

The *TIMES* of... SKINKER DEBALIVIERE

Vol. 49, No.1

Summer 2019

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

The oldest neighborhood newspaper in St. Louis

FREE

Independent and all volunteer-run since 1970

Juneteenth Celebration Kicks Off Delmar Loop Week

by Rachele L'Ecuyer

There's always something going on in the Delmar Loop, everyday there's a high level of vibrancy and activity. Now is the time to revisit your favorite businesses and discover new ones during Delmar Loop Week.

Here's the calendar of events:

DELMAR LOOP WEEK:

Saturday, June 15 to Saturday, June 22: Celebrate the Kick-off to Summer in St. Louis and enjoy a week of events and happenings! All of the information is available at VisitTheLoop.com and on the Delmar Loop's Facebook page, @TheDelmarLoop.

Saturday, June 15: Noon to 5 PM, Juneteenth Celebration at Delmar and Hamilton. Music, performances, activities and food. Bring the family and enjoy a day of fun. This is a great opportunity to check out the new businesses in the 5800 block of Delmar.

Sunday, June 16: all day, Sweet Loop Tour. Take a self-guided tour of specially sized and priced goodies throughout the Delmar Loop. It's Father's Day, National Cannoli Day and National Fudge Day, but do you need any more reasons to get out and satisfy your sweet tooth?

Monday, June 17: all day, Game Night in the Loop. Start the day with coffee and a board game and end

JUNETEENTH
SAT JUNE 15TH
DELMAR LOOP-HAMILTON & DELMAR
12PM-5PM

LIVE PERFORMANCES

OPENING CEREMONY 1PM
DRUM CALL KUNYAMA HITTENDAJI
STORY STITCHERS 2PM
PANOJA ENSEMBLE 3PM
GROOVE TRIBE 4PM

SOUNDS BY DJ KP DA KID

THE LOOP DELMAR

the day with darts, bowling, karaoke, and even an escape room experience.

Tuesday, June 18: all day, Taco Tuesday. Come hungry! The Delmar Loop has some of the best tacos in town. Our award-winning restaurants will be offering taco and taco inspired specials.

Wednesday, June 19: Yappy Hour, happy hour

with your dog! Bring your best friend and enjoy outdoor dining with drink specials and treat specials at Three Dog Bakery.

Thursday, June 20: all day, Pride Day Food Outreach Food Drive. Bring a canned food donation to a participating business and get a discount or a treat while helping this important regional organization that provides nourishing meals to clients with cancer and HIV/AIDs. Join the Queens in Space at the Moonrise Hotel for the evening.

Friday, June 21: Make Music Day. Celebrate the Summer Solstice with music. Public pianos, acoustic performances and a special live performance at the U. City Farmers Market.

Saturday, June 22: 9 AM to 3 PM, Loop Arts Fest. The grand finale to a great week. Celebrate the arts in the Delmar Loop. Experience art in all forms from culinary arts to literary arts to musical arts to visual arts. Activities and fun for all at the Delmar Loop's cultural institutions, art galleries and businesses.

There's plenty to do in the Delmar Loop all summer. Take the time to rediscover your favorite businesses and while you are in the Delmar Loop check out these new businesses: Bob.Q Korean BBQ, 571 Melville | Babes Boutique, 6378 Delmar | Fox Fire Restaurant and Bar, 6679 Delmar | Mark Anthony Collections, 618 N. Skinker | Shiquan Wonton, 6138 Delmar.

There's always something going on! Find listings at VisitTheLoop.com and on the Delmar Loop's Facebook page, @TheDelmarLoop.



photo by King Schoenfeld

Kickoff for the Team

A year-long celebration of fifty years in publication kicked off on Friday, May 17, with a party at the Cross Art Studio on Des Peres and Kingsbury. There were some special guests who helped start this wonderful neighborhood collaboration: from the very first issue in April, 1970, the Business Manager, Joe Vaughn, was brought to the event by Lu Green. Also named in that first issue, Rose Storey and Vince Schoemehl were in attendance. There were several former editors and longtime contributors: Peggy Hermes, Sue Rothschild, and Marj Weir, who has morphed from paper to internet and runs our great website, with all the past issues from all 49+ years! Marj put together a great slide show with photographs from the *TIMES*, which will also be available on our website, www.sdtimes.org.

Applause was given to King Schoenfeld, our great photographer for so many years, who has recently donated his photo library to MOHIS; and Tom Hoerr, our longest running columnist, who has written his column for almost 40 years. Newer contributors Dan Rater and Rachele L'Ecuyer, Alderwoman Heather Navarro, and Frank Schafer, an unexpected addition

to our history columns writing about the firehouse on DeBaliviere, also attended the party.

Special thanks were given to longtime advertisers and boosters Joe Edwards and Karleen Hoerr. We missed some of our "staff" Rachel Boxdorfer and Susanne Knese and Mark Banaszak, who were unable to attend.

Co-Editors Lana Stein and Jo Ann Vatcha made a big announcement as they introduced the new "Editorial Team Leader" Linda Cross. Linda recognized our faithful deliverers, who have delivered every issue to each neighbor's door for almost 50 years, the only neighborhood newspaper in St. Louis to do so.

Joe Edwards rounded out the night with a special recognition for all who have kept the paper going all these years, as he said, keeping strong the lines of communication among neighbors, dispelling rumors, stressing accuracy and letting everyone know about our great neighborhood.

We were also very pleased that Mayor Lyda Krewson and husband Mike Owens joined the celebration. We look forward to an even bigger event in 2020 when we actually turn 50!

Airbnb Properties Reclassified by Assessor

By Marvin Nodiff

Hundreds of Airbnb properties in the city are being reclassified from residential to commercial for property tax purposes, the St. Louis Assessor's Office announced May 10. The reclassification will take effect with the next biennial reassessment.

Based on an evaluation of online platforms, Assessor Michael Dauphin sent notice of the change to 235 operators in the city. These properties are operated as "commercial enterprises" because, as Dauphin noted, the owners live off-site. The review found that the owners of more than half of the reclassified properties live outside St. Louis, in states as far away as California, Colorado and Arizona.

The reclassification will increase the amount of property tax for affected properties. The rate for calculating the tax will rise from the 19 percent of appraised value under the residential classification to 32 percent for commercial properties.

The Assessor's decision affects several Airbnb properties in Skinker-DeBaliviere and is consistent with research by the Residential Housing & Zoning Committee, appointed by the Community Council. The transient use inherent in short-term rentals (STRs), the business nature of operations and loss of owner-occupants are detrimental to residential neighborhoods, according to the Committee.

STRs show phenomenal growth led by Airbnb and other online platforms. Airbnb started in 2008 but went mainstream in 2013-14. By 2017, it had two million listings worldwide

in 34,000 cities and 101 countries, with annual revenue estimated at \$1.7 billion and a value of \$30 billion. Property owners – hosts – use global platforms that connect travelers with lodging and share fees with the platforms. As economist Thomas L. Friedman notes in *Thank You for Being Late*, Airbnb "has grown so large that it is now bigger than all the major hotel chains combined – even though ... it doesn't own a single bed."

Hosts can earn more in only 83 nights compared to a traditional one-year lease. Greater profitability has led to the emergence of commercial operators with multiple properties, a dramatic shift from Airbnb's origins where a homeowner could supplement income by renting a spare room. Today, instead of a homeowner greeting a guest at the front door, the operator lives off-site and the guest is greeted by a lockbox on the front door.

STR operators do not create new housing units. Instead, they convert single-family dwellings for STRs, which has the effect of losing our most important asset – a neighbor – and replacing this asset with a mini-hotel.

The Committee views the Assessor's decision as significant because it recognizes that off-site STR operators are conducting a business. This undermines the quality of residential neighborhoods, like dropping a hotel in the middle of our streets. Based on the committee's work, SDCC recommends that STRs be treated as hotels for zoning purposes, and banned in neighborhoods zoned Residential A and B.

Editor's Notebook

By Lana Stein

The Notebook

I have been struck by generational differences in participation here in our neighborhood. Those who weathered the difficulties the neighborhood experienced in the 1970s are often still the stalwarts in support of the Times and also those who question new phenomena they feel place the neighborhood at risk. The next generation are middle-aged, on the way to being empty nesters. They often have records of involvement but it may be of a certain duration while they get on with their busy lives. The still younger group of neighbors is not steeped in our history and may attend a concert or other event. Unlike decades ago, mothers frequently work outside the home and have greater constraints on their time.

Changes at the SDCC over the past decade have worked against increasing neighborhood involvement. When I moved here 30 years ago, the council office was a fulcrum of communication. Rumors could be put to rest. Neighbors could

be asked personally to volunteer. But now, the office is open ostensibly Monday to Thursday from 10 to 4. Even with these truncated hours, no one is there during lunchtime. The board only meets nine times a year. Only one or two others check in to see the proceedings. The emphasis is on raising money but for what? Salaries. The loss of federal funds. If events of a historic nature don't make enough money, forget them.

This has always been a friendly neighborhood where people of disparate backgrounds came together with the purpose of stabilizing our neighborhoods. If the council tosses the gauntlet to committees and is no longer a policy maker in its own right, it becomes a shell.

Those of us grey heads will not be around forever. We don't want to see our institutions atrophy. Our neighborhood is challenged by AirBNBs, by a population that is over 20% students. We need to protect our diversity and stability and demonstrate the ability to adapt as new challenges arise. A sign of our success historically has been a high level of involvement. Let's see if we can recapture that more widespread commitment.

Neighbors Remaking Downtown

Lana Stein

Several of us celebrate birthdays over lunch. In April we chose the restaurant in the newly renovated St. Louis Hotel at 705 Olive. The building was designed by noted architect Louis Sullivan in 1892 and opened as the Union Trust Building the following year. Its new incarnation captures Sullivan's unique exterior molding. It contains both hotel rooms and apartments,

It is no wonder that developers Amy and Amrit Gill were recipients of the McReynolds award for commitment to historic preservation from the Missouri Alliance for Historic Preservation this year. The Gills are longtime residents of our neighborhood. Another neighbor, very active in Skinker DeBaliviere, Andy Cross, provided much of the interior artwork, echoing Sullivan's designs. Another former neighbor, art glass artisan Adam Johnson, also worked with the Gills to make some memorable art glass ceilings. The Hotel provides guided tours that demonstrate the fusion of past and present. Congratulations to our neighbors for their contributions to preservation and to downtown.

P.S. The Gills plan to renovate the 17 story Chemical Building to the immediate west of Hotel St. Louis as Hotel and apartments.



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: August 15, 2019.
Please send copy by e-mail to jvatcha@gmail.com or by disc to 6117 Westminster, St. Louis, MO 63112.

The TIMES of... SKINKER DEBALIVIERE

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News of Neighbors

By Rachel Boxdorfer

At this time of year when life is so busy with changing seasons, graduations, and more, I am reminded to take it all in and try and enjoy the ride. Life moves too quickly with no guarantees for tomorrow. So my column is brief as I enjoy some of those wonderful events for my own family.



Maddy Boxdorfer and her classmate and neighbor Colton Tiede

I will begin with a personal shout out to my girls; Maddy Boxdorfer, who along with 19 classmates graduated from St. Roch on May 17th. Congratulations to the Class of 2019, many of whom have been together since preschool! And Gretchen Boxdorfer, who graduated summa cum laude from Rockhurst University on May 18th and is headed to the University of Nebraska Omaha to pursue her masters in mathematics. I'm a proud mom! I know we have lots of other graduates in the neighborhood from all levels of education and who are pursuing new adventures. Please send along your photos and notes about these events. People love to hear news about neighbors, especially our neighborhood youth!



Gretchen Boxdorfer

As for not taking life for granted, I am incredibly sad to share the news of the passing of a treasured neighbor and friend, Kurt Lutjens. Kurt passed away on March 29th after a very short battle with cancer.

Kurt had resided most recently (and for many, many years) on the 6000 block of McPherson. In addition to being a wonderful friend and neighbor, Kurt was the former pastor of Grace and Peace Fellowship. He leaves behind three adult children; Heidi, Jeffrey, and Carrie, and now joins his late wife, Susan.



Kurt Lutjens

To know Kurt was to love and admire Kurt. He was so kind, so caring, so gentle and helpful, and an incredible listener. He was genuine. His life was celebrated April 5th at New Perfect Peace Missionary Baptist Church and on April 6th at Grace and Peace Fellowship. Donations in his memory can be made to Serge - Christ School Bundibugyo or ALS Association - St. Louis Regional Chapter.



Claire Rater and Peace Corps friend in Senegal

One of our younger neighborhood residents seeking out exciting opportunities and adventures; Claire Rater, who is the oldest daughter of Dan and Molly Rater's (of Kingsbury Square) has joined the Peace Corps. Claire will be in Kolda in the southern part of Senegal and will be speaking Pulaar. It is a pretty remote area so they do not expect to hear much from her during her service and she will have limited cell phone

service, no running water, and no electricity. Claire is a 2017 graduate of University of Wisconsin Madison, Rosati Kain Class of 2013, and St. Roch Class of 2009.

Claire is very excited and has already made lots of friends there. Her group has 70 volunteers! Best wishes to Claire and thank you for your service.

On Sunday, May 19, the New York Times featured a story showcasing the growth of youth hockey in the St. Louis area. At 9, Van Meara of 59xx Pershing plays on a team that travels to meets. Van is the son of Sean and Angie Meara. He is included in a picture of teammates accompanying the Times articles. Quite a coup for the young fellow.



Alderwoman Heather Navarro and Johnny Zokovitch

A belated congratulations to our 28th Ward Alderwoman Heather Navarro, recently married to Johnny Zokovitch. Residents of the 6000 block of Pershing, the busy couple participates in St. Roch School activities, as well as all our neighborhood work.

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". We love to hear about neighbors accomplishments, awards, travels, weddings, anniversaries, births, and more!

Proud to be a Skinker DeBaliviere Resident!

Rachel Boxdorfer
www.RachelBoxdorfer.com

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Getting Even

By Dan Rater

I emigrated from Milwaukee to St. Louis thirty one years ago, enticed by the mild winters, and summer's inferno. I met my wife here, and all three of my children were born here. Along the way, I've grown fond of the beer, square pizza, and gooey butter cake, all St. Louis staples. I must confess, however, to one St. Louis tradition I've refused to embrace; St. Louis Cardinals baseball. I'm an admitted Milwaukee Brewer fan. In St. Louis, that's viewed with more amusement, than disdain. Why eat hamburger when you can have steak? I think it's my inner vegetarian screaming for attention.

Baseball can be a bridge between the past and present. At the ballpark, the shadows cast from the freckle faced little boy, with an oversized mitt on his hand, reveal the man in the nosebleeds with liver spots, and an overpriced beer, instead of the mitt.

To tell the truth, I was never any good at baseball. I was what you might call a zero tool player. I couldn't hit, field, catch or throw. My greatest on field memory came when I was twelve years old. Somehow, I snow coned a routine pop up for the second out of the inning, and my teammates cleared the bench to carry me off the field just for catching the ball; my Wizard of Ozzie moment.

While glory eluded me on the playing field, it couldn't escape the friendly confines. In 1987, at the old County Stadium in Milwaukee, fame and heartburn covered me like German mustard. In my finest hour in baseball, I ate for the cycle.

On the field, hitting for the cycle requires a player to register a single, double, triple, and home run in the same game. In 1987, eating for the cycle at County Stadium was more daunting. In nine innings I polished off a quintet of sausages. In my first plate appearance, I dribbled a Brewer plumper, a tasty all beef hot dog, into my gullet. Next, in succession, came the brat with sauerkraut, then the Italian sausage. As the game wore on, and the meat sweats became an issue, I seemed to go belly up. But sometimes, in competitive eating, you're able to find an extra stomach. Down in the count, I launched a Polish sausage deep down my esophagus. The energy in the ballpark became contagious. The only thing standing in the way of immortal indigestion was the Vienna sausage. Like the triple, this was the hardest one to get. This long, slender sausage known for its snap, was made more difficult after dipped in the spicy red sauce. Down to my final chance, I let out a burp, and disposed of the sausage, like Roy Hobbs with his Savoy Special. Grill it, and they will come.

As the years ebb away, my record remains etched in history. Believing their sausage choices were too Euro-centric, Brewer officials replaced the Vienna with the Chorizo, and the sausage races were born.

But I can't think of that now. Gloria is ringing in my ears. Let's go Blues, and hold the mustard.

Community Work Recognized

By Marvin Nodiff

Last week, the Community Associations Institute (CAI) presented me with its "Author of the Year" award at its national conference in Orlando. The award recognizes volunteers who, among other contributions, author a new significant publication. CAI is a national nonprofit organization providing information and resources to leaders of homeowner and condominium associations and cooperatives. From its creation in 1973, CAI has grown to 41,000 members and more than 50 chapters in the US and Canada, South Africa and UAE.

In the fall of 2017, I reached out to several colleagues around the country for their recollections. When they began representing HOAs and condos in the 1970s and 1980s, community association law didn't exist. I asked: "What were you thinking? Where did you look for guidance? Did you plan this practice or stumble into it?" Virtually none of them anticipated a career in this field when they started practicing. It didn't exist then. I asked the attorneys to tell their stories and took the same approach with community association managers. After eighteen months, I'd interviewed some three dozen early CAI leaders, attorneys and managers and produced two stories: how we created a new body of law and a new field of community association management. No easy feat, indeed. CAI is publishing the stories.

Here's an excerpt from CAI's description of the award:

"...Marv has spent countless hours this past year on two pieces that are incredibly important to community associations and CAI: a history of community association law and the creation of the field of community association management. For each, Marv has interviewed dozens of sources – lawyers, managers, and early CAI leaders. Through his hard work, these human-interest stories unfold through the voices, recollections, and anecdotes of the pioneers in each field. They are important not only for substance but also for timeliness as members of these early groups retire, move off the grid, or sadly pass on. They show where each field and CAI has been. Through these histories, we might also learn what comes next. CAI owes Marv a great deal of gratitude for his research, writing, and dedication to the cause."

My law practice concentrated in representing condos and HOAs in the metro area and outstate for more than 30 years. I'm a charter member of the College of Community Association Lawyers, served six years on CAI's Board of Trustees, and was an adjunct professor at Saint Louis University School of Law for seven years. And I've published six novels including my new work, *The Pinball Lawyer*.

Summer at STL Village

STL Village is 5 years strong! Join us as we celebrate all year long. We are a member-based organization for adults age 50+ who live throughout the St. Louis area. We value social connection, sense of purpose and community engagement as keys to well-being and enhanced quality of life at any age. Come and see what makes the Village such a welcoming community of neighbors by sampling some of our signature get-togethers. Bring a friend and make new ones. Visit us at stlvillage.org to learn more.



Upcoming events at the Village:

- **June 20** - Happy Hour at the Highlands Golf and Tennis Center, Forest Park
- **June 23** - STL Village Fifth Anniversary Picnic, Tower Grove Park, Old Playground Pavilion, 4 p.m.

Please RSVP by calling (314) 240-5020 or email info@stlvillage.org.

- **Save the Date:** Village Aglow at the Mahler Ballroom – Friday, October 4, 7 p.m.

THIS LAND IS YOUR LAND: Care For Your Lawn!

By Mark Banaszak

Every homeowner has felt the pressure to have a nice lawn. The pressure is compounded by the costs of lawn care. There are financial, labor and environmental costs with having a lawn, like the cost of a 25 pound bag of fertilizer, the time and effort of mowing twice a week, and the fact that the amounts of water used for irrigating lawns is vastly greater than the water used for irrigating any other crop. Some homeowners have decided to save their money and effort by replacing their lawns with other plantings or hardscape. For those that want to keep a lawn, a few simple practices can reduce the financial, labor and environmental costs.

How you mow can help the success of your lawn and save you money and time. The most important practice is to mow as high as possible. Grass grows in proportion to root depth, so mowing higher lets plants get water and nutrients from deeper in the soil. Lawns mowed shorter are more prone to weeds and diseases. The best mowing height does differ by grass type. Cool season grasses like fescue or bluegrass can be mowed much higher than warm season grasses like zoysia. Leaving clippings on the lawn after mowing is also good for the lawn. Lawns where clippings are removed require twenty-five percent more fertilizer. Healthy lawns do not have problems with thatch, because the organisms that live there quickly compost the clippings.

Taking care with watering is another easy practice that can help keep a lawn healthy, save money and effort and help the environment. During the hottest periods of the summer, lawns need about an inch of water a week. Common sprinklers will deliver water at the rate of 1 inch in three to four hours. Warm season grasses do not need more, and cool season grasses will be dormant. For them, the water only serves to maintain the root systems. You can test the soil for moisture with a screwdriver. If it pushes in easily to about six inches, you have watered enough. Early morning is best for watering, because more water is absorbed by the soil. As the morning progresses, standing water is evaporated, reducing the chances of diseases.

Maintaining soil health is another important practice. Synthetic fertilizers may cause peaks and valleys of growth, which stresses plants. Compost and natural organic fertilizers work together with soil organisms to make nutrients available to plants in a more regulated way. Compost and organic fertilizers also help the organisms alive that consume thatch. Soil health is also helped by regular aeration. Many lawns in older neighborhoods become very packed. Adding compost or organic fertilizer after aeration helps cool season grasses recover from the stress of hot summers. Most importantly for soil health, follow directions for the use of any product. Many common problems may be triggered by excess use of fertilizers and insecticides. Most insects have a positive effect on lawns, but many insecticides intended for pest insects also hurt beneficial organisms.

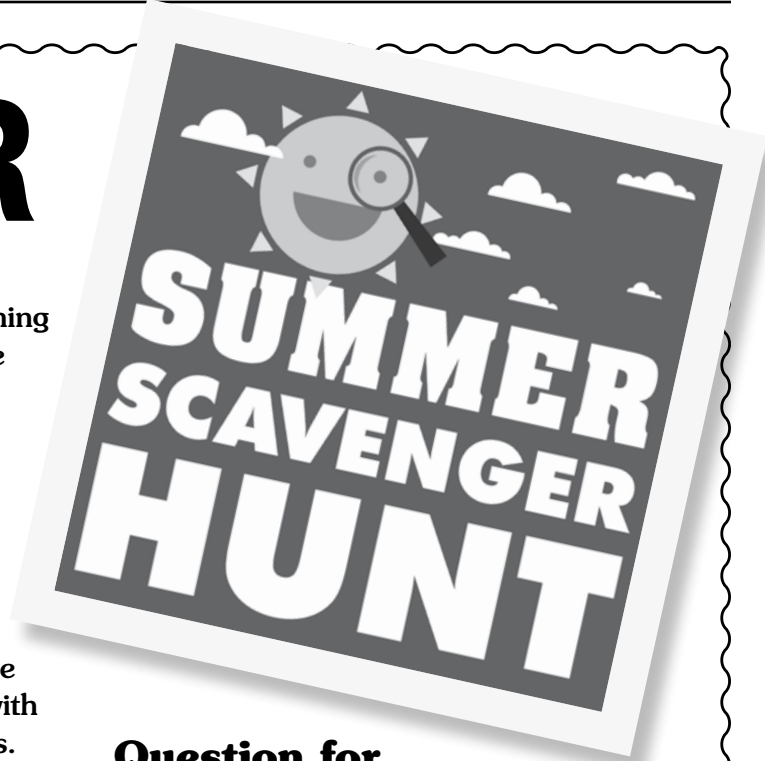
KIDS CORNER

By Susanne Knese

Summertime is a time to be out and about right? Last year I posted photos for you to find around our Skinker-DeBaliviere neighborhood and it spurred families to get out, explore and notice areas that you may not have noticed. So why not enjoy a scavenger hunt game on Delmar Loop? If you like, take a photo of yourself with the clues and email to me so I can include them in the next Kids Corner. Be safe and have fun!

1. Find the building originally built to house Women's Magazine and Women's Farm Journal by Edward Gardner Lewis in 1903.
2. Walk of Fame: Find the American composer and pianist known as the "King of Ragtime".
3. Find characters from the Flintstones, The Simpsons and Star Wars in this famous restaurant.
4. Take a ride on the Loop Trolley.

5. Walk of Fame: Find the person established with creating and opening the first public Kindergarten in the United States in 1873.
6. Your dog will love the flavors and shapes at this local shop.
7. This outdoor location hosts fun bands in warmer months, local produce and goods.
8. Walk of Fame: She was born in St. Louis in 1916 and became "the pin-up girl" during World War II with a long career in Hollywood movies.
9. This planet's nickname is the Windiest Planet with winds at speeds of more than 1,200mph! It is 4 times wider than earth (if earth were a large apple, this planet would be the size of a basketball!) hint: it is approximately 2.8 BILLION miles from the sun
10. This legend's statue knows how to 'duck walk'. Can you imitate his moves?



Question for June Kids Corner:

Tell us about your summer or better yet send a photo. Favorite adventure in St. Louis? Where did you go on vacation? Would you recommend it to other kids? Please include your name and submit to kidscorner@sdtimes.org by August 10th! This is YOUR corner, so make it what you want!



St. Roch 8th Grade Goes to Washington!

By Laila Alhajeri - St. Roch School, Class of 2019

On March 9th the entire St. Roch 8th grade class and I took a three day class trip to Washington D.C. St. Roch School decided at the beginning of the school year to try something new and fun with this year's graduating class. So we worked hard all school year to raise enough money to send our entire class to Washington D.C. We left very early on a Saturday morning to take a plane to D.C. The flight took two hours and soon enough we had arrived. We had a very tight schedule in Washington D.C. Our days were packed with fun and educational experiences from early in the morning to late that evening. We visited some very famous monuments and museums, such as the Lincoln Memorial, the Pentagon, the Smithsonian Museum, the African American History Museum, the Newseum, and many, many, more places.

Our tour guide, Ruth Robins, taught us so much about each of the places we toured and visited. After those three days in Washington D.C., I felt so knowledgeable and smart. I came back knowing so many more things than I did when the trip began. Taking this trip was a fun adventure and a memorable way to spend time with my classmates before we graduate and go our separate ways. Most of the trip we were always busy and on the move, but there were some nice moments where we were able to relax and to spend time together.

I am very grateful to all the kind parents who were our chaperones during this trip, and I want to thank them for keeping us safe while we explored D.C. I'm so thankful that our class was given this opportunity to visit somewhere most of us had never been before and I hope that St. Roch School will make this trip a tradition for all their eighth grade classes. I can say without a doubt that our trip to our nation's capital, Washington D.C. was a great experience.

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From Your 28th Ward Alderwoman Heather Navarro

The beginning of the 2019-2020 Board of Aldermen session coincided with the news of the County Executive's indictment and the dissolution of the Better Together plan. While ward reduction had taken a bit of a back seat to the issues surrounding the creation of a unified metro city, it was never far from my mind and the urgency to create a plan for a smooth transition grows with every new session of the Board. In 2012 we voted to amend the city charter and reduce the wards from 28 to 14. While there is talk about putting it back on the ballot, the city needs to have a plan in place. The plan should leverage this opportunity to improve governance, especially for those for whom the current system doesn't work. The city's Racial Equity Indicator Report paints a picture of two cities in St. Louis. While ward reduction won't solve all of our problems it gives us the chance to create a more equitable, efficient, and effective government – one that delivers constituent services equitably (not necessarily equally) in a more streamlined manner, for example. The formation of the Ward Reduction Advisory Committee provides an opportunity for citizens to participate in this reform.

In addition to ward reduction, the Board of Aldermen will be debating bills to limit lobbyist gifts and provide greater transparency for campaign donations, both bills I am co-sponsoring. We will also consider whether to put the residency requirement for city employees on the ballot. The city has hundreds of job openings and the requirements for many positions have been lowered in order to find eligible candidates. In light of the conversations about how the city and county can better collaborate I think it is worth asking the voters whether they approve of the city's residency requirement.

Stay tuned for updates on these and other important legislation, such as the short-term rental bill over the next few months. All of the board meetings and committee hearings are always available to stream online.

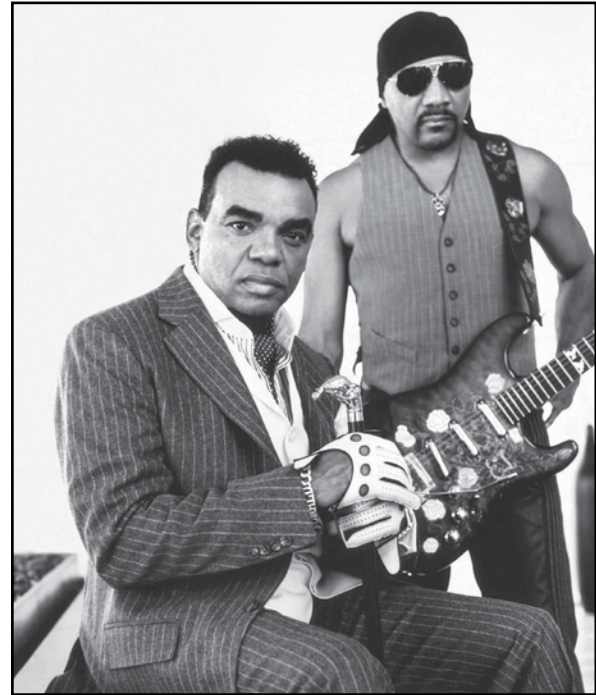
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Isley Brothers added to the St. Louis Walk of Fame

Starting with their 1959 hit "Shout," the Isley Brothers appeared on the Billboard charts for an incredible seven consecutive decades. Their other hits include the 1962 classic "Twist & Shout," the 1969 Grammy-winner "It's Your Thing," and the 1975 anthem "Fight the Power." Ronald and Ernie Isley moved to St. Louis in 1998. They released the double platinum album *Eternal* in 2001, which yielded the top 20 hit "Contagious," and their next album *Body Kiss* reached #1 in 2003. Inducted into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in 1992, the Isley Brothers again reached the top 10 in 2017 with their collaborative album *Power of Peace*. 2019 is a very special year for the St. Louis Walk of Fame. In addition to the Isley Brothers, there will be two other African-American honorees this year: Henry Hampton (film) and Elizabeth Keckley (civil rights/art). This is the first year ever that all three inductees are African American.



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KICKING OFF



A lovely site for the party, neighbors gathered in Andy Cross' studio to celebrate the fiftieth year of publication of the TIMES. Special thanks also to Dan and Molly Rater, who, together with two of their daughters, set up the bar and served with friendly banter. Several neighbors brought food to share: Lana Stein, Chanaya Jacobs, Arline Webb, Karleen Hoerr, Neville Vatcha, Angie Meara, Marj Weir and several more. Marj Weir assembled a beautiful slide show which was projected, thanks to the great set up by Andy and Linda. All the pictures will be available soon on the TIMES website: www.sdtimes.org.



Peggy Hermes, Pat McLafferty and Vince Schoemehl



Jill McGuire, Karleen and Tom Hoerr



Brad Weir, Mike Owens, and Neville Vatcha



Listening to Lana give recognition to our many writers.



At the bar with Dan Rater, Andy Cross, Joe Edwards and many more.



Rose Storey and Jo Ann Vatcha

The Corner Pull Box

By Frank "The Fireman" Schaper

The St. Louis Fire Department has been blessed with excellent Fire Alarm Dispatchers over the years. That was no exception in my day. Dispatchers like Gary Sedovic, Barb Pikesley, Mary Cunningham, Denny McGuire, and Donna Karcher come to mind. These and many other dispatcher worked at what we called Fire Alarm located in Forest Park on Oakland Avenue just west of Kingshighway. Dispatchers were on duty 24/7 answering the phones and dispatching fire trucks to fires and other emergencies. Something else they did was monitor the "Big Board." This large electrical panel stretched across the office and was the receiver for the corner pull boxes. During the seventies, St. Louis utilized thousands of these red boxes mounted on yellow poles. The system was



well maintained by a cadre of technicians led by Ed Bradley and the Costello brothers. The pull boxes were a unique way for people to get help. Just pull the hook and within three minutes the fire department would be there answering your emergency. Emergencies ran the gamut; person with a flat tire, a

stabbing victim, someone who just got robbed, of course fires, but quite often a false alarm.

Years ago when a person pulled the hook three pumpers, a hook and ladder or two, and a battalion chief were dispatched. This was reduced to one pumper, one hook and ladder, and the battalion chief as the frequency of false alarms went up. By the time I got on the job, only one pumper was dispatched.

Eventually a fire engine dispatched to a pull box would respond "on the quiet." That is to say, the fire truck would respond without using their emergency lights or siren. The theory was; no lights, no siren, no excitement for the one pulling the hook. Hence, fewer false alarms. This was good in theory only and about 1976 the decision was made to remove the pull boxes.

The Skinker-DeBaliviere neighborhood had its share of these boxes as did the rest of

Engine #30's fire district. The area we protected basically included Union on the east, Maple on the north, East Gate on the west, and the upper parking lot of the Munny Opera on the south. One of our more notorious boxes was Box 5135 - DeBaliviere and McPherson. The false alarm rate from this box got so bad, we stopped responding to it. We simply walked out front of the firehouse and looked down the street. We could see the kids hiding in the bushes. This was one of the first boxes removed from our neighborhood. Before they were all removed, pull boxes stood at Pershing and DeBaliviere, Waterman and Rosedale, McPherson and DeBaliviere, and Westminster Place at Skinker. And there were other. I have a few stories about these fire alarm boxes that I will share with you next time. Until then, stay safe.

photos by King Schoenfeld

IN YOUR EAR

By Hawkeye Z. Hoerr, Commentary in the TIMES for more than 33 years.

Dear Uncle Zeke,

"It seemed like a good idea at the time," I said to the judge, hoping that my admission would conjure up her memories of a wild and foolish youth. Alas, it didn't work. (In fact, my guess is that the judge didn't have a wild and foolish youth or she wouldn't have been a judge.)

"That's not a very good excuse, young man," she said sternly, "and this court shows no leniency to criminals who prey upon the unsuspecting."

I wanted to say, "Your honor, ma'am, there was nothing unsuspecting about the bank teller. I mean, she was sitting behind bullet-proof glass, surrounded by signs prohibiting firearms, so how could she not have suspected a robbery?!" But Zeke, you've taught me well so I didn't go there. I just nodded and tried to look innocent (which wasn't easy while wearing an orange jump suit and handcuffs; fortunately, orange is a good color for me).

She continued to say stuff but my attention span waned - this happens to me a lot and is probably why I didn't do good in school - and the next thing I knew was the sound of her gavel and "ten years."

TEN YEARS? I'm not great in math, but that's over 2,000 days, I think! I'm here in prison for 2,000 days because I tried to borrow \$1,000? How fair is that? And the borrowing wasn't even complete. How was I to know that the guy in the uniform was a security guard, not an off-duty Metro driver? I mean, I didn't even have time to step away from the teller - who was not unsuspecting, believe me - before I was grabbed by the guard. And not to expect sympathy, but the guard was pretty rough when he knocked me to the floor. Don't they teach these people manners?

So, I'm now #891310250, but my friends call me 89 for short. "Friends" is a bit of an overstatement, Zeke. I mean, other than my roommate, Leo, I'm only with these colleagues ("prisoners" sounds too harsh for me) for an hour a day of rec-time and when we eat. And we don't get to talk when we eat so that really doesn't count. Some guys use sign-language to communicate or they itch a lot, I can't tell which. I tried using Morse Code on the table-top but I developed blisters on my fingertips.

The living conditions aren't terrible other than that the bed is hard as a rock, there's no privy privacy, the food is terrible, and I'm tired of Leo. Leo's a Republican so I am sure he's tired of me, too. There's a tiny black & white television in our cell and we keep it tuned to the all-news channel. Let me tell you, Uncle Zeke, as bad as things are in here, they're

even worse in D.C.

A few years ago, we kept the channel on ESPN and there was a bliss in not knowing the world's politics. Back then, someone said that a reality television personality was running for president, and I thought, "Great, Oprah has my vote. If I could vote." When I heard it was the Trumpster, I was blown away and became glued to the tube. When I heard his initial speeches and rallies, I wondered how anyone could possibly vote for him. Granted, he had good hair, but it was clear he wasn't very smart, was egocentric, and not particularly honest. Yeah, the first two bothered me a lot. But then he won?! How in the world could that happen, I wondered. Leo was puzzled too!

Other than an hour of rec, silent eating, and sleeping, there's not much going on, so I've become quite wise about politics. I understand the rationale for the Electoral College and how it works and doesn't work, I have a good knowledge of the Constitution, I can name most of the Senators, and I totally get the balance of powers among the three branches of government. But I still don't understand how DJT could be elected.

I would have voted for Pat Sajak, Stephen Colbert, Jimmy Fallon, or Seth Meyers. For that matter, President Al Roker would be OK, and I'd definitely support President Judy Woodruff. But Donald Trump, he of multiple bankruptcies and atavistic viewpoints? Sure, he's got great hair, but that's about it. Alas, I am predicting he will win re-election in 2020, even after he is impeached and the Senate fails to convict. So, yep, I'm looking to 2024. I should be out by then, Zeke, figuring that I'll get years shaved off my sentence because of good behavior. (Does having my sentence shaved mean that I talk in phrases?)

(Now this next part is top-secret, Zeke, just between us, but Leo has figured out how to tap into the voting machines from his smart-phone - it's very smart - and he and I are planning a coup in 2020. Security won't be as tight in the primaries and they'll be watching out for the Ruski's and ignoring we local folks so we figure we can pick the nominee we want to go against The Donald. Get ready to vote for President Oprah!)

But enough of me, Zeke. If you ever do make it here, please bring me some Hostess Cupcakes and Kit-Kat bars (and don't be upset when they put them through the metal detector). It's amazing how they don't appreciate fine food here in the pen.

Sincerely,

Your semi-innocent nephew, #89



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