

The *TIMES* of.... SKINKER DEBALIVIERE

Vol. 51, No. 5

February-March 2022

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

The oldest neighborhood newspaper in St. Louis

FREE

Independent and all volunteer-run since 1970

Volunteer! Have a Voice! Meet Your Neighbors! Have Fun!

By Tracy Granneman

The Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council (SDCC) and Board invite you to participate in our committees, events and initiatives!

Our neighborhood depends upon volunteers to advocate for our neighborhood, coordinate events, further strategic initiatives and communicate. While a lot of great things happened over the last two years, Covid negatively impacted our ability to do all those things. We invite you to help build a new momentum 2022. Get involved with activities that interest you and with whatever time you may have to contribute. Join a committee, help plan an event or support a particular event or initiative.

The following are SDCC Committees. If you see something that interests you, please reach out to Tracy Granneman, Vice President of the SDCC Board at: TracyGranneman@Outlook.com. Tracy will work with you and connect you to the right team. If you have a question, don't see something perfect for you but want to engage, or have an idea for something new, reach out!

Events Planning:

Join the committee or volunteer for a specific event! Whether the Concert Series, PorchFest, Wintermarkt, Garden Tours, Rags to Riches, the Halloween party, or a different event, we need volunteers to plan, promote and work at the events! It is a fantastic way to meet neighbors and have fun!

Fundraising & Marketing Committee:

Fundraising & Marketing Committee shall be responsible for identifying new sources for funding for SDCC; annual fundraising events and programs; coordinating the scheduling of special events and fundraisers; and developing marketing strategies and communications to effectively position and promote Skinker DeBaliviere throughout the Greater St. Louis Area.

Community Engagement:

Our newest committee, this group is focused on building communication across our neighborhood. It expands on our prior Block Unit Captain program. Regardless of a formal role or casual, help residents get to know each other, organize fun block events, communicate sensitive and real-time information using a variety of communications channels, and build partnerships with the police and city government.

Beautification Committee:

Keep our neighborhood looking great! Help maintain gardens, planters, physical structures, etc.

Dog Park Committee:

Help our four-legged animals have a place to run and play! Help plan for, fundraise and operate a new dog park in Skinker DeBaliviere.

Security Standing Committee:

Responsible for increasing neighborhood security awareness through meetings, communications, alerts and educational programming. The committee serves as liaison with SLMPD 5th District, University City Police, Washington University Police, Bi-State/Metro Police, the Central West End Neighborhood Security Initiative and the Neighborhood Stabilization Team.

Historic District Review Standing Committee:

Ensures the preservation of the historic character of the neighborhood through various means and helps review proposed public infrastructure development and redevelopment proposals to determine the proposal's compliance with historic standards.

Community Development Standing Committee:

Responsible for maintaining and planning the neighborhood's residential and commercial areas in accordance with the Skinker DeBaliviere Master Plan, adopted by the Board on October 13, 2014, as may be amended; and shall review proposed residential, commercial and public infrastructure development and redevelopment proposals to determine the proposal's compliance with the Master Plan.

Commercial Districts Standing Committee:

Responsible for monitoring development in the Delmar and DeBaliviere commercial areas to ensure compliance with the Delmar Link Redevelopment Plan, the Skinker DeBaliviere Neighborhood Urban Design and Development Plan, reviewing conditional use applications, zoning variance appeals, building code appeals, liquor license applications and changes and proposed zoning amendments.

Residential Housing and Zoning Standing Committee:

Monitors residential zoning issues and supports City of St. Louis efforts to enforce housing and historic ordinances in the neighborhood.

Finance Standing Committee:

Provides financial oversight for the organization, to include budgeting and financial planning, financial reporting, and the creation and monitoring of internal controls and accountability policies.

Didn't find a committee that interests you, but want to get involved??

Don't let that stop you! Reach out and let us know you are interested in participating.

Drive-thru Imo's Proposed at Delmar and DeGiverville

By Richard Bose



5956 Delmar Imo's Site Plan DeGiverville

Imo's is proposing a location at the southeast corner of Delmar and DeGiverville near the Delmar Metrolink station. They purchased the property, 5956 Delmar, from Joe Edwards in May 2021 for \$140,000 according to city property records. The single-story building would occupy the northeast portion of the parcel. A patio for outdoor dining would be to the west along Delmar to DeGiverville. There would be no indoor dining area, just an order counter. Patrons could also walk up to place and/or pick up an order at the counter or via a walk-up window. The Community Development Committee and the Commercial Districts Committees worked with the architect and owner to modify the original design to address some concerns such as the building's placement on the lot and the location of the drive-thru, and issued a recommendation of support. The Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council Board voted to support the proposal, which will need zoning variances, at their January 10th meeting. The plan will need to go before the Board of Adjustment where zoning variances are heard. It will also be evaluated by the Cultural Resources Office for compliance with the historic district ordinance and may go before the Preservation Board. If built, this would be the first new construction east of the Metrolink tracks since the Gotham Annex at Delmar and Hamilton was completed in 2013.

Editor's Notes

By Linda Cross

My youngest daughter Sarah is facing what many people her age are facing, finding a job that will lead to the career that she loves, a job that will utilize her master's in anthropology and love of culture but will also let her continue to do some work with conservation. She has spent the last two years in four different conservation corps in four different states but is done with doing Corps work and would like to find a job that is fulfilling and career oriented. Sarah and I have often discussed this, and I told her that I thought one of the hardest things about being an adult is 'choosing' – choosing a college, choosing what to major to pursue in college, choosing a job, choosing where you are going to live, choosing a partner. By choosing you are by the process eliminating the other paths. Luckily for me, I made that last choice pretty early (Andy and I got married during my junior year of college) and that narrowed down my other choices. When I graduated from college, I didn't know what I was going to do, but I knew that I was going to do it in St. Louis because my husband and his family were here. With the help of Karleen Hoerr we found a house that we loved in the location that we loved. Andy was a high school art teacher and working at the Muny, and I got my first job in a bank. Luckily for us, the neighborhood was much less expensive than it is now.

Andy and I are still in the same house that we love and in the same neighborhood that we love, but things have changed. Our neighbors are still wonderful and our proximity to the Loop and Forest Park are still wonderful (although I have to admit I have always hated that Metrolink bridge). With the developments and improvements in our neighborhood the costs have increased substantially. This, in turn, causes the taxes to increase substantially. Andy and I have owned our art studio for approximately 10 years and the taxes have increased over 100% in that time. I know that we have some initiatives in the community council to assist our long-term residents with repairs and aging in place, but I can only hope that all the projects that we propose or endorse will allow for our neighborhood to maintain its rich diversity and we don't create an environment where our long-term residents can no longer afford to live here. How do we choose to make our neighborhood 'good' but not 'too good'? How can we work for a neighborhood that is safe, progressive, more sustainable, but still accessible to people with a range of incomes? It is a difficult balance. Let's hope that as we choose how we move forward we keep this in mind.

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: March 15, 2022

for our April/May 2022 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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Readers are welcome to send us e-mail or letters commenting on any of our content. Send to lcross@sdtimes.org.

Divergent SDCC Processes on Development Concerning

By Richard Bose

The swift process and lack of transparency for the Imo's proposal by the SDCC Board is quite concerning. Something is broken here. The neighborhood emails gave no details on the proposal, nor were there any on the SD website, nor the SD Facebook page. There was no Zoom link to attend the 6:30pm Jan 10th SDCC board meeting. It said "call for online access if not on Board." Call the office? When? Someone is going to read a website address over the phone? Why make attendance cumbersome? Furthermore the SD website events calendar listed a different meeting time, 7 pm, and a Google Meets link, which I found one other lost neighbor attending. The email said the proposal would be discussed at the Jan 10th meeting, nothing about a vote being taken. I encourage to board to enact a policy of not voting on a proposal at the same meeting it is first presented. The FPSE Neighborhood Association puts information on its website (www.forestparksoutheast.com) ahead of meetings and how to attend is quite clear. Let's take the same approach.

As for the proposal, it goes against the neighborhood plan, the TOD plan, current zoning, the forthcoming form-based code, and the Delmar Link redevelopment plan put into ordinance in 1994. The neighborhood plan states "the vision for this area can be described as a vibrant, dense urban residential neighborhood with mixed-use edges connected to the city through enhanced transit, safe pedestrian and bike access, and alternative modes of transportation." The proposal is not mixed-use. It and the TOD plan call for 3-8 story mixed-use for this part of Delmar. Given its proximity to the Delmar Metrolink station and our considerable investment in transit, it's incumbent upon us to leverage it through development that is commensurate with that investment. Encouraging driving, and all the dangers and negative externalities that come with it, via a drive-thru on Delmar is antithetical to the goal of making Delmar a pedestrian-first place. I fear for those using the patio space who would be in the path of vehicles turning from eastbound Delmar to access the drive-thru.

The draft form-based code, if implemented, would place a minimum height of 3 stories, 40 feet, and zero foot build-to-lines on both Delmar and DeGiverville for at least 85% of the frontage. The proposal is one story, is built to the property line for about 50% of its Delmar frontage, and 0% along DeGiverville.

Current zoning for the parcel is type F. Neighborhood Commercial which says that a carry-out restaurant which abuts a residential district must be on a lot no less than 20,000 square feet. This lot abuts a zone A. Single Family to the south and is less than 8,000 sf. The Delmar Link redevelopment plan in ordinance 63183 specifically forbids drive-thrus and carry-out restaurants.

Given how out-of-bounds this proposal is, it should have been an instant no. The very first issue of this publication in April 1970 covered the opposition to a proposed drive-in Jack-in-the-Box at the southwest corner of Skinker and Delmar. Where did we lose our way?

We've been saying no repeatedly to proposals elsewhere waiting for ones that better fit our desires expressed in the plans. We've had more information dissemination, engagement, and meetings on proposals elsewhere. It is disappointing that we cannot count on the board to be stewards of the plans and redevelopment ordinance that neighbors have put so much effort into over the decades.

We need a better approach to inform neighbors, allow time to consider, and opportunity to give feedback. At this point neighbors with concerns about the proposal will need to take them to Ald Clark-Hubbard and, should it go before them, the Board of Adjustment and the Preservation Board.



News of Neighbors

By Rachel Boxdorfer

Hello neighbors and happy new year. I am probably not alone in feeling like 2022 is very much a continuation of the past couple of years, but holding out hope that brighter days are ahead for the entire world. In the meantime, life moves forward and our neighbors have things to celebrate. So let's catch up!

In the last issue I reported that Truman Stephens completed his masters in September. His parents, Mike and Ann Stephens of the 6200 block of Waterman, were able to attend his graduation ceremony in London on December 14th. Truman received a masters in social policy from the London School of Economics. Congratulations Truman!



Truman Stephens



Lucy Ebeling

Celebrations continued in Parkview as Rachel and Sean Ebeling report-ed their daughter Lucy graduated a semester early from the University of Missouri-Columbia Honors College on December 18. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Theater with a minor in Sociology, and plans to pursue a career in film or theater production. Congratulations to Lucy!

One of our talented neighbors and resident authors received fabulous news in December. Margaret Hermes was informed her novel *The Opposite of Chance* (Delphinium) was named by the St Louis Post Dispatch as one of their 20 Favorite Books of 2021. Peggy is a long time resident of the 6100 block of Kingsbury. Here's the link to the full list from the Post Dispatch. https://www.stltoday.com/entertainment/books-and-literature/20-of-our-favorite-new-books-from-2021-a-year-with-plenty-of-options/collection_ef3c946c-d007-5c90-b165-9961b091b086.html



Margaret (Peggy) Hermes

Sounds like a good book to add to our reading lists this new year!

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!

Times Board of Directors Meeting

By June Vaughan

The Board of Directors of the Skinker-DeBaliviere Community Council held a regular meeting electronically on Zoom at 7 P. M. on January 11. Tim Hendrix from Imo's Pizza and Gabe McKee of V-Three Studios offered a proposal for building an Imo's Pizza restaurant on the vacant lot at the corner of DeGiverville and 5956 Delmar Boulevard, where a gas station formerly stood.

Having only a few parking spots for patrons on the small lot, the business would focus on drawing take-out customers, with a drive-up window accessible from the short section of DeGiverville which opens onto Delmar, DeGiverville not being a through street at that point. There will be minimal seating indoors and a few outdoor tables. The building would rise one and a half stories, including a façade to enclose mechanical equipment on the roof. St. Louis Artworks, located across Delmar, would be employed to create a large mural on an exterior wall. Mr. McKee noted that cleaning up any residual environmental issues on the property from the previous gas station will be part of the project.

With an opening time of 10 A. M. seven days a week, the business would close at 11 P.M. on weeknights and at midnight on weekends. Mr. Hendrix stated that their business philosophy is to draw employees from the immediate neighborhood.

Excepting one abstention by Michael Stephens due to conflict of interest, board members present unanimously voted for a recommendation that the proposal be approved as presented. This recommendation will accompany the proposal as it moves on to the Planning and Zoning and Cultural Resources Departments of the City of St. Louis.

The senior-friendly condominiums which neighborhood resident Dan Schesch planned to build on his 6001 Westminster Place property ran into a snag over environmental issues. A gas station previously occupied the property. Nearby residents are concerned about contamination that might occur during removal of two buried gasoline tanks from the lot, which is adjacent to other residential properties. Mr. Schesch has offered ownership of the lot to the Skinker-DeBaliviere Community Council for community use.

Concerns were voiced by board members relative to the legal responsibilities of owning such a lot, especially regarding the cost of handling any environmental issues that might arise. It was also mentioned that it is outside the scope of purpose for the council to own such property. No vote was taken, but there was generally a strong sentiment against taking ownership of the property.

Andy Cross, chairman of the Beautification Committee, reported On Sat Dec 4 we held the 20th annual Wintermarkt. The weather was wonderful and the crowd was as big as ever, possibly a record size. Thank you to Joanna Schooler and Washington U for supporting our live musical performances. All of the Bratwurst & hotdogs were sold at the food booth so we sent out for more and sold all of those as well. The vendors, performers, and attendees were all very happy with the event. Thank you to all who donated baked goods and to all the volunteers. The most recent food drive was very successful and brought in 1,200 items. Thank you to Arline Webb, Linda Cross, and the drivers who collected the food items.

Linda Cross, chairman of the Residential Housing and Zoning Committee, said her committee continues to address issues related to overcrowding and absentee landlords. Letters are being sent to assure that landlords of various properties, including the apartments under construction at the corner of McPherson and Des Peres, understand the prohibition against renting houses or apartments to more than three unrelated persons. The majority of responses from the neighborhood to a proposal for an in-home day care in the 6100 block of Westminster have been positive.

Lana Stein reported for the security committee that crime has been relatively low, possibly due to the pandemic. Theft of license plates or valuables left visible in cars are the most common offenses.

Executive Director Mike Reid reported that so far \$9420.00 has been given to the Friends Campaign, double what was collected last year. Major goals for the coming year are to encourage more participation from the neighborhood east of Des Peres as well as more transparency to residents regarding the work of board committees. There were questions and discussion toward working during the next three months on the strategic plan for the neighborhood. This will include review and updating of work done on this project in the past.

There were no reports from the committees for Community Development, Commercial Districts, or Historic Review. Residents wishing to attend meetings of the SDCC Board of Directors may call the office at 314-862-5122 and ask that they be placed on a list to receive a Zoom link by email.

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From Your 28th Ward Alderwoman: Heather Navarro

Dear neighbors,

I had no idea when I moved into the neighborhood in 2016 that I would be running to serve as your 28th ward alderwoman a year later. Luckily, I had 10 years as a St. Roch parent to get to know many of you so when I moved onto the 5900 block of Pershing it already felt like home. In my four-and-a-half years in office I've been lucky to work with many more neighbors in Skinker-DeBaliviere as well as the West End, DeBaliviere Place, the Central West End, Hi-Pointe and Wydown Skinker. It's a wonderful place to represent because so much of the positive energy in the city is generated in these neighborhoods. I've also gotten a good perspective on what it means to live in other parts of the city by seeing what my colleagues are faced with in other wards. I am honored to have served you in this role as alderperson and grateful for all the lessons I've learned along the way.

You've heard me write about climate change in this column before, and the chance to support meaningful action to address the crisis is the reason I resigned in January. I'm now directing the Midwest Climate Collaborative and look forward to serving my community in this new role. I'll be applying much of what I learned as a locally elected official and previously at Missouri Coalition for the Environment. There are a few things I've learned specifically about Skinker-DeBaliviere that I'd like to share in my final column.

1. Neighbors volunteering their time make the difference in Skinker-DeBaliviere. When I look at the difference between our neighborhood and others, it's the fact that neighbors give countless hours putting on events like the Wintermarkt, Porchfest and Rags to Riches and that they have dedicated themselves to advocating for the neighborhood to fight redlining, support smart development, and protect housing options in the neighborhood. Whether it's planting daffodil bulbs, engaging with a problematic business, or editing this newspaper you can thank your neighbors who volunteer their time to make sure residents are safe and the neighborhood is a beautiful, vibrant place to be.

I know how busy people are and how easy it is to think that someone else will handle a problem or that the city will take care of things so I am grateful for all of the work of individual volunteers, block leaders, and the Skinker-DeBaliviere Community Council (SDCC). The SDCC committees provide opportunities for people to get more familiar with issues of safety, development, and historic preservation and have been a big help to me these last several years. If you love Skinker-DeBaliviere, I hope you will find a way to get involved.

2. Density is not a bad word. It's something we need to embrace if we want to live in a thriving, urban neighborhood. The quality of life in the neighborhood goes up when the streets are safe, the businesses are successful, and we have access to good housing, schools, and jobs. These things are made possible by the presence of more people. All of the volunteers I mentioned above are that much more important when a lot of people share a space because without good neighbors, things like garbage and noise can become a problem. Those aren't reasons to avoid density, but they are issues that need to be addressed to preserve everyone's experience.

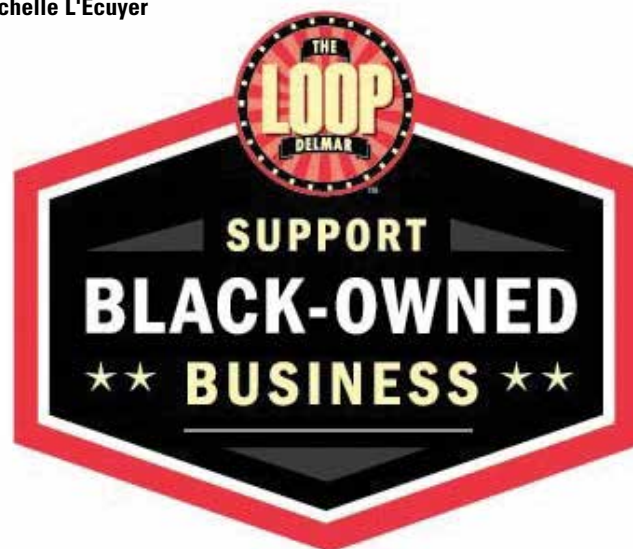
One thing we've all learned this past year is that things are changing and they're not likely to go back to how they were. While many of our houses reflect lifestyles from 100 years ago, our lives today are serviced by online shopping and delivery services for much smaller families and the definition of family has grown and changed, thankfully. The strategies that kept the neighborhood alive 40 years ago need to be updated for the world we live in today. I hope that we can learn from the efforts of the past that have made Skinker-DeBaliviere what it is today and, equally important, that we make room for new and changing ideas about what is going to keep it great for the next 20 years.

3. Finally, and most importantly, we need more voices in the conversation. In addition to being a strong neighborhood organization, the SDCC is a certified Community Development Corporation, which gives it certain status and access to grant opportunities. In my experience, some blocks are more engaged with the SDCC than others. I have met many people, however, who are organized and active on their blocks but not with the Council. These neighbors are also working hard, looking out for one another, investing in their homes, and making the neighborhood a safer, better place to live. The diversity of Skinker-DeBaliviere is one of its strengths, but a diverse community can still be divided and plagued by systemic racism. Given the tremendous opportunity and access the SDCC offers, I look forward to dismantling divides and working towards more proportional decision-making on behalf of the entire neighborhood.

While I am no longer serving as alderwoman, I will continue to enjoy living in Skinker-DeBaliviere as your neighbor. It has been a great honor to serve my community in this role and I'm grateful for everyone who supported me along the way! I hope that you will continue to call on me whenever I can be helpful. I look forward to seeing you around the neighborhood!

News from The Delmar Loop

By Rachelle L'Ecuyer



FEBRUARY IS BLACK HISTORY MONTH - There are close to 30+ Black-owned businesses in the Delmar Loop. Businesses range from services to retail sales to restaurants and professional services. In the Delmar Loop, we honor and support Black-owned businesses every day.

The Delmar Loop is home to over 30 Black-Owned businesses that are a critical part of the famed boulevard. During the pandemic, six new Black-Owned businesses opened on the St. Louis City side of the Loop. This month is a great opportunity for you as a neighbor to take the opportunity to learn about those businesses. Visit our Facebook page, @TheDelmarLoop where we will be featuring the businesses in celebration of Black History month and also, the notable Black and African American members of the St. Louis Walk of Fame. Did you know, Josephine Baker, Maya Angelou, Dick Gregory, and Cedric the Entertainer called St. Louis home? There are many more people who influenced art, music, education, sports, and other fields all with stars on Delmar. Visit www.stlouiswalkoffame.org for more information and then take the opportunity to stretch your legs and see the stars for yourself.

Here is a list of the new Black-Owned businesses that have opened during the pandemic:

- AAA Fish House, 5916 Delmar
- Backing Blacks, 5901 Delmar
- Black Beauty Supply, 5892 Delmar
- House of Sheabella, 6161 Delmar, Ste. 102
- The Wizard's Wagon, 6178 Delmar
- Vails Brothers Shrimp, Chicken, and Fish, 5942 Delmar

Take the time to learn more about the business community that is at your doorstep.

DID YOU KNOW? Dr. Punch, founder of Stop the Bleed/The T in St. Louis, was most recently honored as The Stellar Performer Award at the 20th Annual Salute to Excellence in Health Care Awards from the St. Louis American Foundation. Dr. Punch was also named Visionary of the Year 2020 by St. Louis Magazine's A-List Awards.

Cortez Burnett, owner of Krab Kingz, brought the first Krab Kingz to St. Louis.

Tameka Stigers, owner of Locs of Glory, was named the 2019 Small Business Administration's (SBA) Minority Small Business of the Year winner. She was one of only 9 honorees in Eastern Missouri! And she was invited to the White House because of the recognition. She also launched a new store in 2021, Black Beauty Supply.

Saint Louis Story Stitchers received a \$25,000 grant from The Lewis Prize for Music's COVID-19 Community Response Fund.

St. Louis Artworks is a Bloomberg Asphalt Arts grants award winner and will undertake a public art project in 2022 with the proceeds.

Wells Fargo kicked off their Hope USA initiative in The Delmar Loop and issued \$50,000 in grants to 10 Black-owned businesses.

Please continue to support all of our local businesses, they need your support now more than ever. Stay well and healthy!

THIS LAND IS YOUR LAND: Get ready to plant!

By Mark Banaszak and Katrina Stierholz



February and March in St. Louis are great times to get ready for growing things. Seed catalogs are available, people are ready to get outside, and the soil is ready to nudge plants into action – spring is planting time. It can be a good time to plant many types of plants, including flowering bulbs, vegetables and trees. This quick overview is intended to give you motivation to get those gardens going!

First up, spring bulbs. No... not the ones that you plant in the fall and come up in the spring. These are the ones you plant in the spring and come up in the summer; spring-planted bulbs are many of the biggest, most impressive flowering bulbs we can grow. Spring planted bulbs are types of flowers that are not cold-hardy. That is, the cold may destroy their ability to flower. Some of these may be started indoors in pots and replanted outdoors after the last spring frost. Examples of such bulbs are dahlias, gladiolus, tuberose and oriental lilies. These spring planted bulbs grow into gorgeous flowers. As temperature ranges change (you know, climate change), some of these bulbs can be left in protected parts of your yard over winter. Or, to be perfectly safe, you can dig them up and put them in your basement until next spring.

Next on the list is planting early garden vegetables outside. The middle of March is a good time to plant many types of vegetables outside in St. Louis. A useful garden calendar for deciding planting times for vegetables is available through the University of Missouri Extension (<https://extension.missouri.edu/publications/g6201>). According to this calendar, you can plant lettuce, beets, carrots, collards, onions, peas and radishes near the 15th of March. Planting them this early ensures that that they are ready to eat before the hot St. Louis summer.

To keep the harvest going after the early summer vegetables are harvested, start your other vegetables indoors. Broccoli, many cabbages and cauliflower may be started indoors as early as February 15th, for early crops. Tomatoes, peppers and eggplants can be started indoors for transplant around March 15th and cucumbers, squash and melons around April 15th. These shouldn't be planted outdoors until the danger of frost is past, but then you'll have a great head start on the summer crop of vegetables.

Finally, spring can also be a great time to plant many types of trees. Transplanting in the early spring, before other trees and shrubs have leafed out, works best, because plants have a chance to develop root systems first. Watering spring planted trees is very important. Planted trees must produce leaves and grow roots at the same time. For this reason, it is essential to make sure that newly transplanted trees have plenty of water. Be clear about the water requirements of your new tree and have plans to water in order to help the tree develop safely.

Trees, shrubs, vegetables, flowers – there are so many possibilities. Spring is coming. The soil is warming up. The sun is out longer each day. People are planning their gardening. It is time to go outside and plant!



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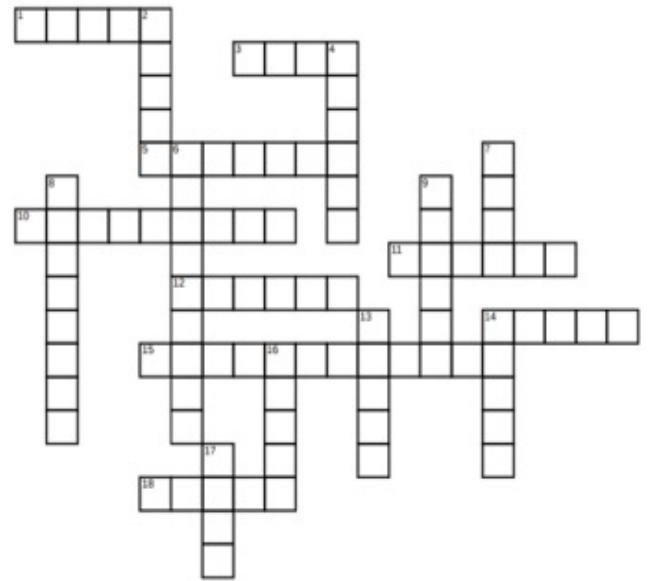
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KIDS CORNER

By Tracy Granneman

DELMAR STARS

Located on Delmar Avenue, the St. Louis Walk of Fame honors people from St. Louis, Missouri, who have contributed to the culture and history of the United States. All inductees were either born in the Greater St. Louis area or spent their formative or creative years here. As February marks Black History month, the following crossword puzzle has the last names of some of the African American inductees.



Learn about them and how they influenced history. Most clues and references can be found at: <http://stlouiswalkoffame.org/>.

ACROSS:

- Trumpet player. Jazz great bandleader and arranger. His quintet is considered one of the outstanding groups of all time.
- R&B singer and songwriter best known for "Rescue Me."
- Filmmaker and founder Blackside, Inc. which produced over 60 films. His signature work, *Eyes on the Prize I and II* (1987 and 1990), is a definitive history of the civil rights movement.
- Helped found the National Convention of Gospel Choirs and Choruses (two last names).
- His more than 50 published works include *The Entertainer* and *The Cascades*, inspired by the waterfalls of the 1904 Worlds Fair.
- This "What's Love Got to Do With It" singer was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1991.
- Renowned entertainer, heroine of the French Resistance and an activist for civil rights in the United States.
- Six-time Olympic medal winner, in 2000 opened a youth center bearing her name in East St. Louis. (two last names).
- Rapper, singer, actor, entrepreneur. Two-time Grammy award winner. Founder of Charity 4Sho4Kids.

DOWN

- 15-time All-Star, 13 consecutive Gold Gloves, career with 2,460 hits, 1,257 runs and 580 stolen bases.
- Poet and author of novels, essays and plays, with a passionate feminist voice and African-American perspective.
- One of the 1st inductees into the Boxing Hall of Fame, he was known as "Perpetual Motion."
- Batted .400 several times and stole 175 bases in one year. Inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame in 1974.
- Patriarch of St. Louis blues, featured in a BBC documentary and recorded in each of eight decades.
- 1857 Supreme Court decision withheld their fundamental rights of citizenship after 11- year legal battle.
- A pioneer of the fluegelhorn in jazz, standout in the NBC-TV Orchestra, composer, educator.
- Hailed as "The Father of Rock and Roll."
- Educator, author, editor, Grammy Award winner, Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, Member of the National Council on the Humanities.
- Missouri's first African-American U.S. congressman, served 32 years in the House of Representatives.

*references: StLouisWalkoffame.org, Wikipedia.org, IMDB.com

THIS MONTH'S ACTIVITY

Visit the **Little Art Gallery** of Skinker DeBaliviere and get a snowflake or snowman to decorate for your home. Consider taking two so you can bring a decorated one back to display in the Gallery. The Little Gallery is on the SE Corner of Des Peres and Kingsbury (next to the Little Library).

RESOURCE OF THE MONTH

Check out **EyeSeeMe African American Children's Bookstore** at 6951 Olive Blvd or online at <https://www.eyesee.me/>. It is a children's bookstore devoted exclusively to promoting positive African American Images and African American History while advocating for Academic Excellence. EyeSeeMe carries thousands of African American and Multi-Cultural Children's Books, offering parents and teachers a resource to foster educational excellence and family fun.

ANSWER KEY
1. DAVIS; 2. SMITH; 3. BASS; 4. SHANGE; 5. HAMPTON; 6. ARMSTRONG; 7. BELL; 8. TOWNSEND; 9. SCOTTS; 10. FORDSMITH; 11. JOPLIN; 12. TURNER; 13. TERRY; 14a. BAKER; 14b. BERRY; 15. JOYNERKERSSE; 16. EARLY; 17. NELLY; 18. CLAY



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Special Election Set to Replace Alderwoman Navarro

By Lana Stein

Alderwoman Heather Navarro of the 28th Ward resigned, effective January 21. She will be the Director of a new institute devoted to climate change funded in part by the Bloomberg trust and housed at Washington University. A significant part of Navarro's career has dealt with preservation of our endangered environment. At the zoomed meeting of the 28th Ward on January 20, Navarro said that she had enjoyed her aldermanic role and thanked everyone for their support.

Navarro worked with the SDCC's Housing and Zoning Committee on the issue of AirBNBs in residential areas. She worked closely with Alderwoman Shaheem Clark-Hubbard of the 26th Ward, and with other alderpersons on the redistricting plan, as well as to set priorities for the federal infrastructure dollars coming our way. In addition, Navarro passed legislation making construction of new homes and businesses more energy efficient. All our best to Heather in her new post! And thanks for a job well done!

Mike Gras to Stand in Special Election

There will be a special election for the year remaining of Navarro's term. That will be held on April 19. The first step in the process prior to

the public vote was having the committee people interview possible candidates and forward the name they favor to the Democratic Central Committee (committee people from all 28 wards). The Central Committee then selected the candidate to be the Democratic nominee. Others may file but cannot have the appellation Democrat on the ballot.

Mike Gras will be the Democratic candidate for Alderman for this unique election. Mike has served as 28th Ward Committeeman since being elected in 2016. He is an employment attorney. He and his wife, Dr. Allison Walsh, and two kids, Alex and Cecilia, live on Maryland Ave. He said, "My primary focus is going to be continuing to serve the residents of the original 28th ward boundaries and shepherding our ward through the next year of changes for our City (ward reduction, etc.). I am also looking forward to leveraging my background as an attorney and my relationships across the City to help tackle our biggest issues."


Starting in 2023, the wards drop from 28 to 14 and a new set of rules on elections take effect. Ward 10 will be home to all parts of our neighborhood, so this last year is important for our neighborhood. Working

together with Committeewoman Gail Farwell, Mike will be able to use his experience in the 28th Ward neighborhoods to help set priorities for the future.

To reach Mike directly, go to the 28th ward website or facebook page, call him at 314-497-8373 or email him at mjgras@gmail.com.



Mike Gras, 28th Ward Committeeman and candidate for Alderman in Special Election, Gail Farwell, 28th ward Committeewoman, and retiring Alderperson Heather Navarro.



28th Ward Democrats 2021:

Next meeting
February 17th and March 17th

More info on Facebook &
<https://ward28stldems.org>



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Beloved Librarian Retires

By Tim Woodcock

After 29 years as librarian at Charing Cross Library (356 Skinker Blvd.), Charles Lamkin finished up his last shift before retiring on Dec. 31. With his unflappable, gracious manner and quiet humor, Lamkin has played a vital role in the Skinker-DeBaliviere community over the decades.



During Lamkin's final week in the job, there was a clandestine and coordinated effort by neighbors to visit Lamkin at the library and to express their thanks for his years of service, with well wishes, gift cards, and cakes

When asked about what a typical day at the library is like, Lamkin says, "I tend to wear a lot of hats." Part of what he has enjoyed most about the job over the years is variety of tasks it offers: interacting with patrons, sorting and shelving the items arriving at the library each day from other branches, and organizing themed window displays. In a larger library, these tasks would be shared among several people. At Charing Cross, Lamkin handled it all. He especially likes the problem-solving aspect of being a librarian, saying there's "always something at the back of the mind [related to the library] even on my days off."

"I'm going to miss the branch, the people, and the work," he says.

Prior to becoming a librarian, Lamkin was in graduate school in Houston studying forecasting. Jobs in this area most often come up in the government and corporate sector, he says, but the job growth in the field seemed to dry up around the time he finished his degree. As a result, Lamkin changed track and moved to St. Louis.

Charing Cross - a short history

Charing Cross is the smallest branch in the St. Louis Public Library, and it was established as an experimental "mini

branch," a model that has proved successful, Lamkin says. Central Express downtown and Marketplace Library on Manchester Avenue followed the model in subsequent years.

The Charing Cross branch replaced a kiosk on Kingsbury at Four Corners, and in its earliest days it was half the size that it is now, with the southern half of the space being occupied by a beauty parlor. When the beauty parlor moved out, the library expanded. For a two-year period in the early 2010s the library was relocated to Delmar, while Washington University renovated the building that houses it.

Charing Cross is especially good for kids who tend to "like the coziness of the size," Lamkin says. And the library punches well above its weight as it specializes in new books and there's a supply of new titles "always trickling in."

The core of the collection - which is ultimately managed by the Schlafly in the Central West End, with which it is paired, and the city's overall library system - is designed so that most items are less than two years old. "People come here expecting new things," he says.

The future of libraries

Given Lamkin's professional background in forecasting, what would he predict about the future of libraries?

As long as libraries are widely used and funded, they will continue to exist, but the exact mix of offerings will inevitably change, he says. While books (and now ebooks) are the mainstay of what contemporary libraries offer, DVDs and music CDs are already becoming less important to public libraries than they once were, Lamkin says. While consortiums of libraries can negotiate for the rights for digital content and they are growing part of what SLPL offers, "digital materials are not free," he says. It would be hard to characterize a typical patron's response to digital material, Lamkin says. For every person who enthusiastically embraces

the move toward the digital content, he says, there's another who says, "I want a hard copy. I don't want to read on a screen."

In recent days, the greatest challenge to the library system is one that no one could have forecast: the COVID-19 pandemic, which for libraries led to a host of new policies. Initially, like many other institutions, SLPL shut down its public-facing operations and furloughed many of its staff in early 2020. For a few weeks, Lamkin's job was principally at the Schlafly branch, one of the larger branches in the city, which cautiously reopened to the public for curbside service only. Yet even that development did not mean Lamkin was absent from Charing Cross. The system for transferring materials between branches did not switch off during this time period and Lamkin came in most days to manage that. Additionally, when concerns about COVID-19 included the possibility of surface contamination - wiping down your groceries and mail, remember that? - the library system had to invent systems for quarantining the constant flow of materials. Thankfully, as more as been learned about the virus's transmission, that has turned out to be an unnecessary protocol. Then, once the branches ready to reopen to the public, six-foot social distancing was in place - not an easy task in a space as small as Charing Cross - and library patrons were requested to make their visits quick.

Now, with the addition of masking, life at Charing Cross is more or less back to normal. With the significant absence, of course: the familiar face of librarian Charles Lamkin.

Stephen Morris, Charing Cross's new librarian, has come to us from the main library downtown. Asked if he prefers to be addressed as Stephen or Steve, he said we could call him either and, if we slip and call him Charles, that's okay, too, as Charles is his middle name. Looks like he's already nicely settled in.



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IN YOUR EAR

By Hawkeye Z. Hoerr, Commentary in the TIMES since 1980

Oh, Joy! I can hardly contain myself. Heart be still! No, it's not that thanks to the feds, the Loop Trolley is reviving and expanding. It's not even that Donald Trump will be indicted for his post-election antics. The groundbreaking news that generates such excitement is much more significant than any of these positive events. You see, Apple Computer announced that they will give people access to their iPhones so that we can make repairs. Happy days are here again! Where's my tiny screwdriver?

Alas, dear reader, my linguistic skills fail me because you probably didn't discern that the previous paragraph drips with sarcasm. My having access to Apple's iPhone isn't good news at all. No, it alarming, concerning, and a disaster waiting to happen. You may have the technological skills and mechanical wherewithal to enter the Apple techno-labyrinth and make things better and/or have the wisdom not to try. I definitely do not have the former, but thankfully, now, I have the latter.

Much has changed in my almost four-score years of life, but one consistency is my inability to fix anything that is mechanical. Or electrical. Or if it moves. Perhaps the highlight of my ineptitude – some might call it a lowlight, but occasionally something can be so bad that it is good – occurred the day after my wedding. This is a true story.

You see, my wife and I were married, and everything went as planned. The reception in the VFW hall was loud, but not too loud, and the mostaccioli was spicy but not too spicy. The next day we arrived at the home we were renting, and Handyman Hawkeye decided to start married life by making a small repair. I wanted to replace the old wooden toilet seat with a new plastic one. That certainly was simple. I mean, what could go wrong? In fact, one of our wedding presents was a tool kit from Central Hardware, including screwdrivers and wrenches, and I saw this as a sign to begin being handy on day #1 as a husband.

I kneeled next to the commode, put the wrench around the nut holding the toilet seat, and began to turn. But nothing moved! It was clear that the toilet seat had not been replaced for a long time, maybe ever, because this nut was rusty and resisted turning. Not a problem, I thought, as with many of life's challenges, a little more brute force will do the trick, so I gave the wrench a final, mighty push. And I was successful because something happened. This has to be progress, right? Wrong.

It turns out that instead of my efforts loosening the nut so I could remove the toilet seat, I had cracked the porcelain commode. Huh? Then I realized that since I was above the nut and looking down, I had actually been turning right to tighten, not left to loosen; my efforts to unscrew the nut were really tightening it. No wonder it didn't turn! My skillful use of brute force tightened and tightened the nut until the porcelain commode broke. How embarrassing. But there's more.

Fortunately, the crack occurred above the water line in the commode. Unfortunately, exhibiting yet another example of ineptitude, I am consistent, I flushed the toilet to see what would happen. No surprise – although I was surprised – the water that flowed in to refill the commode poured out through the newly created crack in the porcelain and flooded the bathroom. Our rented home only had one toilet, so before breakfast on day #2 of married life, my wife and I went to a nearby gas station to use their toilets. Thank goodness a real handyman came and installed a new commode and attached the now very expensive plastic toilet seat.

I cannot take all the credit for my handy ineptitude because there's a genetic piece. Neither my mom or dad fixed anything, and that usually included dinner. My mom stored her important papers in the oven, knowing they would be ignored and safe. I do recall them once trying to install new linoleum tile on the bathroom floor, and to get access to the area under the tub, they removed the four claw-type feet on which the old oval tub was suspended. Fortunately, the water pipes were strong enough to support the suspended tub a few inches above the floor even though its feet were now missing. Unfortunately, those pipes were not strong enough to support the tub when my mom stepped into it to put a piece of tile against the wall.

The pipes broke and flooded the bathroom with water. I was just an observer, sort of in training to learn how not to be handy, and I remember biting my cheek so I would not laugh. Another misfortune is that our apartment was on the second floor and the water shut-off was in the basement. The third misfortune, not counting the time it took to get to the basement, is that neither of my parents knew where the shut-off valve was located. I had to really work not to laugh aloud as they searched the basement, and I learned quite a few new vocabulary words from my dad.

So you can see why I approach the opportunity to open and repair my iPhone with some trepidation. No, make that with a lot of trepidation. My guess is that Apple shop and I will remain good friends, and that's OK. As my dad used to say, "It's only money." On the other hand, how hard could fixing this be? I mean, changing a toilet seat has to be more complex than repairing an iPhone.



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