

The *TIMES* of... SKINKER DEBALIVIERE

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

The oldest neighborhood newspaper in St. Louis

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Independent and all volunteer-run since 1970

Sewers Becoming Responsibility of Neighborhood

One only need look around and see that our neighborhood is rife with sewer problems. Practically every year someone's lawn is being torn up because there is a need to replace the pipe running from the house to the street. Homeowners are responsible for this fee. Further, most of us are familiar with basement drains backing up and flooding basements during heavy rains. It's the same issue. While occasionally the amount of water may exceed the sewer's capacity, far more often the problem is that the sewer line has collapsed and has impeded the release of water. The only recourse is to dig and replace the 1908 pipes.



In the early 1900's, plumbers and contractors thought that clay pipes would last forever. To be fair, they didn't have today's materials at their disposal, so perhaps they made the best choice. It's been speculated that the clay used to make the pipes in our neighborhood is particularly porous, and more likely to break or collapse. In any case, the underground pipes in our neighborhood are collapsing routinely. This is more than an inconvenience or wet basement issue: Collapsed sewers cannot transport sewage from underneath our homes, and thus we have a health problem. City health officials say that the contact air from dormant sewage can infiltrate the air, causing respiratory problems, influenza, and headaches.

Consequently, effective July 1, 2012, each single-family home in Skinker-DeBaliviere will have a \$100 sewer surcharge each month. These funds will go specifically to replacing sewer lines. The City will begin working where the pipes are already broken, and the hope is to replace every underground sewer by 2019. An aldermanic bill has been filed to make these costs a tax so they can be deducted from state and federal taxes, but it is not clear whether this is legal. Circuit Judge Michael Miasma hopes to have a ruling by June. Multi-family residences will be assessed \$100 per rental unit.

Does this sound familiar? Do you have broken pipes? What's this about porous clay? Well, dear reader, if your blood is boiling that means you've fallen for our April Fool's issue! Yep, this is all made up. There is no \$100 per month charge. Hawkeye tried to pull your leg. Did he succeed?



New Mobile Market at Delmar Loop Metro Link

A new mobile market will bring a new dimension to the Delmar Loop Metro Link Station this spring and summer every Tuesday afternoon. "Farm to Family Naturally"'s Mobile Market is a community service that brings fresh, healthy and locally grown



foods to communities that have few if any groceries within easy reach of their residents. The Mobile Market travels with a refrigerated truck to sponsored sites at health care centers, daycare programs and to Metro Transit stops where people can take advantage of opportunities to stock up on foods. These markets set up under tents and provide farm fresh produce for purchase along with eggs, staples, preserved foods, sauces, teas and baked goods.

Our farm fresh selections feature locally and sustainably grown fruits and vegetables in season. Among favorite items are lettuces, spinach, greens, kale, broccoli, cauliflower, cucumbers, onions, potatoes, carrots, radishes, peppers, corn, tomatoes, asparagus, melons, apples, peaches, pears, plums, cherries, berries, and more as the season and weather permit. We also sell a few items such as bananas, oranges, lemons and limes that, though grown outside the region, deliver health benefits our customers need. Also sold are locally grown eggs, culinary herbs, grains, beans, jams, WIC eligible cheeses, jams, sauces, ready to eat foods and some baked goods. Prices change on a week to week basis with the season.

The market will be open on Tuesdays from 1-4 p.m. just outside the Delmar Loop MetroLink Station.

Grace Church hosts 37th annual Junktique!

At 9:00 am on Saturday, May 5, the doors of Grace United Methodist (6199 Waterman) will open for the 37th Junktique. In 1976, Grace was facing a financial deficit and members decided to hold a huge garage sale! No one imagined that there would still be great junk coming in this many years later. Some years over 800 people have shopped for treasures in Grace's Fellowship Hall.

Church members donate treasures (and sometimes whole estates) to serve the local community, including our many food pantry patrons. This year, the booths will include Toys, Linens, Collectibles, Jewelry, Housewares, Furniture/Electronics, White Elephants and Books. There is a 25¢ entry fee.

A special feature this year will be the Authentic Mexican lunch in honor of Cinco de Mayo, supervised and cooked by Grace's own (and Skinker DeBaliviere resident) Dolores Hoefel.

Grace is accepting donations for the sale through Wednesday, May 2. They are not accepting clothing, shoes, old computers, or televisions, but anything else is welcome (in working condition, please). Please bring your donations Monday-Thursday from 8:30 - 3:00 or during the evening the week before May 5. Call the church office (314)863-1992 if you have large items and need a pick-up.

Doors close at 1:00. Join us for lunch and check out the bargains!

Editor's Notebook

by Lana Stein

The Delmar Commercial Committee has spent over two decades working on bringing back streetlife and commerce to the northern boundary of Skinker DeBaliviere. Central to that effort was a redevelopment plan that was adopted by the St. Louis Board of Aldermen, jointly sponsored by Aldermen Irving Clay (26th ward) and Dan McGuire (28th ward). That plan specifically mandated that establishments selling alcoholic beverages derive at least half their income from food sales.

Over a year ago, the Twisted Olive owner appeared before the committee, stating they would open a bar and grill and would abide by our redevelopment ordinance. After hearing her promises to comply, the committee lent support to her venture. However, in a pattern reminiscent of her previous operation in the U City Loop, no restaurant service appears to have taken place at The Twisted Olive. Despite ordering kitchen equipment, the bright green building at 5916 Delmar is apparently nothing more than a bar. Neighbors on both DeGiverville and across Delmar on Enright have complained regularly of rowdiness, late-night traffic, and reports of gunshots.

The Delmar Commercial Committee, with participation from Delmar businesses, as well as residents of the neighborhoods both north and south of Delmar, has recently written to the Excise Commissioner of our displeasure at the current operation of Twisted Olive and calling for a revocation of its liquor license. The Commissioner has already notified the business of an impending audit in which the establishment must demonstrate that it derives more than 50% of its revenue through food sales.

The redevelopment of Delmar is key to the continued stability and growth of Skinker DeBaliviere. The redevelopment plan and the recent marketing study lay out great potential for our main thoroughfare. Residents on both sides of Delmar join in seeking businesses that reflect our priorities and our needs.

The proprietor of Twisted Olive continues to flaunt the strictures to which she agreed when asking for our support, as does the owner of the property she rents. Our neighborhoods deserve far better and The Twisted Oliver should twist away.



Adieu to Shirley Polk: Valued Neighbor and Friend

by Lana Stein

Shirley Polk, resident of 57xx DeGiverville since the early 60's, passed away on March 1. She leaves her husband Al and many who benefitted from her neighborhood work. She was 76.

Shirley was a member of the Board of the Skinker-DeBaliviere community Council in its early years and as an at-large member from 1987 to 2010. She always participated in the annual MLK Commemoration and spearheaded an annual food drive for a number of years that collected food from the neighborhood to give to area church pantries. She was present at almost every SDCC event.

Shirley played a very valuable role on her block, serving as a mentor and friend to the children there. She rewarded the kids that got good report cards. She and her husband sponsored the West End Picnic in Forest Park every August for children in the area, providing refreshments and organized activities. (SDCC was a sponsor.) She also organized a number of block parties on 57xx DeGiverville including a bazaar and stage for entertainment. She often took neighborhood kids apple-picking and to be photographed with Santa. She spearheaded the celebration of National Night Out on her block with hula hoop and jump rope contests for the kids. She also donated grass seed to neighbors.

Shirley and Al were also stalwart members of the 28th Ward Regular Democratic Club.

Recently, Shirley was very proud of a cookbook she compiled of various down home recipes. A number of us have that cookbook. She said that a pastor in New York City had given her the confidence to undertake this project.

Shirley will be missed in many ways but perhaps especially on her block. She reached out and mentored any number of children and if some achieved a certain success, she saw that they received mention in this newspaper. Thank you, Shirley, for all your contributions.

The TIMES of... SKINKER DEBALIVIERE

Co-Editors: Lana Stein and JoAnn Vatcha
Business Manager: Lois Schoemehl
Contributors: Norbert Hart, Tom Hoerr, Susanne Knese, Rachel Boxdorfer, Andy Cross, Becky Homan, King Schoenfeld, Linda Cross

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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. Opinions expressed in Commentaries are the opinion of the author.

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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.

St. Louisans to unite at Green Ball to promote sustainability

Moonrise Hotel will host third annual Green Ball to benefit EarthWays Center of the Missouri Botanical Garden

(SAINT LOUIS, Feb. 15, 2012) – For the third year, the Green Ball will make its way to the Delmar Loop, gathering a crowd of green-minded movers and shakers in St. Louis for a night of fun and philanthropy. Hosted by Moonrise Hotel, Green Ball 2012 will be held from 7-11 p.m., Friday, April 27, 2012, in celebration of the 42nd anniversary of Earth Day and the third anniversary of the Moonrise Hotel's opening. Proceeds from the gala will benefit the EarthWays Center, a division of the Missouri Botanical Garden that promotes sustainability through environmental education and improving the built environment.

Ticket prices are \$60 per person and include locally sourced and organic appetizers and beverages prepared by Eclipse Restaurant's Chef de Cuisine John Stuhlman and complimentary bar service. Live music from Hudson and the Hoodoo Cats and roving entertainment from Belle of the Ball and Human Art by Jessica Dana are also included.

To highlight the importance of making events "green," the ball will be earth friendly. Ameren Missouri's Pure Power program will provide carbon offsets for travel and electricity used during the ball. Brochures

Continued on pg 7

Green Ball

News of Neighbors

By Rachel Boxdorfer

Happy Spring. . . or at least it sure seems like spring! I'm not sure we really had a winter, and at this point, I hope it stays that way (and that you are not reading this article during a spring snow storm). It's been fun the past few months to see some of our neighbors in the news or busy with other publications. One such neighbor is Ligaya Figueras, of the 6100 block of Washington, who many of you know is now with Sauce Magazine. Ligaya's articles continue to keep us in the know on restaurants and trends, as well as tease our appetites with everything from Perogies to Bourbon drinks! She has also had some appearances on KWMU radio, talking about what else but food! Keep up the good work Ligaya!

Another neighbor making news recently was Len Knese, President of National Sales Company. NSC is a distributor of mechanical, plumbing and H-VAC supplies. And on March 7th, they celebrated their ribbon cutting in a refurbished warehouse on Delmar, the first company to move into developer Paul McKee's two-square mile development zone. Len and his wife Susanne live on the 6100 block of Kingsbury with their two daughters (and previously lived on the 6100 block of Washington). Congratulations to them both and to NSC.

Also on the 6100 block of Kingsbury, we would like to welcome new neighbors Ryan and Nicole



Harris who moved from Soulard last August. The two attorneys are already making news here in the neighborhood and adding to the population with the birth of their beautiful daughter on January 20th, Emma Nicole. Emma weighed in at 7lbs, 11 oz. Both Ryan and Nicole are runners and love that they have Forest Park in their own backyard. Congratulations and welcome to the entire family!

Lynn Weir Wagner (daughter of Marj and Brad Weir of 61XX Westminster) and her husband John Wagner introduced their son, Joseph Bradley Wagner, on January 25! He weighed 8 lbs. 5 oz. and was 21 inches tall.

Did you happen to see Alive Magazine's "Buzz List 2012", highlighting St. Louis' most influential people, organizations and ideas? The article included people from all types of businesses; culinary, film, music, and even World Series MVP, David Freese. Also included

in the list was Skinker Debaliviere's Faith Sandler, Executive Director of the The Scholarship Foundation of St. Louis. Faith has been the Executive Director for 22 years. The Foundation provides interest free loans and grants to students in need. Much of the fundraising is through the two popular Scholar Shop locations. Faith and her husband Michael Holohan and two children Claire and Pete live on the 6000 block of Westminster.

Often checking in with us from his travels is Dan Schesch of the 6000 block of McPherson. In September Dan traveled to five countries in central Europe; Poland, Hungary, Austria, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic, as part of an organized tour. According to Dan, "beyond the tour's itinerary, befitting from our Skinker DeBaliviere diversity, neighbors with Polish and Czech backgrounds suggested places to see and restaurants, places which I never would have known about. It made my experience much richer, thank you." Dan has a web site about his trip, <http://jdr2.net/travel/europe/eur2011.htm> if you would like to learn more about his trip, he is happy to share his experience. Thanks Dan!

Regular readers know my least favorite part of writing this column is having to say goodbye to some of the wonderful people who have made Skinker DeBaliviere home. But I realize it is important and am reminded each time I do it of what makes this neighborhood so

wonderful. Yes, we have gorgeous architecture, we are located near spectacular things like Forest Park and The Loop. But what has always made this neighborhood stand out is the people. And for that reason, I believe we must acknowledge our losses and cherish the memories we have of those who have made Skinker DeBaliviere a home.

A sad loss from the neighborhood was the passing of Shirley Polk on the 5700 block of DeGiverville. Shirley passed away on February 29th. Shirley was famous for the picnics she organized for neighborhood children and her work with the neighborhood food drive. She worked hard at both for years and also served for many years on the Skinker DeBaliviere Community



Congressman Lacy Clay with Shirley and Al Polk at the 2008 Skinker-DeBaliviere Neighborhood Centennial Celebration at the Four Corners.

Council Board of Directors. She published a cook book which she was always happy to share and also kept tabs on what was happening

on her block. In recent years, every time I passed her on her street, she would have some type of news about what was happening on her street, who was new, etc... She too will be missed and we are so thankful for all her talents she shared with us.

Attention garden fans, gardening season is upon us. If you have never visited the community gardens in our neighborhood, add it to your next walk in the neighborhood and enjoy viewing the works of our residents during the growing season. Skinker DeBaliviere has two community gardens, the McPherson Community Garden (on the 6000 block of McPherson) and the 1035 Community Garden (on the 5800 block of Westminster across the street from Lucier Park and Hamilton Elementary School). Like the names suggest, they are places where you can spend time with your Skinker DeBaliviere neighbors and where you can grow some food to put on your table. For more information you can call Andy Cross (314-721-6060) or Mark Banaszak (314-863-0965), although at this point I believe both gardens have a waiting list for garden space. Also - be sure to mark your calendar for the SDCC Garden Tour on Saturday morning, June 2nd.

Do you have news to share? Please send your submissions via email with the subject line News of Neighbors to rachelb@sdtimes.org or drop off a note to the attention of Rachel Boxdorfer at the Skinker DeBaliviere office. Be sure to mark it "News of Neighbors". Happy New Year everyone!



Photo by Bob Moore

BOY SCOUT TROUPE NUMBER 98 of St. Roch's celebrate their fiftieth anniversary. Left to right are (first row) Bert Bender, Tom Sleet, Steve Spears, R. J. Stringer, Lester Spears, Bill Manion, unknown; (second row) Jack May, Joe McBride, Joe Newsham, Andy Bender, Tim Flynn, Joseph Wilmering, Jr., Tyrone Howard; (third row) Joseph Wilmering, Sr., Hugh Bertch, Bob Newsham, Charles Lucjer, James Flynn and Albert Bender, Sr.

Robert "Bob" Newsham passed away on February 24 at the age of 88. Bob and his wife Betty were longtime residents of the 6100 block of Kingsbury, where they raised their nine children. Bob and Betty lived their final years at The Dorchester. His memorial service and the lunch that followed served as a reunion for friends and family who celebrated his life with stories of his kindness and the "good old days" in the neighborhood and at St. Roch. For me, both Bob and Betty were always so kind and interested in what was going on, and also seemed to serve as another set of eyes for my parents. I believe Skinker DeBaliviere has long practiced the theory of it taking a village to raise children and the Newshams were certainly a big part of my growing up on Kingsbury. Bob will certainly be missed.

The Loop Area Retail Plan Promotes Ambitious Vision of Urban Development

by Richard Bose

The recently released ambitious Loop Area Retail Study will find a lot of fans in the urbanist community. It affirms the affection and oft-promoted potential of a dense mixed-use walkable area. In short, it's the prototypical model of modern urban development: removal of surface lots, removal of a gas station, removal of stand-alone fast food, a corner grocery store right up the sidewalk, revitalization of old buildings, modern mixed-use new buildings, building urban walls, densification, attractive and active public spaces, an enhanced sense of place, extension of the street grid, improved sidewalks and streetscapes, transit oriented-development (TOD), and pedestrian-priority intersections. The drool-worthy vision and renderings are an early Valentine's Day gift for Loop lovers.

The study was commissioned about a year ago by WU in order to determine the current market conditions of the area to help promote its properties and offer a vision to realize the area's potential and expand upon it. Prepared for Washington University by HR&A Advisors of New York with local H3 Studio sub-contracting, it was originally to cover Delmar from the lion gates to the MetroLink station. With input from other stake-holders the scope expanded to include the East Loop and the Loop Trolley route all the way to Forest Park.

The centerpiece and most transformational development vision would be at the intersection of Delmar and Skinker. Currently, three corners are car-oriented, empty, or private. Guests are greeted with a gas station, a suburban style fast-food establishment, a private parking lot, and the one remaining urban-scale historic building, is largely occupied, but has yet to land many retail tenants. Owned by Washington University, the building has undergone an extensive rehab and would serve as the model for future development. In this way, the one remaining building provides the needed context, as it should. The car-oriented intersection and adjacent businesses disrupt the urban experience, keeping the Loop divided.

Many patrons walking along Delmar turn around here. The Loop Trolley will provide a physical connection across this void, pulling

the east and west Loop together. Immediately at the intersection, the plan envisions replacing the AT&T parking lot with a public space with sculptures, replacing the Church's Chicken with a mixed-use development, recruiting retailers for the NE corner building, and locating the holy grail of a self-sufficient walkable neighborhood, a grocery store (with structured parking) in place of the Shell station. A grocery was the primary desire of survey respondents. The Vision for Parkview Gardens plan (produced by H3) also envisions a grocer at this site.

Renderings are one thing, but how will this vision be accomplished? The Shell station will surely be expensive to buy putting additional burden on the bottom line of the grocery store, and an alternative location will likely need to be provided. Bonds paid by the parking structure? Free parking is often cited by developers and potential customers alike as a necessity. Perhaps TIF? Can you blight the gas station? Perhaps with financial incentives from Washington University? The study says the area could support a 32,000 sq ft grocery. For reference the Schnuck's Culinaria in downtown St. Louis is 27,000 sq ft. The Shell station lot is smaller and so either a smaller store, a multi-story store, or acquiring the adjacent lot to the north on Skinker (an unremarkable 1-story building) are possibilities. Or the grocery needs could be spread out over more specialized stores, think a produce market and wine and cheese shop. Also on the hit-list for redevelopment are all the surface lots along Delmar, the Church's Chicken, Yellow-Cab, Crescent, and Dobbs sites.

Another significant opportunity exists on the Washington University's North Campus. WU intends in the long-term to integrate the campus with the surrounding neighborhood, a welcome vision compared to the often easier to manage superblock. The desire is to bring development on the site up to the surrounding streets. This could include running Cabanne and Clemens through the campus, meeting a new street running from Olive to Delmar (Pageant Drive?). In the map Enright is gone whereas in the Parkview Gardens vision Enright is connected through instead of Clemens and meant to

be a primary East-West connection for neighborhood residents. That plan shows some demolition of existing buildings fronting Eastgate. This on top of demo for creating two new parks (not highlighted in this plan but shown, very much highlighted in the Parkview Gardens plan) seems a bit much and is the least desirable, and most unnecessary aspect of the plan.

Other transportation-related recommendations include opening Des Peres to Delmar, using the Wabash Station as the entrance to MetroLink (a long envisioned and attractive idea), moving bus routes to Forest Park Station instead of Delmar Station, and adding a cultural anchor to the trolley barn in the form of a trolley museum/showroom. The Wabash Station would give MetroLink a landmark entrance on Delmar rather than one tucked back on Des Peres. Changing the station to a central-platform with an elevator on the south side of Delmar would help too. Unfortunately, the now shorter length of the Delmar Bridge may preclude this. Here there is some conflict with the Parkview Gardens Vision where Enright is a primary pathway to the Delmar Station. It envisions a bike/pedestrian path providing riders access to the north end of the Delmar Station.

Moving the bus routes to Forest Park Station sounds fine since they would then meet both MetroLink lines, but examining the four routes currently going to the Delmar Station, it only makes sense to move one of them. The #2 Red and #16 City Limits already cross both MetroLink lines and would be quite a bit out of the way for them to go to the Forest Park Station. The #97 Delmar would go down and up DeBaliviere to reach the Forest Park Station. Only the #91 Olive would be enhanced by such a re-route.

Recognizing that development east of the MetroLink station is currently more challenging, the focus is on streetscape improvements and using the trolley barn as a cultural anchor to catalyze development. The plan shows an expanded Lucier Park up to Delmar. The park is already pretty big. Placing a new building at the SW corner of Delmar and Hamilton and improve Hamilton to invite people into the park would likely have a greater

impact. A long-term ambition would be to repurpose or replace the Metro garage to better fit with new neighborhood development. At nearly two blocks long, the Metro garage is an even bigger discontinuity of the area than the AT&T building. The amount of space there also presents an opportunity for a new public space, or significant development.

TOD is proposed for both the Park 'n Ride lot and the bus turnaround across the street from the Forest Park Station. Streetscape improvements, traffic-calming, cleanliness, and safety are stressed. There is no mention of replacing the strip mall or suburban-style restaurant building nearby, though one would hope that significant TOD would make these sites more attractive for development.

But again, how does all this get done? The study suggests creating high-quality marketing material, hiring a retail recruiter to promote the area, and governance reforms. The reform includes turning the current special business districts into CIDs that fund and guide a non-profit corporation to execute the plan's strategy. It would aim to keep the area clean and safe, develop marketing materials and run events, recruit retailers, undertake capital improvements, and manage development. Funding would come from CID property tax assessments and Washington University. The approach is similar to other focused development efforts in St. Louis and elsewhere.

There's a lot here. Read the plan. Combined with the vision for Parkview Gardens, the area is the most likely of any in the St. Louis region to become a true dense urban community. Nationwide, demographic shifts and generational preference for a more urban lifestyle will continue to favor dense development. With this plan, broad institutional, political and community support, The Loop has a leg up on other locations to be the first manifestation of this trend here. What is remarkable about The Loop is that it continually leads the market. These plans reflect and reinforce that tradition.

Editor's Note: This is part of the blog originally published in NextStL.com.



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St. Roch Students Aid Homeless Dogs

by Lana Stein

In the late fall, Melissa Miller's sixth graders at St. Roch School adopted a special service project. With many pet lovers in the group, they decided to raise funds for Stray Rescue. Founded by Randy Grim, Stray Rescue tries to rescue some of the about 500 loose dogs on St. Louis' streets. The sixth graders created a calendar, which they then sold to raise money for the dog rescue organization. Students in other classes assisted. This project was a huge success. One hundred calendars were produced and one hundred calendars were sold.

At an assembly on the afternoon of February 29, St. Roch students gathered in their gym. Three students from Miller's class -- Bianca Istuarte, Lucy Ebeling, and Charlie McGroarrty were emcees.

They described their project, why they selected it, and how they raised their funds, and who helped out. They introduced Jean Jackson from Stray Rescue who brought with her a terrier mix puppy--Tribbles. She described Stray Rescue activities and how Tribbles had been found unconscious under a car. Her colleagues at Stray Rescue felt that Jean would provide a perfect home for this little girl and, indeed, Tribbles has been a wonderful addition.

The students then presented Ms Jackson with a check for \$1153. Jackson said this money will help provide medical care for rescued pups and help find homes for them. Stray Rescue intends to name a stray after the St. Roch students--Rochy--and will send back pictures of this dog. The students were



delighted and enjoyed meeting Tribbles and two toy spaniels who joined in the festivities. The St. Roch students have helped a very worthy cause with a sizeable contribution and raised awareness of a particular need.

From State Senator Joe Keaveny

I was happy to speak at a gathering in support of state historic preservation tax credits. The gathering boasted a turnout of about 100 people consisting of St. Louis citizens, Missouri lawmakers, and members of the AIJP (Alliance for Industry, Jobs, and Preservation), all of whom turned out to support historic tax credits.

State historic tax credits represent a proven economic stimulus program for communities and main streets throughout Missouri. The rehabilitation of historic buildings:

- Creates jobs;
- Leverages private investment;
- Strengthens our historic assets;
- Generates property taxes for our cities;
- Attracts emerging businesses; and
- Draws a knowledge-based workforce to the area.



Missouri leads the nation in revitalizing and preserving the heritage of our cities and towns -- a legacy that must be upheld for generations to come. The historic tax credits have helped spur economic growth at a time when we need to put Missourians back to work.

I was happy to meet some outstanding kids who attend New City School, located in the Central West End neighborhood in the City of St. Louis.

New City School is an excellent learning establishment that serves children age 3 through sixth grade. According to its website, New City School students consistently score three to four years above grade level on the Stanford Achievement Test. In addition, over the last 10 years, graduating New City School students have consistently scored in the top 10 percent among private and public school students nationwide.

The school is dedicated to investing every resource available to help students learn, grow as individuals, and succeed in the classroom. To learn more about the school, visit www.newcityschool.org or call (314) 361-6411. Missourians will have an additional incentive to "go green." From Thursday, April 19, through Wednesday, April 25, several Missouri communities will host a tax-free holiday on qualified Energy Star appliances.

According to an article published by KSHB, this will be Missouri's fourth Show-Me Green Sales Tax Holiday. People who purchase certain Energy Star products during the tax holiday will have at least the 4.225 percent Missouri sales tax on their purchase waived.

Energy Star appliances that will qualify for the tax exemption include:

- Clothes washers
- Refrigerators
- Freezers
- Dishwashers
- Water heaters
- Furnaces
- Air conditioners
- Heat pumps

You can visit www.energystar.gov to find more information about Energy Star products and news.



State Senator Keaveny with New City School students.



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EclipseStLouis.com [EclipseRestaurant](https://www.facebook.com/EclipseRestaurant) [@EclipseSTL](https://twitter.com/EclipseSTL)





Charles Lamb is ready for library action in the new Charing Cross Branch location on Delmar.

Looking ahead to summer

by Tim Woodcock

St. Louis is a wonderful place to be in the summertime – assuming you can deal with the heat. Looking ahead to the summer, I am thinking of activities I can do with my daughter, who is 4. I don't really want to sign up her for back-to-back summer camps and there is a limit to the number of times you can visit the pool. So I started to think: I wish there were some low-key summertime activities going on in my backyard — and I bet many of my neighbors in Skinker-DeBaliviere are thinking the same.

I'd like to get together with other parents to sketch out some ideas of free activities we could organize. I am not envisioning anything as formal as a summer camp, but more a series of linked activities. They could take place during in single week in the summer or they could be spread out over, let's say, Fridays in July.

Some potential activities that spring to mind:

1. Producing a piece of public art for the neighborhood.
 2. Biking up to the Forest Park together and going to the zoo
 3. Organizing a neighborhood scavenger hunt.
- If this sounds like something you'd be interested in, please get in touch.

The targeted age group and the logistics of any activity would depend on the parents who are willing to lend a hand in organizing this.

If you are interested, please e-mail or call me at timwoodcock@speedpost.net or (314) 494-1893. I will collect people's details and coordinate a planning meeting in late April.



McPherson Garden Becomes "Hub Garden" for Gateway Greening

by Andy Cross

Fifteen years ago Gateway Greening helped create the McPherson Community Garden on two vacant lots on the 5900 block of McPherson. This year the McPherson Garden has taken another big step to become one of four "Hub Gardens" which will help Gateway Greening with their mission of educating and empowering groups all over St. Louis to grow healthy neighbors and a healthy city. When the McPherson Garden began its quest, most folks in Skinker DeBaliviere had not heard of community gardens. now Gateway Greening has 200 gardens of various sizes and backgrounds, from educational school gardens to energetic grassroots citizens trying to reclaim a neglected space and create something beautiful.

In 2009 the Missouri Foundation for Health awarded Gateway Greening a major grant to further their goal of educating gardeners and offering technical assistance. Through 2010 and 2011 we have been working with Gateway Greening to develop and eventually become a Hub Garden which can serve nearby gardens including our own Block Unit 1035 Community Garden, the Clemens, Syracuse, and Vito's Garden in University City, the Mayberry, Monsanto YMCA, and William Clay Sr. Community Gardens and more in other St. Louis neighborhoods.

This year the McPherson Community Garden will keep "regular hours" on Saturdays from 10:00 am to noon beginning March 10 until Oct. 13. We will distribute

low cost (high quality donated) seed packets at 25¢ each and also seedlings grown in Gateway Greening's greenhouse. Seedlings will sell for \$1.00 per four-tray and will be available to community gardeners as our primary focus, we hope to also serve neighbors as well - this is a new project and we will see how the distribution goes.

We will host 3 classes this year. Our first class will be taught by McPherson community gardener Mary Hellwig, who is also a garden leader at the Columbia Hope and Peace Community Garden. Mary's class (which will have taken place on March 31st) is "Companion Planting. Easy steps to increase your vegetable garden's output and health." We will also have three cooking/food preparation demos,

one example "What to do with all that squash!" taught by chef Ivy Tominack will take place later in the summer. More details, dates and times will be available from the SD calendar as our schedule develops. We are coordinating with the S.D. community workshops. All classes will be open to all Gateway Greening gardeners and residents of Skinker DeBaliviere.

The McPherson Garden is proud to have been selected as a Hub Garden, we look forward to serving the nearby community gardens and our neighbors. Thank you to all the gardeners who have been a part of this growing effort through the years.

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IN YOUR EAR

by Hawkeye Z. Hoerr, Commentary in the TIMES for more than 32 years.

“Steve Jobs was a genius,” he said, with no hesitancy. My friend and I were at dinner, talking about Jobs’ life and death, and his feeling was that Jobs was a genius was based on how Jobs had transformed how we look at personal computers (and he hadn’t even gotten to Pixar or I-Tunes!). Based on the stock price of Apple, Jobs died having built the most valuable company in the world, he also noted. No, that’s not too shabby at all. But is it genius?

Genius is a word that we sometimes throw around pretty casually. I wish I had a dollar for each time that former Cardinal manager Tony LaRussa was called a genius. Huh? I mean, he initially played Albert Pujols rather reluctantly, and Pujols turned out to be one of the best hitters of all-time. Manager LaRussa called for steals, changed pitchers, and determined the batting order for 5,097 baseball games. He won just 2,738 of them, for a .536 winning percentage. Are you kidding me? He didn’t even win 60% of his games, and we call this genius? Flipping a coin would give you 50% winners.

Perhaps former UCLA basketball coach John Wooden could be called a genius. He won ten NCAA national championships in a 12-year period, including seven in a row. Coach Wooden’s teams won a record 88 consecutive games, and he was named national coach of the year six times. That’s more Steve Jobs-like.

But what about areas where numbers aren’t the issue? How do we determine genius when we can’t count stock price or games won? Dictionary.com defines genius as “1. an exceptional natural capacity of intellect, especially as shown in creative and original work in science, art, music, etc.: the genius of Mozart. 2. a person having such capacity. 3. a person having an extraordinarily high intelligence rating on a psychological test, as an IQ above 140. 4. natural ability or capacity; strong inclination: a special genius for leadership. 5. distinctive character or spirit, as of a nation, period, or language.”

OK, so the waters are now fuzzied a bit. (Fuzzy waters are always good!) How might we determine political genius? Is it measured by elections won? Does that make St. Louis Mayor Francis Slay a genius? After all, he has won three consecutive terms, and is heading toward a fourth. Virginia’s Robert Bryd served in the U.S. Congress, first as a representative and then as a senator, for 57 years and 176 days. Is that genius or just longevity? What about someone who changed the political mindset? President Ronald Regan comes to mind as one who tilted the dialogue in a significant way. Whether or not you agree with him (and I don’t), there’s no denying that he left a deep imprint on our national dialogue and policy. Is that genius?

How can we talk about genius without mentioning Warren Buffett? A seemingly regular sort of guy, the

CEO of Berkshire Hathaway was the wealthiest person in the world in 2008, worth billions, plural, of dollars. Does that indicate genius? Or what about the fact that he has pledged to give away 99% of his fortune to charity? I like that a lot, but is it a sign of genius? Bill Gates falls into this paragraph too. Gates is worth \$56 billion dollars. That’s a lot of money, a whole lot! Put another way, if Gates spent \$10,000 per day – that’s a fun thought; think of how many Hostess Cupcakes you could get for \$10,000! – it would take him 153 years to spend it all. Better, in my mind, he’s set up a charitable foundation, and funded it with \$28 billion of his dollars. Genius or not?

What about art? Michelangelo seems to have been a genius, not for the least because he could do so many extraordinarily artful things at a level that defies common sense. To be able to paint the Sistine Chapel or to create David or the Pieta would be testament to genius, but to do both? He seems fairly clear-cut. I think, so he goes in the genius box. It’s still pretty empty, though. (I wonder what Michelangelo and John Wooden would be discussing.)

Was Picasso a genius, or does his art fall more in the realm of the Emperor’s New Clothes? What about Norman Rockwell, Frida Kahlo, Judy Chicago, or photographer Dorothea Lange? Can movies depict genius? If so, is Tom Hanks a genius? What about Steve Spielberg? Was Shirley Temple a genius? If a movie could portray signs of genius, I’d nominate Ferris Buhler’s Day Off (but I’m not sure why). Hmmm, maybe that means that a movie can’t be exhibit genius.

What literature reflects genius? Was Ralph Nader a genius because his book, Unsafe At Any Speed, transformed the auto industry and saved thousands of lives? The Silent Spring, by Rachel Carson, is often credited with giving momentum to the environmental movement. That’s no small potatoes. Did Stowe’s Uncle Tom’s Cabin forever change the face of our country and the world? Would that mean that she was a genius? I’d nominate Jared Diamond, whose book Guns, Germs, and Steel, offers a new look at evolution, civilizations, and race, and forever changed how I think about the world. What about Stephen King? How many millions and millions of hours have people been gladly caught up in his

text instead of dealing with life’s challenges and disappointments? Is that an example of linguistic genius? Then there’s Arthur Miller, whose plays brought these same challenges and disappointments to stages and hearts around the world. Is that genius or entertainment? And oh yeah, let’s not forget that Shakespeare guy. His works would clearly constitute genius (if, in fact, he really was the author).

Peeking into the science lab, does Jonas Salk, the inventor of the cure for polio, qualify as genius? How could he not? Does Stephen Hawking make the cut? Thomas Edison fits here somewhere, I’m sure, as does Ben Franklin. What about Spencer Silver, the 3M scientist who invented post-it notes?

Closer to home, I think of Mrs. Mayfield, my first-grade teacher. On most criteria, I’m sure, she wasn’t a genius. She didn’t invent, win games, write books, or create art. But she was a genius when it came to understanding me, and for that I am eternally grateful. It may not be significant to you, but she changed the trajectory of my life, and that’s pretty significant to me!

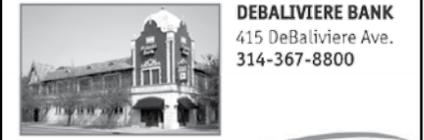
You know, maybe that’s what genius truly is. Perhaps it’s not winning a Nobel Prize or making a gazillion bucks or creating breathtaking art, despite the value of these achievements. Maybe genius is in all of us, if we take the time to listen to others and help them grow.

Absolutely, artists and writers have an impact on others, as do coaches, scientists, and politicians. But that is so true for each of us too. We should all look out for one another. Just possibly, genius is determined by the positive impact that we have on others. With thought and care and effort, we can all be a genius.

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