

The *TIMES* of.... SKINKER DEBALIVIERE

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April-May 2021

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

The oldest neighborhood newspaper in St. Louis

FREE

Independent and all volunteer-run since 1970

Skinker DeBaliviere Traffic Calming Study

By Richard Bose

WSP USA conducted a traffic calming study of the Skinker DeBaliviere neighborhood for the city's Board of Public Service at the behest of Alders Clark-Hubbard and Navarro through ward capital funds. The WSP team carried out a community engagement process and examination of infrastructure to identify problem spots and make recommendations. The study covered the interior of Skinker DeBaliviere.

“Goal: Improve walking and cycling conditions throughout the neighborhood or comfort, safety, accessibility and enjoyment. Balance vehicle circulation and parking needs with pedestrian and cyclist safety and accessibility. Promote walking and cycling as realistic and convenient modes of travel”

Skinker DeBaliviere Neighborhood Plan

The study identified speeding, lack of stop sign compliance, poor connectivity and circulation due to street blockages, missing marked crosswalks, long crosswalks, and poor lighting in some spots.

The recommended implementation outlines three phases in deference to finite funding, so a cheaper option could be implemented sooner and then upgraded later if desired. Phase one projects could include speed humps in the middle of blocks, bike cut-thrus in the angled street blockages on Rosedale, painting crosswalks and curb bump-outs. There are some intersections that don't have curb cuts such as the north side of Waterman at Nina and some crosswalks don't line up with the sidewalks such as the east-west sidewalks at Waterman and Des Peres.

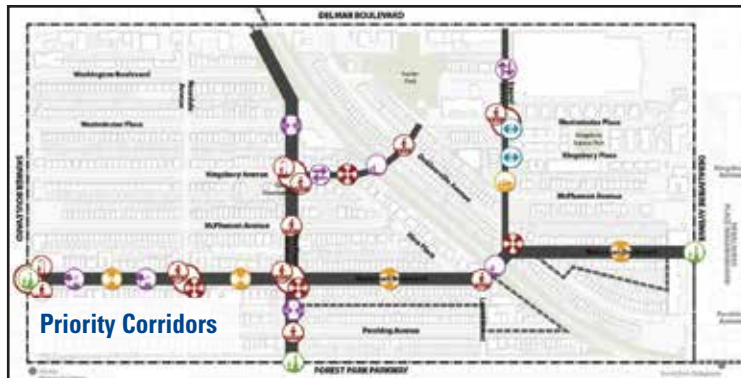
Speed humps located mid-block along Waterman and some other blocks built in phase one could be upgraded to mid-block crosswalks later in second phase. Also painted crosswalks and curb bump outs at intersections could be upgraded to physical bump-outs and raised intersections.

The biggest phase one project recommended is at the Waterman/Laurel/DeGiverville triangle. There is a lot of pavement that induces poor driving habits. The vision uses bump-outs and islands to reduce the space for vehicles and narrow crossings for pedestrians. DeGiverville would be one-wayed from Waterman to Laurel as it is on the 5800 block to reduce driver confusion. There is no crosswalk across Laurel, so there's some more work to do on this design.

Phase three is maybe possibly looking into to considering the impacts of conceivably perhaps at least studying removing some of the street blockages as well as an assessment of the performance of phase one and two improvements

These improvements, that should really be considered basic infrastructure all over the city, are most welcome. Of course the rub is funding. Funding will likely come from ward capital funds. Hopefully partners can chip in on some items such as the institutions and tax-incentivized developers in the area. Be sure to send feedback to the Alderwomen and the SDCC. The study can viewed here: https://www.stlouis-mo.gov/government/departments/public-service/documents/design/upload/SDBTCS_FinalReport_WSP_12-30-2020_SinglePages-2.pdf

Study link- https://www.stlouis-mo.gov/government/departments/public-service/documents/design/upload/SDBTCS_FinalReport_WSP_12-30-2020_SinglePages-2.pdf



COVID VACCINE INFORMATION for Seniors with No Internet or Email Access:

The City's St. Louis Area Agency on Aging (SLAAA) is working to assist the City Health Dept., to help Seniors Citizens get registered to receive the COVID-19 Vaccine.



Senior Citizens who have access to the internet and have an email address of their own, can register for the vaccine themselves on the Health Dept. vaccine website. However, SLAAA is working to help Seniors who DO NOT have access to the Internet and DO NOT have an email address.

Senior Citizens can call the City SLAAA office at 314-612-5918. There is a very large call volume, so Callers should expect to be placed on HOLD on the phone line or callers can leave a phone number and they will receive a call back.

SLAAA staff will help to:

1. Complete the COVID-19 Registration in the Health Dept. online system, which will notify the Health Dept. that the Senior is interested in getting the vaccine when it becomes available.
2. When the Health Dept. receives the vaccines for distribution....the Health Dept. will inform SLAAA of the dates of Vaccine Distribution Events. SLAAA staff will call the Seniors that SLAAA has registered, to set up an appointment for the Seniors to receive the vaccines.
3. If the Senior Citizen is Homebound and/ or has no access to transportation, SLAAA will coordinate with the Senior Citizen Centers that have Vans, so that transportation can be arranged to take the Senior to the vaccine appointment location (round trip) at no cost to the Senior (funding is limited for this transportation service).

Vaccinations for Homebound City Residents

If you are or know of a person that is homebound-unable to get out of their home without assistance, that needs the vaccine at home, please call John at (314)657-1676. This program is administered by the St. Louis Area Agency on Aging and the City of St. Louis Health Department.



Volunteers from Washington University worked with Cecelia Nadal of the Womens Pandemic Resistance Group on successive Saturdays to distribute information about obtaining COVID vaccinations. They went to blocks north of Delmar to reach those who might not have internet access. Since then, the city has also been able to open the mass vaccination site at the Americas Center downtown for the next several weeks. No advance appointment is necessary, and registration can be done when one arrives. All adults over 16 are now eligible. In addition, the city has expanded access to homebound residents.

Editor's Notes

By Linda Cross

I just returned from the most interesting and challenging vacation. Our family went to visit my youngest daughter at The Southern AmeriCorps headquarters in Vicksburg, MS. Due to strict Covid protocols, we could not step foot on her campus, she could not come into our hotel room, we always had to eat outdoors with Sarah at a separate table, and we had to ride in the car with masks and all the windows down. (FYI, it rains A LOT in MS in the spring). Despite the rules we were so grateful to be able to visit with her and hear everywhere that we went about how much Vicksburg appreciates the AmeriCorps volunteers. A program that our government got so right. (Don't write me letters, I know that there are things in AmeriCorps that could be done better, but the concept is awesome)

Never having been to Vicksburg, I was delighted by how warm and welcoming the people were, how beautiful the area was, and how Vicksburg puts its history on display – the good and the bad. We actually visited the Vicksburg Civil War Military park on two separate days. The painstaking effort with which this battlefield is documented is astounding, with each specific skirmish over the three months being documented by both a confederate and union marker laying out the logistics, the missing, and the dead. On another day we went to the civil rights museum in Jackson, MS. So beautiful and so painful. It is so hard to acknowledge that these events happened in our own country, especially living in this

neighborhood, so diverse, so active, and so accepting. How could anyone allow these things to happen?

On the day after our arrival home, Andy reminded me that we had a Zoom meeting with one of the groups that we were on. I will be honest, I was tired from driving nine hours, I was crabby, and I didn't want to go – even though the meeting was just upstairs via the computer. Andy reminded me of the important topics that were going to be discussed, the redrawing of our aldermanic wards, the ballot initiative of the city earnings tax, the mayoral election. I went to the meeting, and as usual was so grateful that I did. (Andy is often right about these things). It was refreshing to hear expert opinions, diverging ideas, and the reasoning behind the issues. I was reminded that what we can do is not always to solve the huge overwhelming issues that our country faces, but to contribute where we can. The local issues are just as important as the national issues and where we can affect the most change. After my kids were adults, I jumped into so many committees and activities that I burned myself out very quickly. I have reigned back in a bit and focused. I do feel better for contributing where I can. I challenge each of us to find at least one important issue and to find time in your busy lives to engage, participate, and contribute. Andy suspects you will feel all the better for it. I agree.

If you need any information about organizations in the city that could use your help, reach out to us and we can direct you to organizations that would love your assistance and where you can make an impact.

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: May 15, 2021

for our Summer 2021 Issue. Please send copy by e-mail to Linda Cross, lcross@sdtimes.org, by disc to 6060 McPherson Ave, 63112.

The TIMES of... SKINKER DEBALIVIERE

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Subterranean Books: A Loop Business Success Story

After twenty years in the same location, our twenty-first seems like a pretty good year to spread our wings.

We've made it through the overwhelming, stressful, and exhausting past year because of the outpouring of support from our customers. In the midst of all this chaos, an opportunity opened up for us to move into a much larger and much more accessible space. We are so sad that Plowsharing Crafts closed its doors but feel very fortunate to have fallen into this chance for expansion, and one that required very little investment to make a go of it.

This new space is 2 1/2 times bigger, which means we can properly staff ourselves in the age of Covid, we can safely allow more folks in the door (while still keeping in place all our safety protocols), and we can flesh out and expand our book selections to be even more wonderful and exciting than what you have come to expect from us.

We're still offering all of our same shopping options – curbside pick-ups, shipping, in store shopping, and web and phone orders, but once we get to the other side of this crazy year, we'll throw our doors open and pack the rafters, throwing one heck of a party. We can't wait to celebrate turning 21!

Call us at 314-862-6100 or stop by 6275 Delmar 11 am to 7 pm.

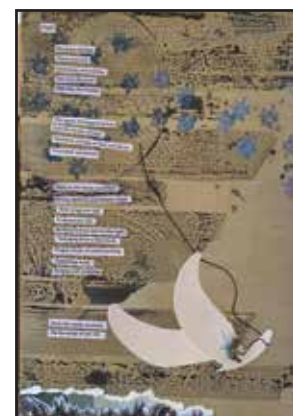


photo by Chantaya Jacobs
Kelly Plonski

Consensus: Workshop exhibition builds empathy through art

By Elizabeth Krasnoff Holzer
Freelance Writer and Consenses Educator

If this year of isolation has taught educators like me anything, it is the vital need for social emotional learning strategies and programming for students of all ages. Parents are demanding it, and students are clamoring for it.



But how? How do we ensure we develop the Human in the Humanities?

For me, the answer comes from a program called Consenses. My journey began with a workshop I gave myself as a birthday present last summer.

Enter Sally Taylor, the amazing singer/songwriter/artist/educator (and daughter of Carly Simon and James Taylor), who created Consenses as a means of exploring our social and emotional connections through the Arts. I originally learned of the curriculum back in 2014 when I heard Taylor give a TED Talk about it, and I was hooked. Not only did I take the workshop, I became certified as a Consenses teacher.

So what is Consenses and how does it work?

On the website, Taylor describes it this way: "Consenses is a multidisciplinary, multimedia, social emotional learning curriculum that offers students an artistic game of 'Telephone' as a vehicle for unity, creativity, understanding, and of differing perspectives. Using photography, painting, poetry, movement, music, sculpture and design, the Consenses curriculum promotes. . . self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision-making."

Taylor created the program in collaboration with the Harvard University School of Education.

As Taylor put it, "Students learn to use art as a language and a lens through which they see themselves,

Consensus continued on page 5

News of Neighbors

By Rachel Boxdorfer

Spring has sprung in the Skinker DeBaliviere neighborhood and I don't know about you, but I could not be happier. Seeing the flowers and trees beginning to bloom makes me joyful but also takes my breath away for a different reason, other than their beauty. It was at the beginning of this pandemic that I found comfort in these blooms on my many walks last year. At that point, I certainly did not think a year later we would still be experiencing life in a pandemic. But I'm not a health care worker, scientist, or fortune teller, so what do I know! So here we are. To all of you neighborhood gardeners, I want to say thank you! Thank you for your planted bulbs, flowering trees, and gorgeous landscape that I enjoy regularly in our neighborhood.

I'm hoping when the pandemic ends I can share even more news of the adventures we are used to hearing about; trips taken, accomplishments, reunions, and more. In the meantime, I'm sharing what I can and hoping that this finds all of you healthy and optimistic for brighter days ahead! I also hope you are successful at getting vaccinated. It's exciting to hear when people get theirs.

Recently, I had the pleasure of attending an annual event I look forward to every year. Andy Cross, of the 6000 block of McPherson, holds his annual art show in his studio, (the former Bill Kohn studio), and this year, although there could not be a large opening night reception, some of us neighbors gathered to enjoy his talents. The show was called Triskaidekapholiatsis,



Andy Cross at his art show

a botanical twist to the superstition regarding the number thirteen. As always, the show was so impressive. How lucky we are to have someone so talented (and generous) in our neighborhood. Thank you Andy.

Another legendary resident in our neighborhood is Monsignor Salvatore Polizzi at St. Roch. Monsignor Polizzi celebrated a couple of very special anniversaries on St. Patrick's Day. March 17th was his 65th anniversary as a priest and his 40th anniversary at St. Roch. Again, our neighborhood is truly blessed. Happy anniversary Monsignor and thank you for all you do!



Monsignor Polizzi

In the last issue I shared the sad news that John Bowe, the oldest of the Bowe children who grew up "back in the day" (for people of my generation) had passed away. Sadly, I need to share that his mother, Joan Bowe passed away on March 15 at the age of 91. She was loved and cherished by many people including: her husband

Richard Bowe; her children, Thomas, Angela, Michael, Steven, Kevin (Kim) and John (Tonya); her grandchildren, Hannah, Elizabeth Bowe, Alex, James, Shaun Hutchinson, Mike Bowe Jr., Christina Nedvin (Jason), Claire, Erin, Bryce Bowe, Ava and Jackson Bowe; and her great grandchildren, Kayla, Emily and Pierson. We send our sympathies to all of the Bowe family, suffering so much loss in such a short time.

Another former neighborhood resident passed away. John Mudd, who lived on the 6100 block of Westminster and then in Parkview passed away in early March. He graduated from St. Roch in 1969 and was active in Boy Scout Troop 98. Our condolences go out to all of his family. John had lived in Texas for a long time.

It has also been reported that Mary Helen Walker passed away on February 2, 2021. Mary lived in the 6000 block of McPherson in years past. Her husband "Red" Walk supervised the St. Roch gym for a number of years a long time ago.

Take care of yourselves neighbors. Be kind, choose happiness, and send me a note to share your news of neighbors, your latest adventures and accomplishment. We are all eager to hear more good news!

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!

Finding Common Ground: Pathway to the Beloved Community

By Cecelia Nadal

"To find common ground you must be willing to search for it."

– Carmine Savastano

Last month's article, *"The Siege and the Hope of a Beloved Community"* was shared as a vehicle for catharsis as we all grappled with the shocking reality of the January 6 insurrection at our Capital. As I reported in that article, my own purging started while watching every gruesome detail of the invasion on television. On that day my consciousness rotated between the unfolding events on screen and memories of our history of race in America. Slavery, Charlottesville, the protests in Ferguson and the murder of George Floyd collectively punched me in the gut. It was the memory of the nonviolent Civil Rights martyrs that helped me step away from the pain of that drama on January 6. People like Reverend George Lee that used his printing press and pulpit to get the community to vote and was murdered when he refused to stop. There was Viola Gregg Liuzzo, a mother from Detroit who felt compelled to help with the Selma march and was killed by Klansmen in a drive by shooting. These were activists who fought for the democratic rights of their fellow citizens. They were guided by high moral principles and love for their community.

When Dr. Martin Luther King developed his vision of the "beloved community" he understood that to remove hatred, injustice and poverty this would require an engagement of our systems such as education, law, healthcare and criminal justice reform. Such initiatives however would be made through the lens of the

"beloved community" where the "other" was not seen as an enemy but would be seen as a potential ally.

I had to ask, "how do we begin to move towards the beloved community having suffered 4 years of battle fatigue from extreme political polarization and credible threats to our democracy?"

The January 6 insurrection and my reaction compelled me to acknowledge that the "Trump era" left many of us with symptoms similar to trauma. I needed to replenish my energy, think about responding rather than reacting to the polarization and take a deep breath. I had felt more anger during Trump's presidency than in my entire 70 year lifetime. There were tons of friends and neighbors around me who felt the same way. When we shared our anger about the lies and insults from the White House and GOP, the chatter from my friends sounded like a school of piranha devouring an object a hundred times bigger than the entire shoal of fish! Yes, it got scary...even on zoom!!! We did; however, all feel better afterwards! My higher self knew that if we are to heal this country it is vital that we begin to find common ground as a pathway to communication, honesty, trust and the beloved community.

Ironically, just before the pandemic was announced I was involved with a culminating event that highlighted one of the most extraordinary experiences I have had. My goal was to bring Germans and African Americans together in rural Missouri, it took almost 3 years to do so. I will tell you that story as a way of showing how powerful finding common ground can be and how you must prepare and stay present with your



own bias.

In 2018, I conducted research for a play I was writing, *An Amazing Story: German Abolitionists of Missouri*. As an African American playwright, I felt compelled to learn everything that I could about German culture and history in Missouri before and during the Civil War. I decided to take a trip to Hermann, Missouri -a quaint outstate Missouri town where the Deutschheim State Historical Site was located. The site provided a glimpse of German immigrant life in the mid-1800's with its well-preserved structures including a typical middle-class home with furnishings, a winery and a newspaper press room.

I took the longer scenic route on Highway 100. I went alone and saw mostly flat land and a car or two every 15 minutes. At a certain point on that isolated road

I thought, "What the hell am I doing out

Finding Common Ground continued on page 4

THIS LAND IS YOUR LAND: Watch out for invasives!

By Mark Banaszak

We all want to keep the edges of our yards nice, but one difficult problem is invasive species. Invasive species reproduce quickly, grow fast, outcompete or kill the plants we want. Many invasive plants were originally introduced as landscaping, crop or forage plants, but, because of their abilities to grow fast and spread quickly, they have become nuisances or worse.

Invasive species are recognized to cause economic or environmental harm. Sometimes invasive species can even be a threat to human health. These species are carefully monitored by local, state and federal governments. Studies suggest that invasive species may cause billions of dollars in economic losses. The environmental toll is just as high. Historically as much as 40% of threatened or endangered plant and animal species are threatened by invasive species.

Scientists have also documented that invasive plants are especially common and spread quickly along roads and railways. In our neighborhood, this means in alleys and outside fences. Three of the most common invasive plants in Missouri are also common in our alleys and along our fences. The three are bush honeysuckle, johnsongrass and wintercreeper.



Bush honeysuckle was first imported to North America as an ornamental plant in the mid 1800s. It grows fast, outcompetes other vegetation, is drought resistant and can kill other plants. It can reach 10 to 15 feet in height and has recognizable flowers and bright red berries. The berries appear

in the fall and are appealing to birds and small wildlife. The seeds spread by these animals sprout and grow quickly. The entire plant including roots should be removed before they set berries in the fall. Merely cutting them back only makes them grow back vigorously.

Johnsongrass is a tall perennial grass brought to the US as a livestock forage plant. It reproduces quickly, even in very poor or



rocky soil. It grows from 3 to 8 feet tall, and has leaves similar to corn, but narrower with a distinctive white rib down the middle. Like many invasive species, it can reproduce several ways. It sets seed from May to July. One plant can produce almost 30,000 seeds, so it is very important to remove it as soon as possible in the spring. As an established plant, it also produces rhizomes which, if broken up, produce more plants. Care must be taken to get all of the rhizomes and root system when removing older johnsongrass.



Wintercreeper is an aggressive perennial woody vine. It grows quickly and can attach to any vertical structure or surface. It can overtop and kill even tall trees if left uncontrolled. Like bush honeysuckle, its berries are eaten by birds and small mammals and the seeds spread large distances, so spring control is best. Like all invasive plants, if let grow, wintercreeper can be very difficult to get rid of. It can even

regrow from small pieces of root.

Getting rid of invasive plants can often be difficult, but there are some common themes that make the work more successful. Learning to recognize and remove the plants at a young age is important. They are persistent plants, so checking the spot again later can be important; they regrow easily. Finally, removing them in the spring prevent the plants from blooming and reproducing, which not makes your property look better, but can help prevent spreading the plant to a neighbor's property. So keep an eye out this spring for invasives!

Finding Common Ground *continued from page 3*

here alone? What if my car stops? What if the Klan is located in these parts?" Despite my fear and hesitation, I finally managed to get to the Deutschheim, took the tour and was inspired by what I heard and observed in Hermann. Margaret, the tour guide was phenomenal and very supportive.

When I left Hermann my commitment to the play was strengthened by what I learned of its history, culture and people. I doubted however whether Gitana Productions, the nonprofit arts organization I founded, could have the level of community engagement in Hermann that typically accompanied our plays in the St. Louis region. Was I having those feelings because of the preconceived thoughts I had about outstate Missouri? Would German Americans and African American want to have conversations on race? I decided that the response to the play should determine how much, if any, community engagement Gitana would do. Finding common ground cannot be imposed it has to be something that the parties agree to! In my heart I was not confident they would want to talk about race relations.

To my surprise, the response to the play in Hermann was overwhelmingly positive. With a full house at the Showboat Community Theater there was much interest in the story! By this time, I had a few great allies in Hermann and asked them if they thought people might come to a meeting to discuss this history and the status of relationships between Germans and African Americans today. I usually conducted such conversations and asked if they thought I should have someone else facilitate. Their answer, "We know you now!"

So much for my fear of outstate Missouri and the Klan! The experience was a healthy one and I had learned something about the towns people of Hermann. They were hospitable, independent and very interested in their history. In December 2019 we invited Blacks and Whites (mostly German Americans) to a conversation on race in the Hermann area with great success! Painful stories were told as well as stories where dignity and warm fellow-feeling were exchanged between Germans and African Americans in the area. Six months later

I learned that Gasconade County where Hermann is located is 85% Republican!

I was forced to confront my bias at several points during my 3-year relationship with Hermann. Had I not done so, the quest for finding common ground would not have occurred. I also realized that my Hermann allies had to do the same and I appreciated them for that.

Through this experience my personal bias about the people living in rural outstate Missouri needed to be checked at the door and I would never again underestimate the importance of building relationships one person at a time before embarking on the group process. I was very fortunate to have developed relationships with individuals from Hermann that helped me to understand the town and its culture before moving forward with difficult conversations on race. The success of the play and the culturally relevant research I conducted in developing the German American characters was an important introduction of who I was to the people of Hermann. I would learn how much they appreciated my commitment to authentic presentation in telling their story.

What if I 'd known that 85% of the people, I met in Hermann were Republican before going to Hermann? Would I have gone to Hermann at all after the siege in Washington DC ?

Like so many, I did everything in my power to elect President Biden and Kamala Harris. If I had to do it again, I would fight just as hard as I did, HOWEVER, I would not allow "the fight" to override the importance and role of the "beloved community." The Hermann experience, the January 6 siege, have reminded me, that as an American citizen, "the fight to win an election" on its own is far less important than the principles that underlie that fight.

There are 72 million people who supported the prior President but they supported him for very diverse reasons. It is crucial that we find our common ground with those that we can within that 72 million people if we are to make things better in this country. "Finding Common Ground" is an essential strategy for healing our country and it takes skill, noble intention and the willingness to look at our own bias. It takes the willingness to genuinely talk to each other and to genuinely listen to each other. Finding Common Ground will take time, patience and a strong desire to make this country live up to its own ideals. Are you willing to take the first step?

(Visit YouTube "Black People and White People Find Shared History in Outstate Missouri" and see recent article by Cecilia Nadal in the Hermann Advertiser Courier, "Embracing Each Other's Culture: Key to Beloved Community")

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Welcome Spring with a Special Trial Membership at STL Village

By Liz Backus



STL Village is excited to be offering a 3-month membership at a reduced rate for new members! This membership is for anyone age 50+ living in the St. Louis area wishing to connect with new friends and be part of our active, caring community. Engage with STL Village members and have fun as we learn, grow and share together.

Join us for a special discounted 3-month membership fee of \$50 and enjoy:

- A rich calendar of events - currently online with book talks, game nights and more, and in-person activities beginning in April/May, starting with outdoor venues
- One-to-one technical assistance to help you connect with Zoom and other digital applications
- Making valuable connections to active, welcoming friends who embrace the concept of "aging in place"
- Access to trusted resources and a friendly staff ready to assist you

To learn more about this opportunity, call the STL Village office at 314-240-5020 or email us at info@stlvillage.org. Visit our website at stlvillage.org, where you can find lots of information about membership and sign up to receive our calendar and newsletter in your email box.

We look forward to meeting you (online and in-person) soon!

Consensus *continued from page 2*

each other and their world more clearly, compassionately, and expansively. They learn ... empathy through 'listening' to others ... through various art forms. Consenses positions students to succeed in the world by building the skills needed to be collaborative, critical thinkers using their curious minds to contribute to society."

What I found as a student and a teacher is nothing short of magic. The alchemy of the lessons offers such interesting methods of approaching topics of love, belonging, place, emotions, and sense of being -- the Human in Humanities.

"This class has been quite AMAZING," said Elizabeth Spring, of Skinker-DeBaliviere. "Consenses created a beautiful way for people to connect and create in ways that, otherwise, wouldn't happen at all."

In each lesson, we explored a new medium and then used the skills and specific wordplay exercises to broaden our thinking and creativity. Each piece was based on experiencing the piece before it. No explanation was given with the artwork only an activity and the piece itself. From there, each student responded with their own art in a different medium.

"The class broadened my creative scope by focusing on areas of art that I don't usually think about," said Sophia Wilson, Junior at Webster Groves High School. "I had a great experience."

As the lessons progressed, students' works became a collective. While each piece stands on its own, together they connect to each other and ultimately reveal an underlying concept or message that is powerful and expressive. The final works beg to be experienced.

And so they shall be.

In May, Consenses STL will present its first "Poetic Justice Arts Show" in the Loop. Firm dates are still pending, but keep an eye out at 6267 Delmar Blvd., a storefront between Meshuggah and Sneaker Perfection. There, property owner Mary Gorman has graciously donated the space for the exhibition.

"I am happy to support the exhibit," Gorman said. "My friend Jason at JD Flooring is installing this fabulous medallion floor -- I can't think of a better way to showcase it."

For more information about summer workshops or the exhibit, reach out to me, Elizabeth Krasnoff Holzer, at ekholzer6115@gmail.com.

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KIDS CORNER

By Tracy Granneman

Let's celebrate Spring in Skinker-Debaliviere with a word game.

Directions: Draw a line, connecting the clue to the correct word.

- | | |
|---|-----------------|
| 1. Opening late spring in Forest Park, the _____ Playscape will provide 17 acres to play and connect with nature. | A. Crocuses |
| 2. There has been a lot of _____ off of DeBaliviere. Can't wait to see the results! | B. Fourth |
| 3. These often purple flowers are a first sign of spring. | C. Construction |
| 4. If you are lucky maybe you will see a Robin's nest with _____ eggs. | D. Delmar |
| 5. Daffodyls are known for their _____ flowers. | E. Earth |
| 6. Sometimes spring also brings on worse allergies due to the _____ in the air. | F. Blue |
| 7. Have you visited MADE on _____? It is a great place to explore our artistic side. | G. Nature |
| 8. Celebrate _____ Day on April 22nd and do something good for our environment. | H. Pollen |
| 9. Can't wait for for April 1st to celebrate the Cardinals on _____ Day! | I. Yellow |
| 10. On 5/4/2021, don't forget to wish everyone: "May the _____ be With You." | J. Opening |

April Showers Bring May Flowers!

Use recycled materials to build your own container garden.

Supplies:

1. Different containers like yogurt tubs, juice boxes, juice pouches, milk cartons, jelly jars, or you can even start your growing with an egg carton
2. Soil: You can use soil from outside or potting soil
3. Seeds
4. Water

Instructions:

1. Fill your container(s) almost all the way to the top with soil
2. Add your seed of choice
3. Water the plant (s)
4. Place the container in a place it can get sun (inside or outside)
5. Water every few days and watch your plants grow!

You may have to move your plant to a larger container in the future, so keep an eye out for more "good" trash to re-use. You can also decorate your containers to add color and art to your garden.

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From Your 28th Ward Alderwoman: Heather Navarro

Our Chance to Remake a Better St. Louis

With all of the bad news from the last year, it's time to look on the bright side. St. Louis City will be receiving \$500 million from the federal government as part of the American Rescue Plan. In addition to the individual stimulus payments the Biden/Harris administration is sending to Americans, cities are receiving funds to get back on track. In the case of St. Louis, our unique status as a city and a county, coupled with our high levels of poverty, have made St. Louis eligible for an unprecedented economic boost.

While there is still more to learn about how these funds can be spent, a short-term focus on vaccines will be important, along with a longer term vision that focuses on bringing our economy back and addressing historic disparities in health and housing. As I write this, we have yet to elect our next mayor. However, I imagine it will be important to her to invest these funds in infrastructure, housing, opportunities for youth, and small business

development. Luckily, St. Louis has a library full of resources that tell us where money is needed. From the "Forward through Ferguson" report to the "Equity Indicators" report, we know where the greatest disparities are. Additionally, a thriving city has to start with the basics, making sure streets are paved and the garbage is picked up. Shoring up those basic services by ensuring we have the equipment and that the people we depend on have the resources and training they need will benefit St. Louis for years to come.

I have been reading *The Broken Heart of America*, which I highly recommend. It's not easy to read about our city's legacy of systemic racism and it's even harder living with its effects. This windfall from the American Rescue Plan, if invested properly, can set St. Louis on a new path. As we come out of the pandemic, we must be careful not to go "back to normal," and instead recognize all the ways "normal" didn't work and use these funds to remake a better St. Louis.

News from The Delmar Loop

By Rachele L'Ecuyer

February was Black History Month and the Delmar Loop celebrated by highlighting the Black and African American members of the St. Louis Walk of Fame. There are 150+ stars and close to 1/3 are Black and African Americans, all from St. Louis, who contributed to the culture of the United States. The last induction ceremony before the pandemic was the Isley Brothers, their star was set in front of the Pageant at 6161 Delmar. The crowd spanned all walks of life and different races. It was so wonderful to see everyone brought together by the ceremony and all smiling and enjoying the moment. We are looking forward to more times like that soon. You can visit the St. Louis Walk of Fame any time! It's a great way to stretch your legs and get a history lesson. Fun for all ages. Visit the website for more information, StLouisWalkOfFame.com.

February also brought three new businesses to the Delmar Loop and all Black-owned, now that's a way to celebrate!

AAA Fish House, 5916 Delmar is open for business now, serving carry out and offering curbside pick-up. Here's the Facebook Page: facebook.com/AAA-Fish-House

Backing Blacks, 5901 Delmar, a retail shop supporting Black-owned businesses. Here's the Facebook Page: facebook.com/Backing-Blacks-St-Louis-Apparel-and-Custom-Prints


Black Beauty Supply, 5892 Delmar, beauty supplies for hair plus make-up and apparel. Look for them on Facebook and Instagram @blkbeautysupplystl

Looking ahead for spring, The Pageant and Delmar Hall are planning new concerts by local musicians dubbed, "The Endeavor of Normalcy Series". The first in the series, a concert by Jake's Leg sold out in less than 24 hours. The Pageant and their staff are fully dedicated to making the venue safe for patrons during this time. Check out the shows and the efforts they are making to create a safe environment at ThePageant.com.

As the warm weather approaches, outdoor dining will return. We look forward to being outdoors and enjoying Prime 55, The Moonrise Hotel's rooftop bar, Mission Taco Joint, and Nudo House, just to name a few.

There's always something fun on The Delmar Loop's social media: Facebook, @thedelmarloop; Instagram @delmarloop; and Twitter @thedelmarloop. News updates: www.visittheloop.com.

Keep Calm and Carry Out - Stay well and healthy!



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A Synagogue on DeBaliviere

By Jo Ann Vatcha

Many of us have driven by the simple building with the “permastone” facade by the fire station on DeBaliviere and noticed its windows with the Star of David, briefly wondering about its history. A few years ago, Marj Weir and I spent many enjoyable hours at the MOHIS Research Center on Skinker, looking at old city directories and finding sources to fill out our knowledge of DeBaliviere Avenue. A spreadsheet of the hundreds of small businesses and several documents that became articles in the TIMES were the result. Some addresses never made it into full length articles, and one of those was the former synagogue at 537 DeBaliviere. To jumpstart the process, a recent Google search led to a trove of photographs on a local website called “STL Patina” from photographer Chris Naffsiger. A single comment caught my eye: “My father, Julius H. Funk, was President of the Sherei Thillium Synagogue in the 40’s and 50’s.” And I was off and running. I was quickly able to find and exchange emails and phone calls with Marilyn Funk Kaufman.



Memories from Marilyn Funk Kaufman

My father, Julius Harry Funk, was president of the synagogue and my Aunt, Mary Zeffren Funk was president of the synagogue's Sisterhood. We lived on Westminster across from Hamilton School, then moved to 5740 Kingsbury and our next move was 5787 McPherson Ave. Our extended family lived in this neighborhood and all the children went to Hamilton School, then Soldan High School and most attended Washington University. The memories of shopping on DeBaliviere, and going to the movies at the Apollo Theater bring a smile to my face. We walked to Forest Park, went to Jefferson Memorial, the Art Museum and sat in the “free” seats at the outdoor opera theatre.



Julius Harry Funk

In the pictures are the teachers and my Aunt Mary Funk who was president of the Sisterhood. The only others I can name are 4 cousins and my sister. My relatives all attended this Synagogue because we all lived in walking distance to the congregation. I remember after my Father was president a Mr. Maurice aka Morris Gordon was president. Also there was an elderly gentleman named Mr. Sarasohn who was responsible for keeping everything organized during the services. He was a scholarly man. My grandfather, David Zeffren attended services daily. Grandpa came to live with us when Grandma died and he moved to St. Louis from Rock Island, Illinois.

The congregation was Orthodox. Women and men sat separately which was required by the Synagogue. Most of the men came from eastern Europe and knew all the prayers in Hebrew as they were taught as children. When the synagogue was active there was a fish store operated by Mr & Mrs. Bloom on the ground

floor of the building. All refreshments were provided by the members' wives, no outside help. Everything had to be kosher. I remember the celebration of Purim at the "Shul". The children in costumes marched around the sanctuary and we all got candied apples.

The DeBaliviere Shul: A Brief History

537 DeBaliviere was erected in 1921. According to local historian Esley Hamilton, “ It was a typical storefront building, with a variety of businesses occupying the ground floor from time to time (Park Café, Dan Kittel printer, Samuel Sherman meats). Beginning about 1931, the Zion Hebrew School occupied the upstairs. By 1938 Sherei Thilim Congregation shared the upstairs space.” They purchased the building in 1944.

Sherei Thilim was an Orthodox Jewish Congregation which had moved from its original location at 13th and Carr, downtown. Walter Ehrlich’s book, Zion in the Valley, documents the history of the Jewish people in St. Louis, including an article from 1925 about the “Orthodox Community of St. Louis” stating that an original charter for “Chevrah Kadisha” had been in existence since 1862, and their charter was taken over by the Sherei Thillium in 1893. 45 years later, the congregation had arrived on DeBaliviere, where they stayed through the 40’s and 50’s.

Although there appear to be no written records of a merger, it is believed that the congregation merged with Mishkan Israel and moved to University City, in the early 60’s. The St. Louis Rabbinical College was listed as having been established at Sherei Thelim, and in 1965, Sherei Thelim was still listed as one of ten orthodox synagogues in St. Louis.

The building was sold in 1966 to Pattison Baptist Church, founded in 1897, moving from north of Shaw Ave when Highway 44 was built. This follows a pattern for many of the Jewish synagogues in St. Louis, moving westward first from the old downtown Ghetto, some merging and moving westward again and selling their buildings to black churches. As Ehrlich points out, “... what had been Jewish synagogues almost universally became AA churches. That happened in the Ghetto, and that pattern held true farther west in the central corridor.” It is not yet known if Pattison Baptist Church is still active. The windows with the Star of David have prompted this very brief glimpse into a part of our neighborhood’s history and the Orthodox Jewish congregation that thrived on DeBaliviere for some 30 years.

Thanks to STL Historian Esley Hamilton, Dennis Northcutt of the MOHIS library, and Diane Everman Archivist of St. Louis Jewish Community Archives/Holocaust Museum Archives.

For more history, see Walter Ehrlich’s book, Zion in the Valley. Visit our website, <http://www.sdtimes.org> and look for the special collections to see more memories from past interviews, as well as the Hamilton School photos and article from 2015. An expanded interview with Marilyn Funk Kaufman will soon be added to our TIMES website: <http://www.sdtimes.org>.

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IN YOUR EAR

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

“Just throw the dart,” I said to my financial planner and masseuse, “so we will know what stocks to buy.” Unlike my many foolish statements about life, love, and the baseball Cardinals, choosing stocks this way is based on evidence. Studies indicate that stocks that are randomly selected perform better than those chosen by financial mavens! Indeed, a June 26, 2019 WSJ article cited how stocks chosen by darts that were randomly thrown wound up beating those picked by hedge fund managers by 27%. This is most humbling to me and my masseuse. Yep, it rubs us the wrong way. (Sorry, couldn’t resist.) We research, predict, diversify, and then Dr. Random Chance beats us. Wow.

That caused me to think about politics and our presidents. Some people think it’s God’s will that the USA plays such a leadership role. Wrong. My take is that it’s God’s will that we haven’t done something really stupid. She is taking care of us. Perhaps She is above us now, floating on a cloud with an iPhone model 312,307 in one hand and a cigarette in another (no need to worry about carcinogens in Heaven), watching The Good Place on Netflix, and throwing darts to determine the fate of our nation.

That Someone is looking out for us (minus the cigarette) is more likely than you think. You see, I assumed that most of our presidents were exceptional individuals and wise; sure, we had Buchanan, Nixon, and Trump, but that’s only three rummies out of 45. Boy, I was wrong! It turns out that most of our presidents are mostly like us except, well, they’re presidents.

I stumbled across an interesting website - something I seem to do more and more these days, stumbling that is - that was filled with interesting factoids about our presidents. (You may wonder what’s the difference between a factoid and a fact, and that’s easy: I have an advanced degree so I use odd and awkward words.) To share some slivers of humanity about our previous presidents and to convince you that She has been watching over us since 1789, get a load of the following presidential mundane normalcies:

William Henry Harrison’s inauguration speech was over 90 minutes on a wet, cold day. He became ill and died 33 days later. Moral: Wear a raincoat!

Ulysses Grant changed his mind about joining Lincoln at Ford’s Theater. Moral: Don’t be a no-show.

Grover Cleveland became the legal guardian to a friend’s 11-year-old orphaned daughter, and ten years later they were married at the White House, making her the youngest First Lady ever at the age of 21. Morals: None.

Benjamin Harrison, the first president to have electricity in the

White House, was afraid of being electrocuted and would not touch the light switches. Moral: That’s shocking!

Richard Nixon installed a bowling alley in the basement of the White House. Moral: Spare me.

George W. Bush was his high school’s head cheerleader. Moral: No surprise, no mention of an honor roll.

Is this an average bunch or what? And of course, that doesn’t include Clinton’s dalliances and Trump’s mendacity.

Consider these folks and then contemplate that 70M people voted for Trump a second time. Gasp. We can do better. But beyond eliminating the Electoral College (an overdue notion), we should quit electing presidents. Yep, you know where I am heading. Instead of voting for president, we choose him or her randomly. I mean, could we do any worse?

I propose that any U.S. Citizen who wants to be president - age 35 or older who has no felonies, with an IQ higher than body temperature, and agrees to publicize their personal taxes - can become a candidate by submitting their name to the National Election Center in Reno, NV. The millions and millions of names (how cool to get to pardon the Thanksgiving turkey!) would be put in a huge spinning barrel and the drawing becomes a televised event. We want lots of enthusiasm - more people watching than the 66.3% who voted in 2020 - so it is on every television station, even pre-empting “Say Yes to The Dress.” Oprah Winfrey and Bill Gates hold hands as they reach into the barrel and pull the name of the next president.

Millions of viewers are Velcroed to the tube because the event is a patriotic feast! Dozens of digitalized U.S. flags are waving in the digitalized background, digital jets are flying in the digital sky, and a digital band is playing “You Can’t Always Get What You Want,” featuring Mick Jagger (who, unfortunately, is ineligible because he’s not a U.S. Citizen). To a digitalized drumroll, Bill pulls the name and Oprah reads it. Everyone has a chance! The winner is announced as digitalized balloons drop from the ceiling and a huge digital picture of the next prez is shown (all candidates submitted a smiling emoji). It’s the excitement of the Publisher’s Clearinghouse Sweepstakes times ten million!

And then in January, we welcome President Elmo Flagg, Naomi Durango, Random Chance, or whomever. Regardless of who she, he, or it is, I am excited about the next four years of their leadership! What could go wrong? (And if you want to wade to see the presidential factoids, check out <https://www.kqed.org/pop/20516/weird-facts-you-never-knew-about-the-u-s-presidents>.)



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