

The TIMES of... SKINKER DEBALIVIERE

Vol. 42, No. 2

Summer 2012

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

The oldest neighborhood newspaper in St. Louis

FREE

Independent and all volunteer-run since 1970

Ivory Perry Park Concert Series 10th Anniversary

Free Outdoor Concerts Every 4th Sunday June – August 6-8 p.m.

Union Communion Ministries proudly presents the 10th annual Ivory Perry Park Concert Series, compliments of the Whitaker Foundation, Commerce Bank, Westminster Presbyterian Church (USA), Pilgrim Congregational Church (UCC), Union



Avenue Christian Church (DOC), the 26th Ward Alderman, Frank Williamson; the City of St. Louis, and countless individuals. The series kicks off Sunday, June 24th at 6 p.m. with one of the most sought after bands in the country, The Ralph Butler Band. This St. Louis based ensemble has built an enormous fan base at home as well as throughout the country from San Francisco to New York. Always fresh and exciting, The Ralph Butler band seamlessly blends traditional Motown

sounds with the most popular songs of today. That explains why after a quarter of a century the ensemble keeps a very full calendar and why Ralph Butler continues to be acknowledged as Public Entertainer Number One.

The concert series will take place outdoors at Ivory Perry Park, located at 800 N. Belt, two blocks north of Delmar and Belt (down the street from Connect Care). In the event of inclement weather, the concerts will be held at Pilgrim Congregational Church, located at 826 N. Union Blvd. The 2nd concert of the series will feature Stan Coleman's Stl. Metro Youth Jazz Band. St. Louis native Stanley Coleman is a musician and educator who has been an innovative and inspirational driving force in the St. Louis public school system since 1979. His students have earned countless accolades for their musical achievements, and Mr. Coleman was honored by Yale University as Distinguished Music Educator of the Year in 2009 and served for ten years on the E. Desmond Lee Advisory Board for the Arts. The Stan Coleman's Stl. Metro Jazz Band features students from East St. Louis, University City, Maplewood-Richmond Heights and St. Louis City schools. These students will delight the crowd on Sunday, July 22nd at 6 p.m. with their big band style of jazz.

If dancing is what you want to get up and do, then Boogie Chylid is the band with a plan; known as St. Louis' No. 1 Funk and

Continued on pg 2

Ivory Perry Park Series

West End Arts Council

by Liz Kniep Engelsmann



photo by King Schoenfeld

Hi Neighbors,

I wanted to let you know about a few events being sponsored by the West End Arts Council this summer.

June 9th, WEAC is hosting a Youth Art/Recycling Program at Andy Cross' studio. Kids in the area are welcome to sign up for a day of creative arts and crafts, using recycled materials. New this year are contributions of pizzas from Papa Johns, and snacks and drinks from Whole Foods and Trader Joe's.

If you know any kids who might be interested, contact Jessica Eiland at the SDCC office, 862-5122, or at jessica.eiland@skinker-debaliviere.com. Below is a list of recycled materials that we are collecting for the youth workshop. If you have any items you wish to contribute, please drop off at the SDCC office: water colors, yogurt containers, egg cartons, white cotton sheets, small hardback books, old picture frames (with glass), leather belts, and magazines.

2012 Skinker DeBaliviere Concert Series

SDCC and the West End Arts Council (WEAC) are excited to announce the 2012 Concert Series Schedule! All Skinker DeBaliviere residents and visitors from around the St. Louis area are encouraged to join us for this year's exciting concert series—bring a friend or the whole family! All concerts will take place from 6pm-9pm in the Greg Freeman Park Four Corners Park (next to 6008 Kingsbury Ave. at Des Peres Ave.). Skinker DeBaliviere's famous BBQ and various beverages will also be available for sale. All proceeds will help to support the concert series.

Saturday, June 23rd: Soulard Blues Band at Four Corners

Tuesday, August 7th: Funky Butt Brass Band

Saturday, September 15th: Farshid etniko

July 1 thru Aug 31 - **Art in the Alley** is a block by block contest intended to inspire neighbors to beautify our Skinker-Debaliviere alleys creatively and artistically. A trophy, being designed by a neighborhood artist, will be awarded to the most beautified alley at the music concert in September. There is a nominal fee to participate, that will go toward a cash prize to the winning alley, in addition to the trophy. Due date for participation is June 30 - fee to be dropped off at the SDCC.

The West End Arts Council also sponsored a staged reading of Shakespeare's *Loves Labors Lost* on May 22, featuring students from Crossroads School, performed on the stage at Four Corners.

If you are interested in participating in planning the WEAC activities, contact me at ekniep@hotmail.com, or call Jessica at SDCC, 862-5122.

Welcome New Neighbors on June 29

This most neighborly of neighborhoods loves to welcome its newest residents. This year, the TIMES of SKINKER-DEBALIVIERE is joining forces with the SD Community Council in hosting a "New Neighbors Party" at Joe's Cafe, 6012 Kingsbury, Bill Christman's unique sculpture garden and entertaining space. The party will start at 5:30 p.m., Friday, June 29, 2012. All new neighbors are invited to come free of charge. All other neighbors are invited to come with a minimum donation of \$ 5 per person. A cash bar will be accompanied

by free appetizers, donated by the generous volunteers who work hard to make the TIMES not only the oldest, but the best neighborhood newspaper in St. Louis. Proceeds help keep the TIMES free to all homes. A special free-admission invitation is being extended to those block "deliverers" who make that possible.

We especially wish to reach out to new neighbors, so if you know of someone who fits that description, let us know, or just invite them to the party! Kids are welcome, too.

For more information, or to help with the party, call David or Jessica at SDCC, 862-5122, or Jo Ann Vatcha at 629-2505.

Editor's Notebook

by Lana Stein

Americans tend to participate less in major elections than their counterparts in other democracies. Perhaps we have too many elections or perhaps the increasing negativity of political campaigns disheartens some. Politics seems to be sport for the few but it should not be. Many programs, policies and appointments depend on who gets elected to office.

In August, we have an important primary—for federal and state offices. Since St. Louis City is overwhelmingly Democratic, it is the primary that will determine who are congressman is, who are state representative is and will determine who seeks state office in November. There are several hotly contested races. Two sitting congressmen face each other to represent Missouri's first district (thanks to redistricting). Four candidates are seeking to be state representative for the 84 district (which includes the whole neighborhood). And, four also seek to be Treasurer of the city.

On the first Tuesday in August, remember to vote. If you are going to be away, you can vote at your convenience at the Board of Elections. And, if you're not registered to vote, you can register at the Charing Cross Library, now located on Delmar at the corner of Rosedale.

If we don't participate, who can we blame?

Ivory Perry Park Series

Continued from pg 1

disco band. This premier funk and dance band is made up of six talented musicians, who with their years of experience will entertain you like no others. Specializing in top-tier entertainment, they have style, they have class, but most important, they'll make you get up and dance. Join us Sunday, August 26th at 6 p.m. in Ivory Perry Park for a one of a kind, boogie down production.

So grab your friends, neighbors, congregation members, and family and head on over to Ivory Perry Park with your lawn chair or blanket to experience good music and a good time for all on Sundays, June 24, July 22, and August 26. Food and beverages will be on hand for purchase. Special children's activities will be available as well. Please consider bringing a non-perishable food donation with you to any of the concerts. Donations will be used to support a local food pantry.

For more information, visit the web site at www.ivoryperrypark.com or call Archilla Buford at 314-367-2112.



Fun for youngsters

Families with young kids in the Skinker-DeBaliviere neighborhood are planning a series of activities this summer. The focal point for activities will be Friday mornings in July, with other events planned that will allow families whose kids are in daycare or summer camps to be part of it, too. The schedule of activities has not yet been finalized but will likely include art activities, trips to nearby parks, and games.

Please email Tim Woodcock at timwoodcock@speedpost.net or call (314) 494-1893 for information.

The TIMES of... SKINKER DEBALIVIERE

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Guidelines for Submitting Copy
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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.

Deadline for next issue: August 15, 2012. 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.



A TIMES party from the 80's. Lisa Horner, Ray Breun, Lois Schoemehl, Hitch Powell, Tom Hoerr, Sandy Rothschild and Brad Weir.

News of Neighbors

By Rachel Boxdorfer

It's hard to believe that summer is upon us. And as always, we find our neighbors busy, active, and on the go. Please be sure to keep us informed of any of your news or adventures in the coming summer weeks! To begin the column this month, let's start with some recognition.

Congratulations are in order for **Desiree Speed** of the 59XX block of Pershing. Deborah was recently named the St. Louis Public School Counselor of the Year. Desiree works at Gateway High School. And **Shauna Cunningham** of 60XX block of Kingsbury, who is a Counselor at Central Visual and Performing Arts High School, was named St. Louis Public School College Summit Coordinator of the Year. Congrats, Shauna!

We always love to welcome new neighbors..... so a big Skinker DeBaliviere welcome goes out to **Deirdre Walker & Jeff Abernathy** who moved into a recently re-habbed, long vacant house on the west end of 61XX Washington in early April. They lived previously in University City.

And a welcome back to the neighborhood goes out to the family of **Jon and Jen Barton**, formerly of the 61XX block of Westminster. The Bartons moved last summer and have been



exploring and enjoying downtown loft living, but are now moving back to the neighborhood. They have purchased the Parkview home of the **Renard/Droege family**. While we are thrilled to see the Bartons moving back, it is always sad to say goodbye to old neighbors and the Renard/Droege family have been a key part of our neighborhood and the St. Roch parish for nearly fifty years. And so a new chapter begins for a beautiful old home as the Bartons make it their family home for many years to come.

Wedding bells rang over Memorial Day weekend for **Danny McGuire**, who grew up here in Skinker DeBaliviere. The elder son of long-time residents **Dan & Jill McGuire** of 61XX Westminster, married



Ms. Carrie Wingate of University City. The "young couple" now reside in St. John. Congratulations to Danny and Carrie and all the McGuire family!

Richard and Venita Lake of the 5800 block of Waterman are celebrating their 50th Wedding Anniversary on June 2. Health scares aside, the Lakes hope to take a great cruise soon. Congratulations to these long-time neighbors (49 years on Waterman!)

Ryan Bogdan will soon be a new neighbor on the 6100 block of Westminster. He will be joining the faculty of Washington University at the Danforth Campus. His parents Mark & Marina are already here, helping with the house until he arrives. Ryan is currently at the Laboratory of NeuroGenetics Department of Psychology and Neuroscience Duke University, and will have a new lab and new challenges at WU. Welcome, Ryan and family!

Gail Farwell has been appointed Democratic committeewoman of the 28th Ward. Although now a Central West End resident, she lived for a number of years on 60XX Westminster. A nurse at Barnes, she also sells real estate for Coldwell Banker Premier.

Lana Stein was happy to see the joyous adventures of a Young Families of St. Roch School ice cream social in the school yard at St. Roch. The group is for preschoolers and their parents and potential preschoolers. Lana said there was lots of laughter, tricycles and scooters and kids with cones! For more information about this group, please contact Brooke Williams at 314-368-7706 or by email at brookebuechele@yahoo.com

Many of our neighbors, or in this case, former neighbors, enjoy some very exciting vacations. In April **Mary & Peter Schmit**, now of Kirkwood, but previously of the 61XX block of McPherson enjoyed a wet, windy and chilly two weeks in Ireland. Mary reports that there was occasional sun and adds "It is always sunny in Ireland." Their tour guide was a charming Irish woman who not only loved her country but was

able to share her amazing grasp of Irish culture, music, history, religion, and a fantastic knowledge of its pubs. Mary said she acquired a new appreciation of Guinness while Pete sampled Bushnell. The two week tour included a variety of adventures including a visit to a sheep farm and a cooking school. Mary added that the best part of all was the variety of people on their bus: Australians, Canadians, Tasmanians, British and Americans.

And making news recently for her amazing work and interesting life was **Desiree White** of the 61XX block of Kingsbury. Desiree was featured in an article in the WU Record in March. You can read the entire article at <http://news.wustl.edu/news/Pages/23563.aspx>. Desiree and her husband Bruce Rogers live on Kingsbury with their beautiful daughter Sophia.

Sad news came from St. Roch School recently. **Lucy Peace**, the former second grade teacher, passed away on May 7th. Lucy taught at St. Roch for 26 years. Her funeral mass was celebrated at Little Flower Church and was attended by many parents, and former colleagues and students of all ages.

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".



West End Arts Council dance workshops in April were a big hit!

WHITAKER

Free Outdoor Concerts

Presented by Union Commission Ministries
On the Commerce Bank Stage in Ivory Perry Park
800 N. Belt (2 Bks. N. of Connect Care at Delmar and Belt)

All performances begin at 6 p.m. on the 4th Sunday in June, July, & August

<p>Sunday June 24</p> <p>RALPH BUTLER BAND Motown, R&B, Pop, & Variety</p>	<p>Sunday July 22</p> <p>STAN COLEMAN'S YOUTH BIG BAND JAZZ</p>	<p>Sunday August 26</p> <p>BOOGIE CHYLD Soul, Funk, & R&B</p>
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Support a local food pantry... Bring a non-perishable food item to each concert.

Increment Weather Location: Pilgrim Church at 826 N. Union

Concerts supported by: Whitaker Foundation

Whitaker Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. All contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. For more information, please contact us at 314-435-1234.

Save the Date!

Fourth Annual SDCC Homecoming!

Saturday, September 22, 2012

at the Regional Arts Commission

The theme this year will be "Artistic License"

For more information about the event, to get involved as a volunteer, or to participate as a sponsor, please call the SDCC office 314-862-5122.

Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council Update, May 16, 2012

By David Whiteman

Code Enforcement Returns to Skinker DeBaliviere

In late spring or summer, the Division of Building Inspections of the City of St. Louis will carry out comprehensive code enforcement in Skinker DeBaliviere. All residential properties in the 28th ward will be inspected. Some or all of those from the 26th ward will be as well but it is not certain as of this writing. The inspections cover the exterior of the houses and the home owner is responsible for any repairs that may be needed. Inspections cover: tuckpointing, exterior paint, fences, windows, walkways, etc. Residents receiving a violation notice can call the Buildings Division and receive an extension. If work is not performed in the agreed-upon period, fines are levied.

The SDCC held a workshop on this topic in late March with a presentation by a Buildings supervisor. The office has more information about this periodic code enforcement. Call 862-5122 for information.

The Skinker DeBaliviere community has experienced significant stabilization and improvement over the last decades. To help guide future development to reinforce the inclusive, cohesive, sustainable and vibrant urban community we strive to be, the Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council completed its Strategic Plan in 2011, and the community is currently engaged in an Identity and Marketing Plan. The community's current Master Plan dates to 1988, the Housing Strategy to 1991, and the Delmar Link Plan to 1994. With planning activities (such as the Delmar Loop Area Retail Plan, Parkview Gardens Sustainable Neighborhoods Master Plan, Loop Trolley, St Vincent's Greenway) occurring all around us – the Council believes it is time to undertake an Urban Design and Development Plan to guide future improvements and development in

our historic community.

Additionally, the timing is right to coordinate our planning effort with St. Louis Regional Sustainable Communities Plan and Transit Oriented Development (TOD) planning for selected MetroLink stations. The Council has received grants for the initiative from Washington University, the Regional Housing and Community Development Alliance (RHCA), and the Skinker DeBaliviere Community Housing Corporation; and the consultant selection process should be complete by the end of June. We will announce the community engagement process once the consultant is onboard.

The Council is also completing the realignment of its committee structure by creating a new Public Space and Beautification Committee and reestablishing the Neighborhood Services Committee. The Public Space and Beautification

Committee will merge the former Lucier Park, Greenways and Beautification committees and will be responsible for the planning, improvement and beautification of the community's three City Parks, City and community-owned land, streets, alleys, sidewalks, street trees, community gardens, and other public and community assets. The Neighborhood Services Committee is responsible for the annual Dr. Martin Luther King Commemoration, social outreach programs, and connecting seniors, youth and other residents to available services and resources.

Anyone interested in serving on one of these committees is encouraged to contact the Council office at 862-5122.

Have a great summer – and we hope to see you at one of the BBQ Concerts in Greg Freeman Park.



photos by Katherine Bish



Rebuilding on Pershing

by Lana Stein

"Rebuilding Together St. Louis" is an organization that brings volunteers together with homeowners whose dwellings need improvement. Homeowners who participate must be income eligible. "Rebuilding Together" has repaired over 1,600 homes in the St. Louis area. They have a day in the spring dedicated to repairing dozens of homes with the aid of over 2,500 volunteers.

This year, 4 homes on 57-5900 Pershing were eligible for assistance. People from Scott Trade volunteered on May 3-4. They put in new doors and sodded a back lawn. On Saturday, May 5, volunteers from the unions painted these homes. Other repairs were also made.

The SDCC helped to enable this effort. The Council set as its goal to help income-eligible and seniors with home repairs. Associate director, Jessica Eiland, examined various programs and helped solicit the "Rebuilding Together" organization. Pershing was selected as the target area. Superneighbor Mark Gorman of 57xx Pershing helped to coordinate. He went door-to-door to find eligible homeowners and signed people up. He also helped to facilitate meetings about the program at the SDCC. Thanks to "Rebuilding Together", which has greatly aided some of our residents.

LAURA McCarthy
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Gary Boehnke, at recently completed (and sold!) 6188 Westminster. Gary serves as staff of the Skinker-DeBaliviere Community Housing Corporation, whose board of directors includes: President, Paul Hohmann, VP Richard Wilkes, Secretary Erich Friesen, Treasurer Matthew Peters, Karleen Hoerr, and Directors Emeritus John George Storey, Susan Feinberg, and George Johannes. The housing corporation selects those projects which will make an impact, resolve problem properties in the neighborhood, and address basic needs of historic buildings such as this one, which needed, among other things, new columns! Gary can be reached at the office at 6008 Kingsbury, which also houses the Skinker-DeBaliviere Community Council, phone 862-5122.



Skinker DeBaliviere as Historic District

Our neighborhood has been designated an historic district by the City of St. Louis. The vast majority of residences were constructed between 1908 and 1908. To preserve the historic nature, special permits are required when exterior repairs or additions take place. The SDCC is sponsoring a workshop on June 28 at 6:00 pm at its office, 6008 Kingsbury. The workshop is free and everyone is encouraged to attend. Historic district requirements will be explained as well as how to obtain permits to perform renovations. Knowing how to conform to historic district standards will prevent costly errors when remodeling.

- 28th Ward Regular Democrats -

Meetings for 2012: June 21, July 19, September 20, October 18, November 15

Dressel's Pub Above • 419 N. Euclid • 7:30 p.m. • Free Parking

For up-to-date information on programs and other news of politics, go to the 28th Ward website:

<http://ward28.citywestend.org/index.html>
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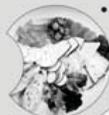


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Longtime neighbor becomes newest advertiser



Clarice Christine is a Social Work Student at Fontbonne University. She has lived in the Skinker-DeBaliviere Neighborhood for more than 20 years. She now lives on

Washington and is enjoying sharing Mary Kay with my new and existing clients. She notes that "being a Mary Kay consultant gives me the opportunity to focus on my education, and my two children as well, by setting her own schedule."

Mary Kay has a wide range of products from Skin care for sensitive, normal and oily skin. There's even a wonderful acne system and skin care specific for men. Of course there is makeup for all complexions. "If you enjoy natural or colors I can help you the select a complete skin care and makeup system the comfort of your own home.

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Saint Louis

2012 Summer Concert Series

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America the Beautiful

Sunday, July 8, 2012
Words and Music

Sunday, July 15, 2012
En Français

Sunday, July 22, 2012
Hilarious Haydn, Masterful Mozart, Boisterous Beethoven

Washington University-Brookings Quadrangle
7:00 pm "Notes to Munch On"- pre-concert series
7:30 pm - Concert

Admission is Free

www.gatewayfestivalorchestra.org

Senator Joe Keaveny:

The Republican-dominated Missouri legislature's accomplishments this session were limited.

The matter of returning control of the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department (SLMPD) to the City of St. Louis is an issue that I've heavily supported. For far too long, the state has controlled the police department & currently, the police department is overseen by a five-person board consisting of the mayor and four members appointed by the governor. By initiating local control of the SLMPD, the City of St. Louis could save a great deal of money, and there would be better efficiency and accountability of city government.



Recently, those in favor of a city-run police department submitted petition signatures to get the local control matter on the November ballot.

According to an article published by KMOV, "Supporters organized under a group called the 'Safer Missouri Citizens Coalition' said they submitted more than 164,000 signatures to the Secretary of State's office. To qualify for the ballot, proposed statutory changes must garner signatures from 5 percent of the number of registered voters & in six of the state's nine congressional districts & who cast ballots in the last gubernatorial election." Before the initiative can

appear on the November ballot, local election officials need to verify petition signatures and the Secretary of State's office would need to approve the measure for the ballot.

One of the accomplishments I am proud to announce is the passage of the "Omnibus Judicial Bill" which included trust reform which I sponsored.

As a trust attorney, it's very important to me to sponsor and endorse legislation that will make the legal process as smooth as possible for Missourians. This provision modifies the requirements for a spousal trust to include both property held in one trust for both spouses and property held in two separate shares.

Currently, trusts that hold a certain kind of property owned by a husband and a wife will be considered a qualified spousal trust, if the property is held in one trust or

the property is held in two separate shares of one trust. This act would allow a trust to be considered a qualified spousal trust, if the trust consists of both property held in one trust for both spouses, and property held in two shares of one trust for each spouse. The reform legislation also includes establishing a Joint Committee on Child Abuse and Neglect.

For your information, I will be hosting my annual health fair for the people of St. Louis on Saturday, July 28, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. I'll be partnering with the Betty Jean Kerr People's Health Centers, located at 5701 Delmar Blvd. in St. Louis. This establishment is dedicated to providing comprehensive primary health care to impoverished, uninsured populations in the St. Louis metropolitan area.

Don Walker

Don Walker passed away in April, after a short stay in hospice, where he was visited by several Westminster friends. Don was 84 years old and had lived at 6143 Westminster for close to 50 years. Until the late 80's, he had been a theatrical agent, booking variety type acts for county fairs all over Missouri and in downstate Illinois. He knew a number of big names including the cast of the Lawrence Welk show. Long-time neighbors Lu Green and Jo Ann Vatcha recalled a memorable evening in the 90's saying good bye to another



neighbor and learning that in the 60's Don had gone on lots of show-biz trips and heard about his friendships, with neighbors Olive Chaffee (a wonderful artist who also lived on Westminster), Irene Geer (who had a unique business creating such items as Girl Scout badges), Betty and Jim Dunlap (who ran a rare-books business from home), and next-door neighbor Dorothy Hood, who had served in WWII as an ambulance driver. No wonder these interesting folks had the great sense to locate in Skinker-DeBaliviere.

Don had so many stories to tell, a tradition he carried on for the remainder of his life. Robyn Nagel said she was "among those who were fortunate enough to sit with him on his front porch and while away the time on balmy evenings chatting about the "old days" on Westminster Place." Nancy Rice recalled that she had known Don for 50 years.... living next door to him when he moved in. He bought the house from Mrs. Bradbury who was, I believe, an original owner and a very kind woman." Priscilla Dowden said, "When Chris and I moved onto the block in 1995, Don was one of the first neighbors to welcome us. Don embodied the meaning of 'neighbor', as he not only 'looked out' for us, he extended himself as a friend (much in the same way neighbors used to do when I was a little girl growing up on Kennerly Ave. in the 1960s). Don was warm, funny, intelligent, and caring. Oh, and, then there was that fabulous platinum hair of his!"

Don was originally from Morrisonville, IL, a small farming community. He had a BA from the University of Illinois where he had been a cheerleader. He later took graduate classes in education at Wash U. At age 17, he enlisted and was a radioman on a destroyer and a cruiser during WWII. In later life, he returned to Morrisonville regularly for 5 years to care for his beloved mother Wanda. He came back to Westminster after her death.

Don was a neighborhood institution. He knew everyone and

was a fixture in the summer on his front porch, with a diet Pepsi and a cigarette.

When the history of the neighborhood was being written in 2008, Marj Weir and Jo Ann Vatcha recruited Don to be interviewed by oral historian Jody Sowell, who said filming Don was a great experience. Don mentioned in the interview that he "hated to leave even for a weekend, afraid I'd miss something. When I'd go to Florida or someplace, I'd send cards back here. Why I don't know. But I'd miss it... it was my street, my neighborhood." Don recounted how he started his rehab,

first painting the trim orange ("I don't know why") and telling of the parties in the 36" deep, 12 foot galvanized pool he put in the garage: "An architect across the street, Herb Levy, and young neighbors Carol and Jim in their twenties took scrap lumber to build a ladder to get into the pool. We called it the Westminster Country Club." He also proudly recalled that former

Alderman Dan McGuire had called him the "Mayor of Westminster".

Throughout his nearly 50 years on Westminster, he had a manicured front lawn and beautiful statues in back. He had a huge collection of salvaged hardware and was always there to share and help. He helped Lara Doyle when her husband was out of town. He was close to his next door neighbor, Dorothy Hood, and provided respite care for her mother who had Alzheimer's. His yearly yard sale was famous for all the antiques and interesting items he had saved through the years. Rags to Riches will never be the same!

He had a famous sweet tooth and spent his last 2 birthdays at Crown Candy and Ted Drewes respectively. Neighbors on Westminster have celebrated Don's birthday with him in recent years. Hitch and Mary Powell were neighbors and friends for 31 years and shared fond memories of his friendship, as did the Fitzpatricks, the Nodiffs, the Nagels, and many others. As Hitch Powell said, "He was a friend to many on 61xx Westminster."

Young neighbor Tashonda Stewart, whose grandparents Willie Mae and Bob Stewart lived near Don for many of those 50 years, said: "It's just like Don to go out in style. Taking into consideration all his years as a Theatrical Agent and then he passes away on the same day as Dick Clark. When I went to see him Monday morning, he told me he was ready. RIP Don. The block won't be the same without you. Dick Clark knows everybody, so together I'm sure you'll put together great shows up there."

Neville Vatcha added, "Don reminded you of the qualities that make our neighborhood, and especially our block, so great. It doesn't matter if you're foreign or native born, black or white, young or old, gay or not. He was your friend and neighbor." In his

Gallery Openings at Four Corners

by Lana Stein



I. Tim Smith and His Work

The gallery/studio at Four Corners now owned by Andy Cross was the site of an opening of a neighbor's work on Friday, April 13. Tim Smith, a longtime resident on 61xx Westminster Pl. filled the walls of the studio with a variety of works. There were line drawings and other compositions and a number of striking photographs. Smith is known to some as the caricaturist holding court at Westminster block parties. On this evening, a number of neighbors, family and friends as well as art lovers in general filled the studio and enjoyed the assembled work. Particularly striking to this writer were two photographs--Three Deer and Pont De Neuf. The photo shows the right bank of the Seine and was taken from one of the baton mouche that ply the river, filled with tourists. The reflection of sunlight makes the work special.

II. "The Art of the Sign" and Bill Christman

Bill Christman has long had a studio at 6014 Kingsbury. In years past, visitors could note a number of signs, often crafted by

Bill. Using the Ars Populi gallery one door to the east, Bill and his fellow curator, Greg Rhomborg, have installed a fascinating assemblage of many different kinds of signs. The opening night for this exhibition was also April 13 and many, many people made their way to Four Corners to see this special installation. Christman says this exhibit represents the golden age of American sign making. The oldest sign ere is Visitation from 1880. Signs in the exhibit date from before the coming of computerization in the 1970s. Prominent in the exhibit is a fiberglass rendering of Sir John Falstaff, made to promote the beer of the same name. About lifesize, it is the only one known still to exist. There are a number of one-of-a-kind signs on display. Christman has also produced "Signpainter's Scrapbook." This work represents 40 years of taking pictures of old signs. It has his favorite 900 pictures from a collection of 6000. This book is available for purchase when the gallery is open--every Thursday evening from 7-10pm and Saturday and Sunday from 1-5pm through June. This exhibits surely demonstrates that signs are an art form that we should experience and remember.

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oral history interview, Don said, "I knew everyone and everyone knew me, and I felt safe here." On his upcoming birthday in July, neighbors will gather on his lawn and drink a toast. One of Don's last acts was to make a small bequest to the block for this year's block party, which will be in his honor.

All are welcome.

IN YOUR EAR

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

What do you think about the lid that's going over highway 70 in downtown? OK, more accurately what do you think about the lid that's going over the highway near the arch?

Granted, that's probably a silly question. I mean, who could be against covering the highway near the arch? When you think about it, it's a win-win. Hey, it may even be a win-win-win!

The cement industry thinks it's a great idea. The construction company likes it a lot. Sod and lawnmower manufacturers have gone on record as saying it's a good thing. It's planned to be finished by October 28, 2015, the fiftieth birthday of the arch. Can you see the cake now? My guess is that it will be a Bob Cassilly-like construction, forty or so feet in diameter with acetylene torches serving as the candles!

But there's more! The U.S. Forest Service people who work at the arch are very happy because it will make it easier to walk to the arch from downtown. Downtown businesses are pleased because the lid should generate more traffic which leads to more dollars. Photographers are happy because now there will be a demand for new shots of the arch from a variety of perspectives. (Yep, your current arch photo will be out-of-date.) The Feds will be pleased because they have an expense that just about everyone endorses ñ unlike tax money spent for wars or deductions for fat cat private jets. Even pickpockets and purse-snatchers who lurk in the area are eager for the project because they'll have more potential victims. (Yep, they're the, drum roll, please, arch criminals!)

Phew, that's quite a list of

supporters. The last time a federal project garnered this much unanimity was the Spanish-American War, and the arch project doesn't have the advantage of William Randolph Hearst's endorsement. With all of this support, how could there be anything, anything at all, wrong with covering the nasty looking highway that currently separates the arch from downtown?

Alas, dear reader, like the charming personality of Newt Gingrich, there's less here than meets the eye. Indeed, with my urban planning background (I did grow up in south St. Louis, after all), I massage the 63112 crystal ball and see the problems inherent in this plan.

Thus in the spirit of rationale, objective, clear-thinking, and candid logic, there are two major problems inherent in the lid. Sad by true, this is a scary idea, maybe second only to the thought of President Gingrich!

First, this is no cheap puppy. We're talking an estimate of \$553,000,000. No, that ain't no typo: five-hundred and fifty-three million bucks. And that doesn't include the gondola ride across the Mississippi or the new park built on the east side. Honest! I am not making this up.

Don't get me wrong. I'm a good liberal Democrat, so taxes being spent in a sloppy and less than efficient manner don't bother me. That's what those rich people are for, after all, to make up the shortfall. Still, that's more than a half-billion dollars. Think of the other things we could do in this community for a half-billion bucks.

We could build a new football stadium, for example, so that the Rams aren't embarrassed by playing in our old antiquated

one, built in the ancient 1990's. My heart always goes out to the Rams. I'm sure that part of their inept performance is because they're forced to play in a stadium that isn't in the upper tier of NFL stadiums! Gasp. Poor, poor Rams.

Or we could take that half billion and return it to the residents of the City of St. Louis, which, after all, is where the arch is located. That would mean that each of our 344,362 people would get a check for \$1,605.86. I don't know about you, but I could find a good use for that \$1,605.85. Think of how many Ted Drewe's chocolate-chip concretes that would buy!

But here's the best option, and apologies in advance for my logical-mathematical mind, why not take that \$553,000,000 and buy lottery tickets? Don't laugh: That much money would allow us to buy enough tickets in every state lottery, including the Power Ball, so that we'd be sure to win. We would turn that paltry \$553,00,000 into some real cash! My guess is that we could win enough to retire the national debt. Would you prefer a lid over the arch or zero national debt? I thought so!

Second, beauty is in the eye of the beholder, recall, and I mourn the loss of watching the cars zipping along the highway. There's something poetic about a Camry followed by a Prius, and don't overlook that dingy tractor-trailer in the next lane. And oh, look, quickly, there's a Ford Escort! Boy oh boy, it doesn't get any more exciting than this! Varoooooooooooo!

Think about it fellow-citizen. We can have more grass and a barren field (as if we need another barren field in our town!) or we can retire the national debt and get to watch the ebb and flow of mechanized art. It seems like a no-brainer to me.

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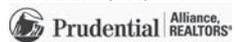
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