uplift" and "behavior" models of the studies preceding



hers. She explores one of the era's chief organizing principles, the "community as a whole" idea, and deliberates on its relationship to segregation and the St. Louis black community's methods of reform.

Groping Toward Democracy depicts the dilemmas organizers faced in this segregated time, explaining how they pursued the goal of full, uncontested black citizenship while still seeking to maximize the benefits available to African Americans in segregated institutions.

Coalition for Environment publishes Cookbook – IT'S ARRIVED!!

The cookbook you and your family and your friends have been waiting for:

Eating Lightly for our planet for our health for robust pleasure!

Eating Lightly is a collection of over 400 vegetarian and vegan recipes from friends of the Missouri Coalition for the Environment, ranging from the family of the Missouri Botanical Garden's Pat and Peter Raven to some of Missouri's most creative professional chefs to your next-door neighbor.

Longtime resident of the 6100 block of Kingsbury, author Peggy Hermes served as editor. Many of the contributors are residents – current and former – of the Skinker-DeBaliviere and Parkview neighborhoods. Not only have contributors shared favorite recipes but, often, the stories behind them. This is a cookbook with personality!

Eight Missouri artists, including our own Gene Hoefel and Hilary Hitchcock, have contributed work to make it a visual feast as well.

In addition to offering a wide range of vegetarian and vegan appetizers, soups, salads, breads, side dishes, entrees, and desserts, this collection notes which of its recipes are gluten-free.



Copies can be purchased for only \$20 apiece at the Missouri Coalition for the Environment office at 6267 Delmar, Suite 2E, in the U-City Loop (always good to call first, 314-727-0600) and by cash or check only with a visit to any of several St. Louis locations, including Left Bank Books and Plowsharing Crafts.

All proceeds from the sale of *Eating Lightly* will benefit the Missouri Coalition for the Environment, a member-supported and member-directed organization that has been strengthening environmental protections, holding government and corporations accountable, defending the environment in court, and mobilizing citizens to action for over forty years.

Contact Peggy Hermes, 314-726-5683 or hermes.margaret@gmail.

No Spitting on the Floor is Marvin Nodiff's second novel, again focusing on the world of community associations, with all its interesting connections. The condo attorney Joshua Flyer discovers a body on the floor of the State Capitol rotunda. Was she pushed or did she jump? So a heated governor's race, powerful lobbyists, and lots of juicy scandal



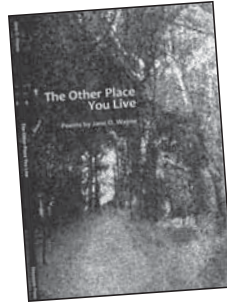
Photo by Marj Weir

are uncovered as he tries to recapture his reputation – and solve the possible crime. Marvin read from his book at Left Bank Books on March 16, and the book is available there. Celebrating this occasion were many neighbors and friends, including Shirley Bissen and Peter Lucawicz, shown to the left with Linda Nodiff.

New Book by Parkview Poet

Jane O. Wayne's fourth book of poetry, *The Other Place You Live* (Mayapple Press, \$14.95), continues her tradition of mining the commonplace for rare glimmers. Her keen observations of the ordinary draw the reader inward. Pushcart Prize winner Jennifer Atkinson writes, "Her elegantly controlled and balanced lines restrain deep emotion – grief, empathy, joy." Titles like "The Subtractions" and "The Uncertainties Call" and subjects like a nursing home visit or a neurosurgeon's verdict (Tumor, he says, noninvasive/though it spreads quickly/through the room you're in/takes over so there's nothing else/to talk about) confirm her poetry is not for cowards.

Winner of the Devins Award, the Marianne Moore Poetry Prize, and the Society of Midland Authors Poetry Award, the long-time Parkview resident has taught at the Washington University Summer Writer's Institute. Her poems have appeared in *Poetry*, *Iowa Review*, *The American Scholar*, and many other journals.



On May 2nd, Jane will join in a benefit reading for River Styx magazine (for information, BigRiver@riverstyx.org). *The Other Place You Live* is available for purchase from Left Bank Books and online at Amazon from Mayapple Press.

Contact Margaret Hermes, 314-726-5683, hermes.margaret@gmail.com.

From the St. Louis Genealogical Society Quarterly, Fall, 2010, by Marsha Clark

Celebrating Skinker-DeBaliviere: History and Comeback. By JoAnn Vatcha with Marj Weir. Published by the authors and The Times of Skinker-DeBaliviere, St. Louis, Missouri. 2009. 118 pp., photographs, DVD. Softcover. \$41.89 plus \$10.54 sales tax and shipping.

This easy-to-devour book would serve as attractive past-time reading for anyone with St. Louis heritage. It is also a great read for anyone interested in urban planning and design, sociology, public policy, and government, as much as the history of this grand St. Louis neighborhood.

Written in four parts, the book is filled with many photographs. Section One addresses the earliest history of the area north of Forest Park that became the Skinker-DeBaliviere neighborhood. This section is the result of the historical account compiled over the course of a year (1972-1973) by three women—Kathleen M. Harleman, Georgiana B. Stuart, and Susan K. Tepas—who wanted to preserve their neighborhood history. Vatcha and Weir's inclusion of the history of the land and the people who

settled it is a gift to genealogists as well as St. Louis historians.

Part One introduces many names familiar to students of St. Louis history: Cabanne, Gratiot, Waterman, Forsythe, Leffingwell, and Chouteau, among others. The area of celebration pertains mainly to the borders of DeBaliviere on the east, Delmar on the north, Westgate (one block west of Skinker) on the west, and Lindell on the south. Some history of street names is provided, as well as the history of ownership of these lands, which began as Kingsbury Farm, cut from property owned by Marie Louise (Chouteau) Papin as Survey 378, a 1796 land grant.

Part Two focuses on the redevelopment history of the area. An overview of political leadership, government agencies, and community efforts at the most grass-roots level demonstrates ways the residents were resolved to restore the Skinker-DeBaliviere area. The book also notes how a parish and strong leadership can keep people tied to their residential roots.

Part Three features articles from local newspaper, *The Times of Skinker-DeBaliviere*, an all-volunteer publication, covering activities and leadership of the 1970s.

Part Four is a compilation of oral histories of residents, past and present. Mayor Vincent Schoemehl (in office 1981-1993) is among them. This section is supported by a DVD produced by the Missouri History Museum that celebrates a diverse forty years of "a Great St. Louis Neighborhood."

There are no footnotes or a list of sources within the book, but they are provided on a community website <<http://centennial.citywestend.org>>, from which one may obtain a copy of the book through Blurb publish-on-demand services <blurb.com>.

Note from Editor: The book is also available at the Missouri History Museum in Forest Park. Thanks to the SL Genealogical Society Quarterly, published by the society and available at quarterly@stlgs.org, or P.O. Box 432010, SL 63143. The Editor of the publication is Venita Archer Lake, a longtime resident of the Skinker-DeBaliviere Neighborhood.



IN YOUR EAR

by Hawkeye Z. Hoerr

"Welcome to St. Louis," reads the sign as you enter the bridge from Illinois, and then, in smaller letters, it says, "Please drive safely over the Jerry F. Costello-William Lacy 'Bill' Clay Sr. Veterans Memorial Bridge." Huh? Are you kidding me? Twenty-one syllables! That's going to be the name of the bridge? Alas, dear readers, that's the current proposal. What were they thinking?

Nothing against Jerry F. Costello or William Lacy "Bill" Clay Sr., two congress-people who brought home the bacon with regularity (back in the days before we knew how pernicious bacon could be to one's diet, whether corporeal or fiscal), but what an awkward name. How long would it be until the local news traffic reporters told us to beware of traffic tie-ups on the CC Bridge? They certainly aren't going to say "And traffic is slowed on the Jerry F. Costello-William Lacy 'Bill' Clay Sr. Veterans Memorial Bridge"; by the time they finished spitting that out, traffic might be cleared. More important, reciting that name would leave no time for commercials.

So yes, let's rename this bridge while there is still time. I'm not alone in this venture. Others have called for different names, foremost among them *Post-Dispatch* columnist, Bill McClellan. As usual, Bill is right on-target in being slightly off-key. I agree: It's time to stretch our boundaries a bit.

Enough with naming public works for people. Who was McKinley, anyway? The name of a new bridge will shout who we are, so let's decide what message we want to share. Let's name the bridge after an important piece of St. Louis culture. We don't build new things very often - the last was the arch in the 60's, and it was preceded by the 1904 World's Fair, not much else has happened - so we can't squander this opportunity.

The name of the bridge should be

a message that is positive, one that speaks clearly to our traditions, and one which encourages vacationers to come drop some coin into the local coffers. I held a mini-focus group the other night to generate ideas for the name of the bridge, and the results were nearly unanimous. (To be fair, I was the only one in the focus group, but still, we reached conclusion fairly quickly.) Here are the leading candidates, each guaranteed to make a statement that shouts "Come on down!"

1. The Ted Drewes Concrete Bridge. This puppy is definitely a winner. I mean, is there any institution more associated with St. Louis than Ted Drewes? (Stan Musial is not an institution.) Getting a pun in the name by referring to Ted's best concoction, the concrete, is even better. However, recognizing that motorists are easily confused - it's difficult to drive while texting, particularly when crossing a body of water on a narrow pathway while also trying to find the Rolling Stones on your radio dial as you pop another Cheetos in your mouth - I propose that we clarify the name a bit. After all, we don't want people entering our state to think that we were mundane enough to name a bridge after a building compound made of sand and glue. So what if we name it the Ted Drewes Chocolate Chip Concrete Bridge? That conveys all the élan of the calories without the baggage of the minerals.

2. The Toasted Ravioli Bridge. You knew that was next, right? Mind you, I've never been much into toasted ravioli myself. Those little squares keep getting stuck in the toaster, and I practically electrocute myself while trying to pull them out with a fork. (A first-hand experience hint: Wooden forks conduct electricity far less well than metal!) Nevertheless, I recognize that for lots of folks St. Louis is defined by toasted ravioli, so go for it. Of course, then we'll need a big billboard

at the first MO exit that explains what we mean by toasted ravioli.

3. The Sweltering Summer, High Humidity, Tall Temperature Bridge. Granted, this isn't our best foot, so you may be wondering why we should put it forward. Simple: We're managing expectations! By promoting our beastly July and August temperatures, our visitors will be pleasantly surprised when the temperature is only in the low 90's and the humidity hovers around 89. It's a bit like a restaurant saying "Our food will make you sick," and then you're happy when it just tastes bad. It's always good for consumers to find the experience better than they expected.

4. The "Where Did You Go To High School?" Bridge. This title may puzzle the newcomer, I understand, but what a good way to prepare them for their St. Louis experience. After all, regardless of where they land or to whom they talk, that will be the first, second, or third question they are asked. Why not prepare them for the onslaught into their past as they venture across the Mighty Miss?

5. The Casper Bridge. OK, this is simply me being a bit personal here, but I think it would be wonderful to have a bridge named after one of my dogs, and Casper, being the senior, gets the honor. It's not just his age, either. After all, in many ways he is emblematic of our fair city. He's a bit old and tired but still lots of fun. We pride ourselves on being a city of neighborhoods, and that's a bit like Casper. He doesn't have a coastline or high-tech center, but he's always friendly and ready to wag his tail. I realize that some of you traditionalists - people who come to a full stop at red lights -- might have some difficulty naming a bridge after a dog, but consider the alternative: Would you really rather have the Jerry F. Costello-William Lacy "Bill" Clay Sr. Veterans Memorial Bridge? Case closed and arf, arf!


Happy driving to you. Next I'll offer some ideas for the name of the new St. Louis International Airport, soon to be built in West County where the Chrysler Plant used to be located.

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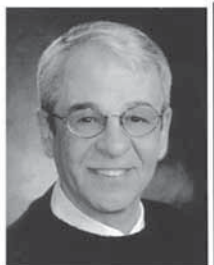
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