

# The *TIMES* of... SKINKER DEBALIVIERE

Vol. 44, No. 4

November - December, 2014

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

The oldest neighborhood newspaper in St. Louis

FREE

Independent and all volunteer-run since 1970

## Open House at "New" Library

November 8, 2014, 2-4 p.m.

by King Schoenfeld

Following a complete renovation, the Charing Cross Branch, located at 356 North Skinker Blvd., has reopened! The St. Louis Public Library will be hosting an Open House to reintroduce their "smallest branch in the STL Library system" to the public on Saturday, November 8 from 2-4 p.m. The renovated Charing Cross features a host of physical improvements including a completely renovated interior, 25 percent more space, and public access Internet computer.

Over the years, the Library has taken several forms in the Skinker-DeBaliviere neighborhood. The Des Peres Branch opened in 1963 at 6003 Kingsbury. It moved

movie 84 Charing Cross Road. In 1997, it was completely renovated and nearly doubled in size.

In 2011, property owner Washington University announced that the entire building housing the Branch was to be renovated, necessitating a move to a temporary location on Delmar. Now, it's coming back home to Skinker.

Thanks to its location on the western border of the city, Charing Cross sees many visitors from both the city and the county. And being in Washington University's backyard, it provides students with an access point to the St. Louis Public Library's extensive resources.



After a fire in 1981, the library moved into a kiosk on Des Peres.

to the former grocery store at 5960 Kingsbury in 1970, but was extensively damaged by fire in 1981 and was forced to close. A small, freestanding kiosk-style building called the Kingsbury Kiosk Branch was opened near the site of the fire-damaged facility.

The Kiosk closed in 1992, and a small storefront branch named Charing Cross was opened in the building at Skinker and McPherson. Rumor has it that members of the Library Board chose the name from the book and

To keep the collection fresh at the smallest branch in the Library system, items rotate in and out on a daily basis. At any given time it has over 4,000 items of all varieties. Despite its diminutive size, it circulates about 27,000 items and sees roughly 19,000 visitors per year. That's equivalent to about one patron every five minutes.

With an all-new space and new amenities, Charing Cross is well-equipped to serve the Skinker-neighborhood for many years to come. Longtime librarian Charles Lampkin will be there to help readers of all ages. Charing Cross's hours are: Monday: Closed; Tuesday-Friday: 1-6 p.m.; Saturday, 9 a.m.-Noon/1-6 p.m. The phone number is 726.2653.



Librarian Charles Lampkin with some longtime customers before moving from Skinker to Delmar during renovations.

## 15th Annual Wintermarkt, Saturday December 6th 2014

By Andrew Cross, Beautification Committee Chair



Every winter, craftpersons and artisans gather at Greg Freeman Park at Kingsbury & Des Peres to display their talents with wonderful gifts you can purchase for your holiday celebrations. You can always find great food to eat (bratwurst, Gluhwein and roasted chestnuts) at the festival and delicious baked goods to take home. Live musical performances fill the air while you browse, shop, and visit with your neighbors. If you wish to enjoy the festival as a volunteer, vendor, or donate baked goods, contact Kelcy Siddall, Community Engagement Coordinator at [sdcc@skinker-debaliviere.com](mailto:sdcc@skinker-debaliviere.com) or call (314) 862-5122.

## USO Canteen Party

STL Village is sponsoring a unique event on November 8, 2014, at the Mahler Ballroom, 4915 Washington Ave. in the CWE, recently named by the American Planning Association as one of the "Best Neighborhoods in the US." Designed as a "USO Canteen Party", 40's style swing music will be provided by the seventeen piece big band "Second Generation Swing."

Light refreshments will be provided, along with a cash bar and a 50-50 raffle. Advance tickets only. Order by phone at 314-802-0275 or online at [stlvillage.org](http://stlvillage.org).

STL Village is a not-for-profit, member-driven community network that helps people 50+ age in their own homes with 24-7 phone/click access to a full range of activities and support services.

## MLK Day Celebration-- Sunday January 18, 2015

Neighbors and friends are invited to a celebration of the life & legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. on Sunday, January 18, 2015. More details will be available closer to the date of the event. For updates visit [www.skinker-debaliviere.com](http://www.skinker-debaliviere.com) or contact the SDCC Office at (314) 862-5122.

## 2015 PartyTimes

Beat the winter winds and support your neighborhood newspaper at our 2015 Winter PartyTimes, scheduled for Saturday, January 17, 2015, 6:00-9:00 p.m. at Andy Cross' studio at 5959 Kingsbury at the Four Corners.

A cash bar will be available, along with light refreshments served potluck style (bring something if you wish). Best of all, admission is just \$ 5!

Donations of any amount are also appreciated.

For more information, contact Lana Stein at 721-5372 or at our Times website, [sdtimes.org](http://sdtimes.org).

## Editor's Notebook

by Lana Stein

### A Fiscal Crossroads

Since 1966, the Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council has served the neighborhood. The Council has received support from the 3 neighborhood churches and Washington University. It has also been the recipient of federal Community Development Block Grant funds dispersed by the city's Community Development Agency. In addition, neighbors have assisted the Council through the Friends' Campaign and the Homecoming. These funding mechanisms in recent years have provided for 2 staff members who have staffed many different events and spearheaded training and services.

Due to budget cutting at the federal level, the CDA allocations have declined in recent years. Now agencies that have received this funding must compete in certain established categories. The money can no longer be used for general service delivery. This year the Council applied for funding in 3 categories but was successful only in receiving \$16,000 for services to senior citizens. This leaves a budget shortfall of \$34,000. In the immediate future, cuts will have to be agreed upon and other methods to raise money decided upon.

One strategy the SDCC is considering is creation of a special taxing district for the neighborhood. Every property owner would pay \$.85 per \$100 in assessed valuation. Parkview would not be included and Skinker DeBaliviere voters would have to approve this tax at an election. At the SDCC Board Meeting in September, Council President Alice Stanley stated that, based on feedback, now would not be a good time to put such a tax on the ballot. More thought would have to be given about how to use the money the tax would raise and how much could go toward the general operations of the council. Stanley said that neighbors would have to ask what the neighborhood would look like without the council. A committee will work on community engagement regarding the establishment of a special taxing district and also how to raise funds from other sources. August 2016 is a likely date for a vote on the district if neighborhood outreach is positive. In the meantime, some changes should be expected to cope with the initial shortfall.

## Transition at Kingsbury Animal Hospital

by Lana Stein

Dr. Steve Brammeier built Kingsbury Animal Hospital on the site of an abandoned gas station in 1978. The practice grew and he had a state-of-art facility erected on Skinker at Kingsbury. Clients come from our immediate area and many other neighborhoods in the St. Louis area. After 36 years, Dr. Steve has sold the practice to his associate, Dr. Bret Shaw. Steve will remain at the clinic for about a year as an employee.

When Kingsbury Animal Hospital opened, it was significant for the neighborhood to see



Dr. Steve Brammeier

this new business established. Skinker DeBaliviere was less stable then but with a very active populace working to make it succeed.

Steve graduated from the University of Missouri veterinary school in 1975 and initially worked at a practice in North County. He was not happy in the situation and contemplated returning to Columbia. In August of 1977 he began working at the first emergency veterinary clinic

in the area. His son was diagnosed with a chronic disease the following month. Remaining in St. Louis near Children's Hospital became important in his decision-making calculus. He had attended the Art Fair on Kingsbury and had been impressed by the neighborhood. He also remembered a boarded up gas station. A family friend bought this structure and remodeled it as an animal hospital.

In June of 1978, Kingsbury Animal Hospital opened. Steve had one assistant then, Amy Zimmerman. He initially worked nights at the emergency clinic and then fulltime at Kingsbury during the day. He spent 26 years in that building of 1650 square feet. He liked this part of the city, our neighborhood and the neighbors. He originally lived on 61xx Westminster, was president of Rosedale Neighbors and helped put together the first Rags to Riches.

now on the 3rd generation of pets of people who were kids when the practice opened. He has always wanted to have a facility that reduces animals' fear. After this current year, he may work part-time there but also has other interests he wants to pursue. He is taking a class at Clayton Studios regarding voiceovers and is interested in cabaret performances. He is likely to stay in St. Louis, in part because he works with his son Ben in his photography business. Steve feels that being here is like being a small town doctor in a city; the neighborhood is so inviting. He has loved his days here. It was really a good decision for him to locate here.

In Dr. Bret Shaw, we have a successor with a similar philosophy. Dr. Shaw is a 1999 graduate of the Mizzou vet school. At that time, he interviewed with Steve at Kingsbury but decided to take a position in Chesterfield instead.

In 2008 he did join the staff at Kingsbury. He has respected the practice Steve built and decided he wished to take over. The clients and staff are second to none. They are very loyal people that you don't find that often. Dr. Shaw wants to maintain the high quality standards of Kingsbury Animal Hospital and keep its standing in the community. Dr. Shaw and his wife live close by with their Hungarian pointer, Pipen. His dog accompanied Dr. Shaw to Better



Dr. Bret Shaw at dog park pop-up event.

He always dreamed of having a more modern and larger building. To use the same site on Skinker, gas lines would have to be removed from the property as well as thousands of gallons of contaminated water. With neighborhood and governmental support, he proceeded and the new building now has replaced the former gas station.

There are about 3,000 active clients at Kingsbury (those seen in the last 3 years). There are 13 staff members. Steve says that they are

Block where he greeted owners and pets that visited the virtual dog park. My toy spaniels, Maisie and Max, liked the park a lot and I hope a real park can arise sometime soon.

On a personal note, Better Block was Max' last civic appearance. He succumbed to congestive heart failure on Oct. 15. He was a very loving dog and Dr. Steve and the Kingsbury staff gave him excellent care. Max will always be in my heart.

## The TIMES of... SKINKER DEBALIVIERE

Co-Editors: Lana Stein and JoAnn Vatcha  
 Business Manager: Linda Cross  
 Contributors: Rachel Boxdorfer, Susanne Knese, Sean McGroarty  
 Christina McGroarty, Cecelia Nadal, Tom Hoerr  
 Richard Bose, Art Santen, Liz Pund  
 Sen. Joe Keaveny, Cheryl Adelstein, Andy Cross  
 Marj Weir, King Schoenfeld, Lana Stein  
 Jo Ann Vatcha

The Times of Skinker DeBaliviere is published by the West End Publishing Co., a not-for profit, independent, community organization.

Layout: Kate Klimut Printing: Arcade Printing

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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](mailto:jvatcha@gmail.com) or [maxlana@sbcglobal.net](mailto:maxlana@sbcglobal.net).

### 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.

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: January 15, 2015. Please send copy by e-mail to [jvatcha@gmail.com](mailto:jvatcha@gmail.com) or by disc to 6117 Westminster, St. Louis, MO 63112.**

# News of Neighbors

By Rachel Boxdorfer

**This issue of News of Neighbors we are going to do things a little bit differently. This time, we are going to take a look at some of our younger neighbors and find out what has been keeping them busy. It turns out that our neighborhood youth are well traveled, studying in amazing places, and sharing their talents with the world!**



For starters, summer was clearly a great time for traveling for many of young residents. Gretchen Boxdorfer participated in a Humanities class at Nerinx Hall High School. The course included three weeks of classroom work in June and then two weeks in Italy, France, and England in July. The travelers visited Rome, Florence, Assisi, Paris, and London, allowing the girls to sample the local flavors and visit the monuments and historic places they had been studying and reporting on. Needless to say, it was enough to give Gretchen a taste for traveling and she looks forward to doing much more of that in the future. Gretchen is the oldest child of Matt and Rachel Boxdorfer (yes she belongs to me!) of the 6100 block of Kingsbury.

Dylan Voss, the oldest child of Tim and Pattie Voss of the 6100 block of McPherson, is spending a semester abroad attending the Webster University campus in Geneva, Switzerland. He left August 18th and is scheduled to return December 21. He's majoring in Audio Production. While studying abroad Dylan has been able to visit Paris, the Burgundy region in France, the town of Les Brenets, Switzerland, and the Chateau de Chillon in Switzerland. The highlight so far according to Dylan has been hiking through the mountains around Les Brenets. And Dylan advises that anyone who has the opportunity to study abroad should definitely do it...sounds like very good advice!

In August, Molly Hart traveled to Rome, Italy to take part in a Brown University Summer Pre-College Global Program. She was selected for participation through a competitive application process that focused on academic achievement, intellectual curiosity, and a readiness for participation in an independent academic and living environment.

Upon arrival, Molly joined students from all of the United States (and several from abroad) moving into a boarding school in the beautiful Avantine Hill neighborhood located next door to the Circus Maximus and a short walk to the Colosseum and the Roman Forum. She took three classes while there including conversational Italian. Molly is the youngest



child of David Hart and Mary Zabriskie of the 6000 block of McPherson.



On June 17th, four of the McGroarty children traveled to Madrid Spain with Sean and Cristina McGroarty, of the 6100 block of McPherson, for the wedding of Arturo Benito. Arturo is the youngest of five siblings-four of whom have lived in St. Louis and attended at St. Roch. Pictured in the St. Roch t-shirts is Arturo Benito and his brother Javier.

Arturo lived with the Genung family, of the 6300 block of Washington, and attended St. Roch in 1996-97. Javier lived with the Genungs and attended St. Roch in 1993-1994. The Genungs also attended the wedding.

The McGroartys arrived in Spain the day



before the Coronation of the new King of Spain and walked the parade route that afternoon. Spanish flags were everywhere, a truly amazing sight.

Brendan and Joe McGroarty stayed in Spain while the rest of the family departed after a week. The boys were there for three weeks with Javier and Arturo's oldest sister, Currita Benito Lopez and her four children.

Brendan went backpacking with in the mountains of Spain near Avila where he tent camped with a Jesuit youth group for a week. While there he was with Claudio Olalla (who stayed with both the Gudiswitz and Voss families

in summers past) Claudio was a counselor at Brendans camp. After camping Brendan was in Madrid and the Benito family summer house in Avila for the rest of the time to work on his Spanish!



Joe McGroarty was with Currita's family as well and stayed in Avila. While working on his Spanish he also worked on catching frogs and meeting the family rabbits. He also went to the attraction Park in Madrid and rode horses (as did Brendan).

Michael Noble of the 5700 block of McPherson reports that his son, Mike Jr, a photojournalist, is currently working on a six month internship for the Hawkeys Newspaper, in Burlington, Iowa, Mike Junior is pictured here at a University of Iowa football game. You can see some of Mike's



work on his blog at <http://www.michaelnoblejr.com/blog/the-hawk-eye>. He is a very talented photographer, so please, make the time to take a look!

Do you have news to share? Please send your submissions via email with the subject line News of Neighbors to [rachelb@sdtimes.org](mailto: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."

**28th Ward Democrats**  
**2014 meetings:**  
 November 20  
 December 8  
**Dressel's Pub Above 419 N. Euclid**  
**7:30 p.m.**  
 For up to date info on programs & other news of politics, go to the 28th Ward website: <http://ward28.citywestend.org/index.html>  
**Alderman Lyda Krewson 367-975•**  
**lyda.krewson@pgav.com**

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# Peacock 24 Hour Diner Now Open



Kitty Radcliffe of the St. Louis Convention and Visitors Bureau and Kevin Johnson of the St. Louis Post Dispatch helped Joe Edwards inaugurate the new Peacock Carousel of Love.

The fabulous neon peacock sign is lit, and the first 24-hour diner in the Loop is now open. Brainchild of Joe Edwards, the Peacock is located at 6261 Delmar, on the ground floor of the Lofts of Washington University student apartments. More than a million dollars has been spent on the new 5,000 square foot restaurant's build out and design. Diners can watch the pastry chefs in action making S'mores pies (and many other flavors), while a full-service bar with St. Louis-brewed craft beers, creative cocktails, wine and specially "spiked" milkshakes are available until 1 a.m. Don't miss seeing the Peacock Carousel of

Love, a unique curved wall booth with its own TV, just one of the diner's attractions.

The varied height stools and unique lighting enhance the image of the colorful bird.

Why the peacock? Joe said: "to appeal to people from all over the country and the world. The Loop is such a melting pot of ages, ethnicities and ideas, and we're proud of that neighborhood dynamic. A peacock symbol seemed to be a perfect match."

He shared his concept with his daughter, Hope Edwards, a professional graphic designer, who has turned this vision into a fully detailed design and piece



Hope Edwards under the fabulous peacock sign now a landmark on Delmar.

of artwork, with input from Kiku Obata & Company, and finally into a physical sign by Piros Signs, a third generation company based in Barnhart, MO.

"All I've ever wanted to do was

create places that are fun, where people could go and be happy, said Joe. The Peacock Diner, always open, is definitely the place for fun in the Loop.

## From Senator Joe Keaveny

The Legislature convened on Sept. 10 for the annual veto session. This year, the second-highest number of bills received the governor's veto. In addition to the 33 bills available for override consideration, the 55 line-items vetoed in the Fiscal Year 2015 budget resulted in a record number of items vetoed. This led to a record number of veto overrides.

Among the 125 total vetoed line-items, 47 were overrode, returning

to the budget approximately \$41 million. Some highlights of the budget for \$3.5 million for a reading program specifically for provisionally and unaccredited school districts, \$3 million for recruitment and training for teachers in academically deficient school districts and \$150,000 for the Bright Futures Program.

On a positive note, the following day the governor released \$143 million in funds he had withheld

from Missouri students and schools, including \$43 million in performance funding for higher education and \$100 million for the foundation formula for public schools.

I cannot in good conscience allow my personal support of individual budget items to outweigh my duty to protect Missouri's balanced budget. The state government of Missouri runs on a budget, which at the end of the day must be balanced. While I wholeheartedly support many of the underlying programs that were vetoed from the budget, I also support the governor's hard decisions of how to balance this budget.

These short-sighted veto overrides will leave our budget hundreds of millions of dollars out of balance while revenue collections are down. The General Assembly should have considered all of the governor's line item vetoes as a whole in order to weigh the balance of all programs being cut. Instead, only the two budget chairmen determined the 50 or so politically

expedient line-item vetoes that would be brought up to override. To solve one program's shortfall, we must take from another.

### November 4 election:

**Amendment 2:** The introduction of prior charges or convictions is extremely prejudicial therefore I OPPOSE Amendment 2.

**Amendment 6:** This amendment only allows for six days of early voting and does not include weekends. I OPPOSE this measure because it disenfranchises people who are eligible to vote, but have limitations on transportation and work flexibility.

**Amendment 10:** I OPPOSE Amendment 10 because it would not allow the governor to have discretion on how to manage finances and balance the budget that is delivered by the Legislature. We should fully fund education and stop cutting revenue so the governor does not have to cut necessary services and programs out of the budget.

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# Kids Corner

by Susanne Knes

**In the week before Thanksgiving Mary-Jo asked her class of 9 year-olds to write a paragraph entitled: 'What I am most thankful for on Thanksgiving Day'.**

All Joey could write was: 'I am thankful that I'm not a turkey at Thanksgiving.'

Kid Friendly Events around our Neighborhood:

**November 7th** (1st Friday of the Month) Public Telescope Viewing at the Science Center

**November 22 - 23rd** Stella, Queen of the Snow at COCA

**November 27th** Thanksgiving Day Parade in Downtown St. Louis

**November 27th** Weekend - Light Up Delmar

**December 5th** (1st Friday of the Month) Public Telescope Viewing at the Science Center

**December 12, 13 & 14th** The Little Dancer ballet at COCA

**January 10 & 11th** Perpetual Motion Hip-Hop dance at COCA

If you have other kid friendly events you would like included in this section, please email [kidscorner@sdtimes.org](mailto:kidscorner@sdtimes.org)

Question for February edition: What is your favorite Dr. Seuss story or quote? And / or Submit a valentine picture. Include your name and age. Please submit drawings and answers to [kidscorner@sdtimes.org](mailto:kidscorner@sdtimes.org) by January 10th!



Marj Weir and granddaughter Erin enjoyed the State Fair at Better Block.

## Tim McCarver



Shown here with an admirer at the installation of his star on the Loop Walk of Fame, Tim McCarver holds a photo of himself with Bob Gibson, another of the Cardinal greats. "McCarver debuted with the STL Cardinals in 1959 at the age of 17. A fine defensive catcher and a dangerous hitter, McCarver became a mainstay on the great Cardinals teams of the 1960s. An all star in 1966 and 1967, he played in four decades before retiring in 1980 and moving to the broadcast booth. Known for his keen insight and expert analysis, McCarver worked for all four major television networks and called 24 World Series from 1985-2013. A best-selling sports author as well as an Emmy-winning announcer, Tim McCarver won baseball's Ford C. Frick Award in 2012 and was enshrined in the broadcaster's wing of the Hall of Fame."

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Web: [stuartkeatinglaw.com](http://stuartkeatinglaw.com)

*I'm a five year Skinker-DeBaliviere resident who graduated from Washington University School of Law in 2012. My legal experience includes: estate planning, small businesses, real estate, landlord/tenant, traffic, family law.*

*The choice of a lawyer is an important decision and should not be based solely upon advertisements.*

**Rachel Boxdorfer**  
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# News from the Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council

by Liz Pund, Executive Director

At its October board meeting, SDCC passed the Skinker DeBaliviere Urban Design & Development Plan (the neighborhood master plan) and will pursue its adoption by the City of St. Louis as the official Skinker DeBaliviere neighborhood plan. The master planning process began in 2012 and involved a 1-1/2 year public engagement process including 10 focus groups, 7 public meetings (including two during the 2013 Transit-Oriented Development Study of the Delmar & DeBaliviere/Forest Park Metrolink Stations), and two volunteer-assisted studies on neighborhood walkability/bikability

and building conditions. Planning documents were also shared on the SDCC website for public viewing and feedback throughout the planning process.

The plan has already generated momentum, including a grant to promote the revitalization of the historic Wabash Station, the ongoing formation of the East Loop Community Improvement District (CID), the Bike St. Louis improvements to Des Peres Avenue, the Better Block Project, lighting improvements being installed along Skinker Blvd this fall, and more. The final plan document is available for viewing on the SDCC website, [www.skinker-debaliviere.com](http://www.skinker-debaliviere.com). Thank you to everyone who participated in laying this foundation for the neighborhood's future.

In September, the St. Louis Community Development Administration announced its funding recommendations for the 2015 Community Development Block Grant program which include \$16,000 for SDCC to conduct an Aging in Place Program.

In past years, SDCC has received an average of approximately \$50,000 in CDBG funding; next year's reduction leaves SDCC with an estimated shortfall of \$35,000 for the 2015 calendar year. To address the overall SDCC budget

shortfall, the board of directors is anticipating some changes in SDCC's capacity and priorities. As a result of our revitalization efforts over the years, the percent of the neighborhood that is classified as low- to moderate-income has dropped below 50%. While this is positive news for the neighborhood, it also causes SDCC to establish new ways of funding its operations. SDCC is in the early stages of exploring the possibility of establishing a Special Taxing District for the neighborhood, which would involve public engagement before a potential vote in August 2016.

## Bike St. Louis Phase III Improvements to Des Peres Avenue

By Elizabeth Simons, Assistant Project Manager at Great Rivers Greenway



The new view facing south at the Des Peres cul-de-sac, just north of Washington Ave.

Des Peres Avenue is a connecting corridor for people who ride bikes and is part of Bike St. Louis Phase III. In this phase of the Bike St. Louis project, Great Rivers Greenway and the City of St. Louis are adding an additional forty miles of on-street bike routes and upgrading sixty miles of the existing Bike St. Louis network

to create bicycle connections throughout the City of St. Louis and neighboring communities.

A bicycle cut through has been added to the cul-de-sac at Delmar Boulevard, and a shared use path has been added between Forest Park Parkway and Pershing Avenue. The shared use path guides pedestrians and cyclists

to the east side of Des Peres Avenue when crossing Forest Park Parkway and the Metrolink bridge. Improvements have been made to the intersection of Des Peres Avenue and Forest Park Parkway to make the crossing ADA accessible. Shared lane markings called "sharrows" are being added to Des Peres Avenue. The sharrows mark Des Peres Avenue as a through route for cyclists and encourage drivers of motor vehicles and people riding bikes to share the road safely. Shared lane markings promote the three central principles of street smarts - attentiveness, patience and willingness to share the road with others.

The Bike St. Louis Phase III roadway improvements were developed by an advisory committee made up of representatives from various transportation agencies and residents from throughout the

City of St. Louis with guidance from the public. In partnership with the Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council, the Bike St. Louis Phase III plans for Des Peres Avenue were adapted to fit the priorities identified in the Skinker DeBaliviere Urban Design and Development Plan (also known as the neighborhood master plan) as well as feedback from neighborhood residents at a public meeting that was held in March 2014. The cul-de-sac cut through, shared use path and shared lane markings improve the connections to Delmar Boulevard and Forest Park for pedestrians and cyclists.

Bike St. Louis Phase III is being funded by contributions from Great Rivers Greenway and the City of St. Louis and a \$1.1 million Federal Transportation grant. For more information, updates and maps of the Bike St. Louis Phase III network, visit [www.bit.ly/BikeSTLPhaseIII](http://www.bit.ly/BikeSTLPhaseIII).



Better Block at the Wabash.



Kelcy Siddall as a Cardinal with Monique Hudspeth at the 2014 Homecoming party at Joe's Cafe.

## The Way We Were

by Mary Jane Barlett Conrades

The Skinker-Debaliviere neighborhood - I know it well - but I didn't realize it had a name. Good! That's better than "the Old Neighborhood" I grew up there on McPherson Avenue - 6150 to be exact. My grandparents, Charles and Mollie Devlin Bartlett bought the house in about 1914 when it was brand new. [They had moved from the area now known as Carr Square Village in a row house Mollie's father purchased in the 1870s.]

How they appreciated living in the West End, out of the crowded city, in such a spacious new home! My father, Dan Bartlett, could walk to Washington University and he said there were so few buildings around that they could hear the lions roar in the Zoo. Since they didn't have an automobile, they didn't mind not having a garage. Public transportation was right up at the corner on Skinker. I still have a 1917 photo of 6150 with Grandma's Service Flag with three stars in the living room window, proudly proclaiming that the Bartletts had three sons in the Army.

After the war, when I came along we all lived in that big house, my uncles in the third floor rooms and the rest of us [including my two great aunts] on the second floor with ONE bathroom. Hard to realize nowadays - but I don't think that any of our neighbors had more than one bathroom. All the houses had ash pits in the yard where trash was burned and coal chutes to deliver the coal to the coal bins in the basements.

In 1925 with my little sister on the way my parents made the wise decision to rent a flat down the street at 6047 McPherson and there we stayed till 1932. Captain John McCarthy and his family lived upstairs and when he was made Chief of the St. Louis Police Force we really celebrated. My three year old brother was invited to see Chief McCarthy sworn in and by request sang "the Maine Stein Song" to the Courtroom. [It was Danny's specialty.]

I made friends with all the neighbor kids who all went to St. Rochs Grammar School. My special friends were the Quirks who lived at 6049 McPherson. In the summer we cooled ourselves off by running through the sprinklers on the lawns and jumping on the back of the Polar Wave ice truck to beg pieces of ice to suck on .At night before bedtime we played Rock School on our steps, Tag, Red Rover, The Farmer in the Dell, etc., etc. The Good Humor man with his ice cream wagon would con my father into buying ice cream bars on a stick for the whole gang gathered in front of our house. The organ-grinder man's little monkey collected coins in his tiny cap. The hot-tamale man shouted his wares at night and the watchman knocked his club against the curb in front of the house to say, "All was well."

On my birthdays in August the Quirks and we would put on a backyard show. [We were deeply

influenced by the Munny Opera and the stage shows at the Fox.] This yearly occurrence included singing and dancing and a Charlie Chaplin movie that my father rented. Mrs. Quirk made crepe paper costumes and we would rehearse for weeks! Pop put up Japanese lanterns all around the yard and had the boys in the neighborhood give out ice cream cones [to keep them from making fun of our show and otherwise causing trouble.]

My brother and sister and I attended Hamilton School through the eighth grade. It was quite a walk, but we actually came all the way home for lunch. On bad days we took our lunch and ate in the gymnasium. When we were old enough to handle the financial responsibility we were given twenty five cents to buy our lunch at the Blue Moon Cafe which was on Delmar. If we managed to save five cents by not ordering mashed potatoes we spent it on penny candy at Cohen's drugstore on the corner of Delmar and Hamilton.

The River DesPeres ran along the east side of our block and sometimes it smelled to high heaven. We kids called it the River DeStink. None of us were allowed to go down the street that far, of course. Then the city decided to enclose the river and pave over it



River DesPeres collapse 1931.

to make DesPeres Avenue. It was a thrilling event when the workers dynamited some of the buildings and half of Voges Drug Store on the east bank fell in the river bed. We loved the drama.

In the 6000 block of Kingsbury west of the river [or DesPeres Avenue] were several small stores. Our grocery store, Jake Mauer's, was on the south side. Jake was the kindly butcher who would put up with our coming by after school and charging sodas to our parents' accounts. Schattgens' bakery was there, too which had wonderful damson plum coffee cake in the autumn. I think there was a beauty shop alongside. Baeppler's drug store was across the street on the west corner. [We only patronized the one on Skinker and McPherson.]. In the very early days before they covered up the river Miller's grocery store occupied



Francis Brennan, Jimmy Sprick, Dan, Jack and Jane McEnergy, and Nancy Quirk were some of the McPherson children.

the northeast corner. Miller had the sorriest looking delivery wagon with the most weebegone horse. It looked as if it would tip over any minute.

When my great aunts died in 1931 and my uncle moved to Detroit, my father bought 6150 McPherson from his mother and the five of us moved back up the street. St. Louis summer heat always has been perfectly awful and in the evening all the families on the street would either sit on their front porches or pull lawn chairs on the grass to catch any breezes. A lot of memorable visiting went on back and forth, of course.

We were allowed to play our

course we would attend, sitting inconspicuously in the back row and admire the bride - but also feeling sorry for her because she had to stay with one man the rest of her life. We personally were in love with a raft of movie stars - mine was Nelson Eddy. If our parents didn't catch us we would hang around the corner drugstore and read movie magazines in front of the rack.

Our two movie theatres were the Pageant and the Tivoli; the Varsity was a later addition. When I was older, my parents used to let us join the Quirks to walk up to the Tivoli. There were always double features and it only cost 35c. If we had time we used to go into the Tivoli apartments and ring all the doorbells and run.

Another one of the summertime attractions in the area was the Vegetable Man, Mr. Deuser, who came from a rural truck farm in the wilds of Creve Coeur. He drove a marvelous truck in which the customers could enter up little steps with the produce displayed on either side. I can still picture my grandmother hearing Mr. Deuser's call, grabbing her pocketbook and rushing out to the sidewalk.

My family wasn't Catholic, but my sister and I joined the Girl Scouts at St. Roch's. Miss Veslage was our long suffering leader who took us caroling at Christmas and camping on weekends. We even delivered copies of the *Ladies' Home Journal* to the soldiers at the Veterans' Hospital.

These were Depression days, but none of us were conscious of any deprivation. Occasionally, men would knock on the back door, looking for work. Grandma and Mother would fix them a plate of food and have them do a little job in the yard... Hamilton School had a sewing class for us to make clothes for "poor children." We used a fleet of the old pedal sewing machines and, although we tried very hard, I now feel sorry for any children who had to wear what we kids made.

I could go on reminiscing forever. After all, I lived on McPherson until I was married in 1948 and my mother and father didn't move until 1971. We never had a garage and I am an expert in parallel parking. It was a wonderful place to grow up in and I guess it still is. I hope someone is still playing Rock School on the front steps and hopscotch on the sidewalk.

Missouri History Museum

# IN YOUR EAR

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

What's more broken, the Rams football team, the City's snow removal program when more than three inches falls, or our federal democratic system? My bias is politics. Chances are that the L.A. Rams will make it to the Super Bowl before we have a reasonable congress.

What's going on? Is our democratic system broken because of (a) our pathetic voter turnout -- it was 58.2% in the last national election, or (b) because of the caliber of people who run for office, or (c) the quality of candidates we elect, or (d) all of the above? Yep, it's (d). That's pretty sad. Bring back Ross Perot. (And what does it say that I consider HIM a reasonable candidate?)

So, as a community service, In Your Ear will solve this problem. Yep, I will fix our democratic system. Here are five ways to keep democracy, yet tidy and tighten the system. I've been channeling both Thomas Jefferson and Ben Franklin, and they approve. (They're on the History Channel, right after Pickers and before the duck call guys.) Take notes!

**Solution #1:** Forget voting booths and requiring people to get out of their pajamas and trek to the polls. Make at-home voting -- no photo ID required! -- pure and simple. If Amazon can sell me books and clothes and hearing aid batteries (size 10, please) without being confused, how hard can it be to offer on-line voting? "You've got mail" becomes "You've got ballot." Those people who still listen to vinyl records can go to the library and log-in there.

**Solution #2:** Forget registering voters. Realistically, our problem is not that too many people want to vote so why have an extra hurdle like registration? Instead of requiring irrelevant information like identity or asking for a picture, we should be encouraging everyone to vote. After all, it would be hard for even the most ignorant population to make worse decisions than our present legislators. So instead of bothering to determine eligibility, tie each vote to a pastry. Every glazed donut purchased at Dunkin' Donuts equals one vote. There's

no issue with who gets to vote, hanging chads, or when the polling place opens. Further, if you had to pick a criterion for who should get to decide important issues, I'd put my money with people who eat glazed donuts rather than who has what degree or went to school where. (Plus this would be good for my Dunkin' Donuts stock.)

**Solution #3:** Only women get to vote. Sorry, guys, and apologies to T.J. and the rest of the white, male founders. Women almost always make better decisions than men so we guys should get out of the way. If the women were in charge, do you think we'd have barged into the Middle East? Would 20% of our children live in poverty? I think not. Case closed. (Relax guys, you get the NFL.)

**Solution #4:** Turn the process upside-down by, drum roll, getting really good candidates. Democracy would work if we had bright, honest, caring, hard-working people running for office and who would work to find solutions if elected. OK, sorry, it's not fair to throw out such an unrealistic idea, I know. Forget this one. Let's go to the donut store.

**Solution #5.** Let me decide. We'd still have a democracy because people would get to vote, but their votes wouldn't matter because I'd be making all of the important decisions. I'd let them think their vote matters by giving them the small decisions, things like taxes and health care and abortion. You got to keep folks happy, says the king. But I'd make the big ones from behind the curtain, such as if we should build a new football stadium and whether or not to have a snow day.

See how easy that was? Next month I'll offer solutions for health care and the Missouri Lottery.

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