

The *TIMES* of.... SKINKER DEBALIVIERE

Vol. 53, No. 4

November - December 2023

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

The oldest neighborhood newspaper in St. Louis

FREE

Independent and all volunteer-run since 1970

MAGIC MINI GOLF IS HERE!

By Linda Cross

Joe Edwards' latest project, Magic Mini Golf, opened on Friday, October 20 in the Delmar loop. The 9,500-square-foot all-seasons venue features 18 holes of miniature golf designed by Joe and neighbor (and my husband) Andy Cross, two full-size shuffleboard courts, a five-car Ferris wheel, and basketball arcade games, as well as food, a full bar, and a stage and screen for live entertainment or private events.

The venue is heralded by an award-winning 27-foot tall animated neon sign designed by Joe and Hope Edwards.

Inside are hand painted shuffleboard courts and the 18-hole golf course that features magic themes and Delmar inspired themes including the Moonrise Hotel, Blueberry Hill, the St. Louis Walk of Fame, Chuck Berry, a Magic Circus, a Sunken Pirate Ship, and even a 'Delmarado'. Andy and Joe Edwards have been designing the golf course for many months and Andy has been fabricating the holes for nearly a year.

Magic Mini Golf also has a "Magic Wedding Chapel", making it a unique place in St. Louis for weddings and vow renewals. The entire staff is ordained and can legally officiate weddings!

Magic Mini Golf offers house-made pizzas (including vegan), grilled cheese sandwiches, appetizers, desserts, and more.

They also have a full bar with signature cocktails currently including the Houdini Martini, the Presto G&T, and the White Rabbit as well as non-alcoholic drinks.

Edwards envisioned a space similar to his previous projects, inspired by nostalgic games, where all types of people could get together. "A place where people can enjoy themselves and put their troubles behind them for a couple hours, whether it's a date night or grandparents and grandkids or a business group," Edwards says.

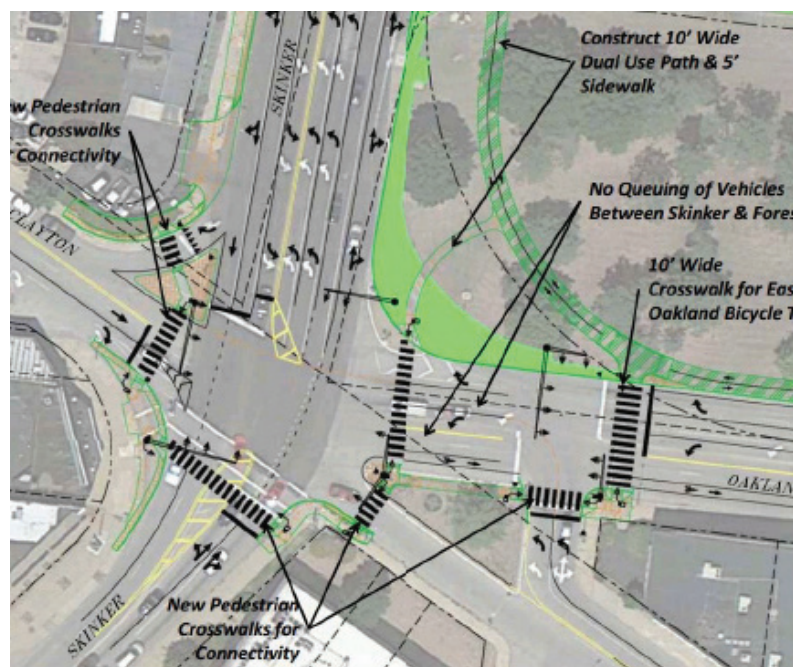
On a personal note, this is the first time that I have watched a project of this scale from concept to completion (although if you go to the golf course you will probably see Andy improving the course for months to come). There are so many components that I had never even conceived of like lighting a sleeping dragon or getting Chuck Berry's Duck Walk to look great when you are given a pre-made mechanism. Andy's was just a part of the overall concept, but he put his heart and soul into it. I can't imagine the years of sleepless nights that Joe Edwards had. I hope that your enjoyment can in some way match my pride when you go play golf.

Intersection Improvements at Skinker and Forest Park Parkway

If you've traveled south on Skinker Blvd in the past months, you've probably noticed construction work at the four corners of Skinker and Forest Park Parkway. The work completed in the intersection is part of a project designed and funded by Washington University to improve the overall safety of the intersection. This project was first discussed in a virtual community meeting held by the Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council and Washington University on March 27 for the neighbors in Skinker DeBaliviere and Parkview. Located immediately northeast of the Danforth Campus entrance, the intersection is an area that experiences high traffic use from the convergence of vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists, and transit riders.

The project includes the following enhancements:

- Improvements to ADA accessibility at the corners of the intersection;
- Adjustments in signal operations to reduce conflicts and allow appropriate time for pedestrians to safely cross the intersection;
- New pedestrian ADA compliant crosswalk buttons and audio signals;



- Modifications to make crosswalks highly visible and include green bike paths;
- Separate paths of travel for bicycles and pedestrians similar to the approach implemented at the Skinker and Lindell and Skinker and Forsyth intersections;
- Installation of stainless-steel bollards at the corners to enhance awareness for pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers. WashU is managing these improvements in partnership with the City of St. Louis's Board of Public Service.



photos by Almy Cross



What else is up in the development world in SDCC?

By Richard Bose

The equipment shed for controlling the Metrolink tracks has been placed up high to make it less susceptible to flooding. Hopefully a return to pre-flood service levels and speed will be soon.

- A Starbucks coffee shop is under construction in Expo at Forest Park at the southwest corner of DeGiverville and DeBaliviere. According to building permits filed with the city, the cost of the build-out is over \$700,000.
- A two-family is under construction at 5806 Westminster. A second is planned next door at 5808.
- Chicken Out at Delmar and Skinker has closed.
- Amigo Sole Mexican Street Food has opened at 6102 Delmar.
- Paris Bánh Mì has opened at 6118 Delmar.
- Construction is process for the 2 story 3 condo building for senior living in the neighborhood. Condos are still available.

Editor's Notes

By Linda Cross

I have been procrastinating on this issue frankly because I couldn't think of positive things to say in my notes. We are approaching my least favorite time of year, winter, and frankly the time of year where I start to drive my husband Andy crazy with the 'Why do we live in the Midwest instead of the beach?' annual discussions. This is the time of year when Andy should be the formal mascot of this neighborhood. He reminds me of how the silhouettes of the trees look in a winter sunset, how the muted colors of a dreary day are a beautiful change of pace, and how it is nice to have a day so nasty that you have guilt free reading time with cocoa. (Although if you are in the community garden with Andy you know that there is maybe one day a year that is so nasty that he won't be outside just to get some nature). So, in honor of Andy, I am thinking of the great things that our neighborhood will have and do in the next couple of months. There are always great concerts at Joe's Café that are just a walk from your home and inside and warm. Pretty soon we will see the streets filled with cars of families walking to our doors with Thanksgiving potluck dishes, then the holiday lights will start appearing on facades and in windows, we will have Wintermarkt on December 2nd so that you can load up on handmade gifts for Christmas presents, and our carolers might grace our doors for about the 25th season. We are lucky to have so much to look forward to right within our reach even if it isn't a tropical paradise.

Guidelines for Submitting Copy

The Times welcomes unsolicited articles and letters. Because of the small size and volunteer nature of the writing staff, the quality and range of the Times has always depended in large part on submissions from non-staff area residents.

The writer is responsible for the accuracy of the data, including times, dates, location, and particularly the spelling of names. The editor retains the right to omit or alter any material. Opinions expressed in Commentaries are the opinion of the author.

Deadline for next issue: January 15, 2024 for our February/March issue. Please send copy by e-mail to Linda Cross, lcross@sdtimes.org.

The TIMES of... SKINKER DEBALIVIERE

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The Times of Skinker DeBaliviere is published by the West End Publishing Co., a not-for profit, independent, community organization.
Layout: Karen Hilmes Printing: Arcade Printing

Advertising Rates - Display Advertising:
Column width, 2.25". Minimum ad size 2" x 1 col: \$25/insertion.
For a complete list of sizes and rates, write:
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NEW!

What Makes a Deli Divine

By Lana Stein

The St. Louis area is undergoing a bagel renaissance. Almost overnight, there are more spots selling water bagels, boiled before baking. In spring, a new deli opened as well that tries to capture, with food and atmosphere, the delis that are seldom around anymore in most cities. Deli Divine is located at 5501 Delmar at Belt. It is in the old Regional Hospital building. Situated on the Delmar Divide, it tries to bring together the north and south areas adjacent to Delmar. Build a Bear founder Maxine Clark bought the building. She is using it to house nonprofit service organizations and some affordable housing.

And a deli. A Jewish style deli. It was once said that if you had 100 Jews in a room, you'd have 99 political parties. So it is with Jewish cooking. Saying that, I can say my own prejudices. I'm from Detroit which had numerous delis and bagel places in the 1950s and where a number moved to the suburbs, particularly after the 1967 riot. I also ate in delis in New York and Chicago. New York had larger, perhaps chewier bagels. They all had the cholesterol based Jewish diets schmaltz, fatty tasty corned beef and pastrami, salty lox, smoked fish—whitefish and chubs,

The new Deli Divine has a wide array of the products I grew up with. I sampled a bagel with lox and a shmer. To my way of thinking, there was too little each but given the price of lox that's understandable. What was disappointing was the pastrami. It was dry and lacked flavor. Why? It was wafer thin and lacked fat. The flavor is in the fat. Pastrami isn't a health food. The matzo ball soup was good, reminiscent of my aunt's. I did not sample my mother's whitefish, chubs, or herring. That's for another trip. There were samples of honey cake at the counter, well flavored and good texture. There is a marketplace where one can get bagels to go, cheeses and the best looking bottles of kosher dills. Plus a barrel to pick out a single succulent dill.

The atmosphere? It's like the delis I remember. People shouting, greeting, as it had been at Hy Horensteins in my hometown. I would vouchsafe to say that Deli Divine is bringing back people who had not been there on Delmar for decades. That can only help our East Loop. Around noon there was a queue. People kept coming. More development on Delmar up to Union is planned.

There will still be a divide but a little less discernible perhaps.

Wintermarkt

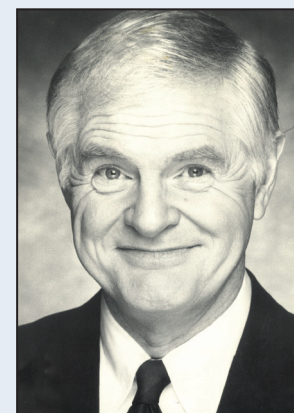


AN OUTDOOR CRAFTS SALE IN THE SPIRIT OF THE HOLIDAY SEASON



Saturday, December 2, 2023
from 11am to 4pm
Greg Freeman Park,
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News of Neighbors



Dan Shea

Dan Shea, a professor emeritus of English in Arts & Sciences at Washington University in St. Louis and longtime Skinker DeBaliviere neighbor, died Monday, Oct. 23, 2023, while in hospice care at his home in the Central West End. He was 86.

A specialist in early American literature as well as an accomplished stage actor, Shea was born in Minneapolis but experienced a nomadic childhood, moving a dozen times by the age of 13. In 1958, he graduated summa cum laude from the College of St. Thomas, then earned both a master's degree and a doctorate from Stanford University, in 1962 and 1966, respectively.

Shea joined the WashU faculty in 1962. His first book, "Spiritual Autobiography in Early America" (1968), explored writings by Quakers and Puritans in 17th- and 18th-century New England. Other publications include "Journeys in New Worlds: Early American Women's Narratives (1991), which he co-edited, "The Patience of Pearl," about St. Louis writer Pearl Curran, as well as numerous essays on writers including Thomas Morton, Jonathan Edwards, B.F. Skinner and Pennsylvania Quaker preacher Elizabeth Ashbridge, whose autobiography he also edited.

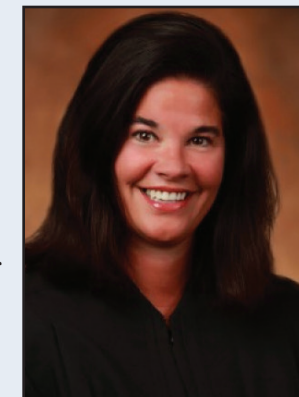
Described by theater critic Harry Weber as one of the area's "most powerful actors," Shea was a member of Actors Equity and the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists. He appeared in dozens of productions, both with the PAD and professional companies including The New Theatre, Off The Cuff Productions and the St. Louis Shakespeare Company.

Credits range from starring roles in Shakespeare's "King Lear" and Chekhov's "The Three Sisters" to modern and contemporary plays such as C.P. Taylor's "And a Nightingale Sang" and Hélène Cixous' "The Conquest of the School of Madhubai."

Shea is survived by his wife of 45 years, Kathleen Williams; by his children, Matthew Shea, Catherine Cleavinger, Daniel D. Shea and Emily Fisher; and by five grandchildren. His oldest son, Timothy, preceded him in death in 2014.

Shea donated his body to the Washington University School of Medicine. A celebration of his life will take place from 1-4p.m. Sunday, Dec. 3, in Umrath Hall Lounge on the Danforth Campus. Memorial donations can be made to WashU or to the Alzheimer's Association.

Skinker DeBaliviere neighbor and Presiding Circuit Judge Elizabeth Byrne Hogan is one of the Missouri Bar's two winners of the 2023 Hon. Theodore McMillian Judicial Excellence Award.



Elizabeth Byrne Hogan

The annual award recognizes Missouri judges who have advanced the administration of justice, provided outstanding community service and leadership and have inspired other members of the judiciary to noble purpose.

Judge Hogan's leadership brought stability to the 22nd Judicial Circuit in the first half of the year at a time when the Circuit Attorney's Office faced heavy staff turnover and a shortage of courtroom experience.

"As Presiding Judge, you guided the 22nd Judicial Circuit in finding a way to protect the rights of victims and defendants as much as possible during a tumultuous time when numerous cases were unable to be prosecuted," Missouri Bar President Lauren Tucker McCubbin told Hogan in a recent letter announcing the award. "In addition, your dedication to civic education and delivery of numerous speeches about the judiciary have exposed countless Missouri citizens to the judicial branch of our government."

Judge Hogan has served the St. Louis Circuit Court since her appointment to the associate bench in 2005. She has been a circuit judge since 2012 and is serving a two-year term as the 22nd Judicial Circuit's presiding judge. Before becoming a judge, she was an assistant prosecutor in Jefferson County, an assistant circuit attorney in St. Louis and supervising attorney at CASA (formerly known as Voices for Children).

"The award is one of the greatest honors of my career," Hogan said. "In addition to serving as an assistant circuit attorney in the City of St. Louis and working with juveniles in the City of St. Louis prior to being appointed to the bench, I have worked for over 18 years as a public servant as a judge and raised my family in this city that I love. I remain committed to doing anything I can to ensure every individual that comes before me and my colleagues, whether defendant or victim, is treated with courtesy, respect, and recognition of the rights of all."

Do you have news to share? Please send your submissions via email with the subject line News of Neighbors to lcross@sdtimes.org. Be sure to mark it "News of Neighbors". We love to hear about neighbors accomplishments, awards, travels, weddings, anniversaries, births, and more!

To All Our TIMES Friends

Thank you for reading the TIMES! We rely on our volunteers to write our news and deliver it to you at your door. To pay for printing, we rely on donations. We are happy to report that our envelopes have brought in over \$3,000! That will enable us to keep rolling until our 54th anniversary issue in April, 2024.

We have also received some donations through "zefzy" online. Thanks to our business manager Mark Jacobs and our website led by Marj Weir for instituting this new way to give. Check it out at sdtimes.org!

Of course you can also mail to TIMES OF SKINKER DEBALIVIERE, % Business Manager Mark Jacobs, 6229 Washington, STL 63130. We will be thrilled to add your name to the list of these generous friends and neighbors.

As longtime neighbor, advertiser, and friend Joe Edwards wrote: "The Times is soo important to the neighborhood. Thanks to all the volunteers."

Total is "over \$3,200."



THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

- Sally Boggeman
Alan Breckenridge
Linda and Andy Cross
Joe Edwards
Jim & Susan Gamble
David Garin
Ligaya & David Gritz
Lourdes Henares-Levy
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NEW SHORT-TERM RENTALS ORDINANCE

How will it affect our neighborhood?
By Marvin J. Nodiff

After years of procrastination, the city's Board of Aldermen approved an ordinance on October 20 to regulate short-term rentals (STRs). While neighborhood advocates contend the ordinance doesn't go far enough, it has implications for Skinker-DeBaliviere.

On the effective date in one year (or sooner if "technically feasible"), operators must have an annual STR permit (\$150.00), including an inspection for public health and safety, administered by the Building Division. Only individuals (not entities) may obtain a permit, with a limit of four per person, although entities may own the properties. Off-site operators ("Non-Occupants") must also have a graduated business license.

STRs may be located anywhere in the city, except that in single-family (District "A") zones they will also require a conditional use permit ("CUP"). This applies to the 61XX blocks of Washington, Westminster, Kingsbury and McPherson; Waterman between DeBaliviere and DesPeres; 58XX and 59XX blocks of Pershing; and all of DeGiverville. The 60XX blocks are zoned "B" for duplexes. See: Citywide Zoning District Map (stlouis-mo.gov).

While Parkview is single-family residential, it must rely on enforcing its own private STR restrictions, which also applies to condominiums and homeowner associations. The ordinance does not "supersede" private covenants and restrictions.

STR listings in the city have more than doubled in the past four years from 1700 to approximately 3,800 today, generating resident complaints about nuisances, parties, parking, gun violence, eroding neighborhoods, and rising housing costs and rental rates.

As of August 2023, Skinker-DeBaliviere had 45 STR listings, which means we've lost a significant number of homeowners and long-term tenants. The figure is higher in other neighborhoods: 397 STRs in the Central West End, 279 in Soulard, and 242 in Downtown.

CUPs call for a public hearing allowing neighbors to raise concerns, and the city could deny the permit or add conditions. However,



neighborhood advocates contend that it transfers the burden from policymakers to individual residents, who must show up at hearings with objective concerns. Further, anecdotal experience from other cities indicates that the STR applicant may hire attorneys to tilt the playing field against neighbors who are unrepresented.

For apartments, the ordinance limits the number of "Non-Occupant" STRs: for buildings with 3-4 units, not more than one permit and a cap of fifty percent (50%); buildings between five (5) and 23 units, not more than 25%; buildings with 24 or more units, not more than 12.5%.

A coalition of residents, "Neighborhoods are for Neighbors," sought a total ban in all residential districts (A, B and C), except for owner-occupied STRs, and tighter limits on the number of STRs in apartment buildings. These additional restrictions were supported by Ald. Cara Spencer (8th Ward) and Sharon Tyus (12th Ward) but rejected by the full BOA.

"With this diluted ordinance," said coalition organizer Michelle Pona, "the unrestricted growth of STRs will persist. When we purchased our home in the Southeast Garden neighborhood, we never thought that a hotel would open up next door with transient guests that arrive at all hours of the day and night. We have lost the stable residential environment that we had when we purchased our home.

"Rather than be proactive and learn from other cities," Pona added, "our aldermen opted for a 'pass now, fix later' strategy. To preserve our right to quiet enjoyment of our homes, we need to prohibit non-owner occupied STRs in residential neighborhoods."

Additional restrictions: minimum stay of two (2) nights; limits on the number of occupants and parking spaces; proof of insurance and paid taxes. Internet platforms providing STR transactions must register. The city may revoke a permit if the STR fails to comply with the ordinance or has at least three citations within a period of 24 months.

Marvin Nodiff is a retired attorney and a long-time resident of Skinker-DeBaliviere neighborhood. This story is not intended to provide legal advice.

SDCC BOARD MINUTES:

Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council (SDCC) September 11, 2023

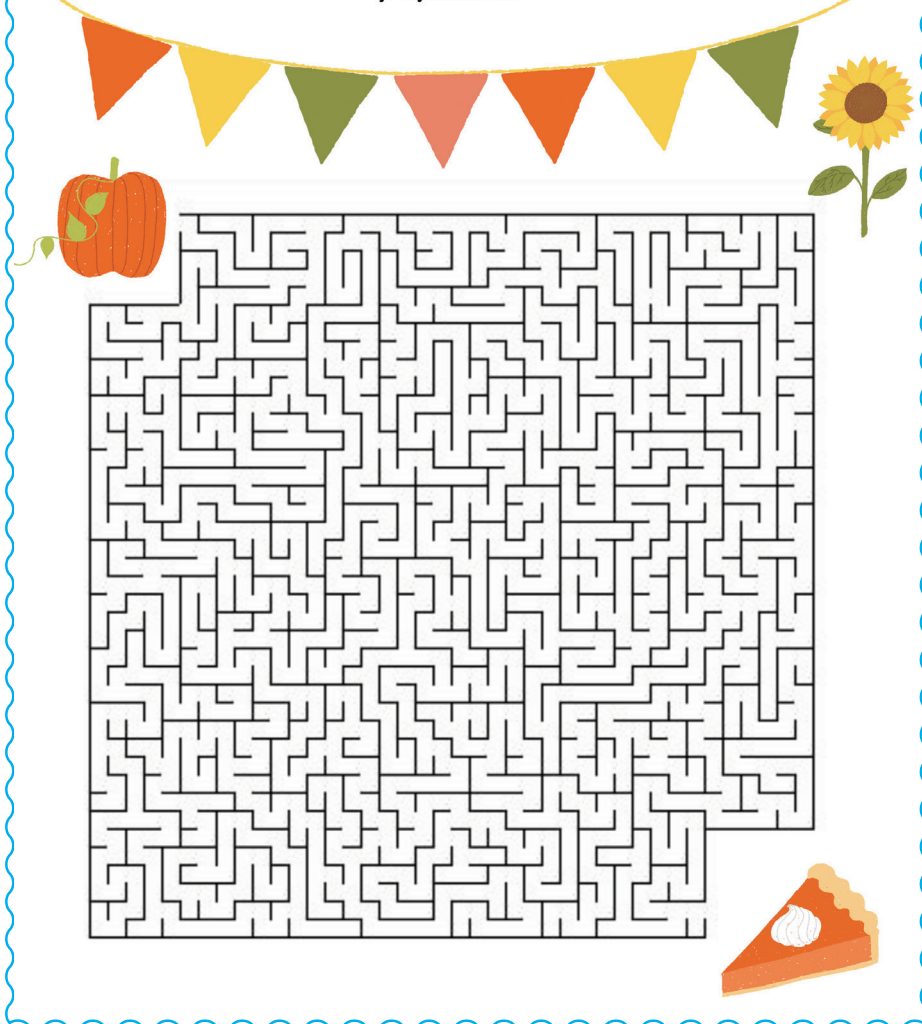
Meeting Minutes Board Members Present: Tracy Granneman (President, Rosedale), Molly Rater (Secretary, Kingsbury Square), Yvette Kell (Treasurer, Washington Heights), Jim Holzer (Rosedale), Linda Cross (Rosedale), AnnaMarie Bliss (at large), JoAnna Schooler (Washington University), Tim Woodcock (Rosedale), Mike Stephens (Parkview), Nathaniel Rivers (Washington Heights) Not Present: Carl Merritt (Cote Brillante), Kim Freter (St Roch), Kathryn Bulard (Busey Bank), Jeff Stokes (Grace Methodist), John Wright (Parkview Agents) Visitors: Ald. Shameem Clark-Hubbard, Andy Cross (beautification), Sheree Hickman (NIS), Samantha Smugila (Delmar Loop), Captain Marks, Kevin Koenig, Sarah Christman, Paris Von Me restaurant owners Executive Director: Michael Reid Meeting was called to Order at 7:00 in person. Quorum with 10/15 board members present Introductions Approval of July minutes tabled since we did not have copies of minutes available Public Comment: Presentation was given by Paris Bahn Mi restaurant owners. This is a Vietnamese restaurant that will not be serving alcohol. They will be having indoor and outdoor seating. Normally this would go through the Commercial Districts first but they have not met and we did not want to hold up their process. Questions asked by board members were answered by the restaurant owners. Mike Stephens made a motion to approve a letter of support for the restaurant and Yvette Kell seconded. No one was in opposition and the motion carried. Captain Christi Marks, District 5 Commander, discussed her top priorities for our area which are reducing gunfire and car break-ins. Questions from board were answered. JoAnna Schooler expressed concerns re: Un-housed population in neighborhood. Captain Marks encouraged us to use our Alderperson as a resource and Captain Lowe who does Crisis Intervention. Captain Marks provided her email address and encouraged us to contact her with concerns: CMMARKS@SLMPD.ORG Financials: Treasurer Yvette Kell suggested two motions: Combine Debit and Operating Accounts for simplicity and easier tracking on Quickbooks. This would be the account for daily business and bill paying. Brandon Sterling will be removed from Debit Account since he is no longer employed with us. Motion presented by Linda Cross and Mike Stephens seconded and the motion carried unopposed. Page 2 of 2 Second motion suggested by Yvette Kell was to merge the West End Arts (WAC) account (dormant for last 9 years) into the SDCC savings account. There is approximately 20,000 dollars in the WAC account which would bring our operating savings account up to 83,000. Andy Cross expressed that the people that developed the WAC fund would be upset to learn that the funds that were meant for artistic projects were being merged into the general operating fund. Board members discussed and opinions were generally that if the account had been dormant for this long it would be OK to move. Molly confirmed that recently received RAC grant funds were not restricted and could be used for general operating expenses and the WAC money could be dedicated to artistic projects like the concert series and Wintermarkt. Molly also communicated that the council was in a different place than it was 9 years ago with lack of CDA funding and current budget deficit. Motion was made by Mike Stephens to table the motion until the end of the calendar year so those involved with the WAC fund could hear this information. Jim Holzer seconded the motion and it carried without opposition. Yvette reported that we need MOUs for donors to SDCC and will be working on this with Mike Reid. Linda Cross would like a MOU for the gardens. Yvette also expressed concerns about having money in "parking lot accounts" like the dog park because they are still on our books. Tracy wants our October meeting to focus on financials. Aldermanic Report: Shameem reported that the Aldermanic board will be back in session this Friday. She had no new reports on BB 43 or 44. She would like Evan Wilder of the Zoning Committee to talk to us. Board members AnnaMarie and Mike Stephens expressed dissatisfaction with how the Cell Tower approval process went. New Business: Neighbor Sarah Christman expressed concern about developer Brent Cowin. At our last meeting he reported that he was maintaining the vacant lot next to her property. She said this was not true and she and her husband have maintained that lot for years. She has alerted our Alderman and has written to City Hall. His application to buy the lot is in process according to Shameem. Porchfest: Molly reported that the event was this Sunday September 17th and volunteers needed. Tracy expressed that it was a duty of every

KIDS CORNER

By Jenny Matthews

Pumpkin Pie Maze

jinkykids.com



board member to volunteer. Rain date for Rags to Riches is tentatively planned for Saturday October 14th . Meeting adjourned at 8:05 pm Minutes submitted by Board Secretary Molly Rater 9/13/2023

Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council (SDCC) October 9, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Board Members Present: Tracy Granneman (President, Rosedale), Molly Rater (Secretary, Kingsbury Square), Yvette Kell (Treasurer, Washington Heights), Jim Holzer (Rosedale), Linda Cross (Rosedale), AnnaMarie Bliss (at large), JoAnna Schooler (Washington University), Tim Woodcock (Rosedale), Mike Stephens (Parkview), Nathaniel Rivers (Washington Heights) Kathryn Bulard (Busey Bank), Karen Stokes (Grace Methodist) Not Present: Carl Merritt (Cote Brillante), Kim Freter (St Roch) John Wright (Parkview Agents) Visitors: Ald. Shameem Clark-Hubbard, Andy Cross (beautification), Samantha Smugala (Delmar Loop), Juan Crawford and Elmer Hammond (DJ Social Club), Teryl Riggins (6000 Kingsbury) Executive Director: Michael Reid Meeting was called to Order at 7:06 in person. Quorum with 12/15 board members present Introductions Approval of June, July and September minutes Public Comment: Business Proposal presented by Juan Crawford and Elmer Hammond for DJ Social Club. Prince Hall Free Masons are a group of Shriners and Masons-a fraternity of African American Males. They foster philanthropy, networking and job opportunities. They would be using this space at Laurel and Delmar as a Private club for social gatherings and meetings. They would usually be open W/R/F/Sat. They will be serving alcohol with a conditional use permit. They will not have a kitchen to serve food. There will be no alcohol to go sales. Parking will be in the Loop Trolley Parking Garage. They assert that they will enhance security and increase business traffic in the area. All members must undergo background checks. Only vetted members will be allowed to enter the club and members will have key fobs. They will have a capacity of 90 people. Motion passed by the board to table decision on letter of support until more neighbors learn of this, West End Neighbors need to be aware. Long time neighbor Teryl Riggins expressed dissatisfaction with parking on her block, 6000 Kingsbury. She says that some apartment units on her block have 5-6 students, all with cars. She is frequently unable to park close to her

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S N A R F ' S



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91U 374A • 5. Grand Blvd. St. Louis, MO 63103
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THIS LAND IS YOUR LAND Watch Out for Others!

By Mark Banaszak

One of the characteristics that make Skinker DeBaliviere a sought-after neighborhood is its livability. We have good access to public transit, in a city where that is not common. Attractive housing, green spaces, community gardens, and large trees beautify our environment. Convenient grocery and restaurant options support a walkable lifestyle. Diverse, interesting, and kind neighbors all support a community-minded environment. And according to USA Today, it has the best public park in the United States. But there are problems.

Traffic safety is one of those problems - and not for the first time in our historic neighborhood. As car use grew, so did concern about traffic safety and the rising traffic fatality rate. In the mid-1950s, President Eisenhower responded with measures focused on improving driver behavior - including toughened driver licensing laws, driver education courses in high schools, and public relations campaigns. All of these efforts help

increase safety not only for people in cars, but people on foot or on bikes. Since 2010, however, there has been an increase of 77% for people on foot and 44% for people on bikes, according to the New York Times. There are a host of reasons that account for these increases, including things like more people on foot in neighborhoods now focused on cars, an aging population for whom accidents have more potential harm, and a rise in vehicles with a higher front-end profile, making it difficult to see people on foot or bike.

These increased dangers are not just statistics. Many of us have seen pedestrians or bicyclists put in unsafe situations. A recent incident prompted me to write this column. I witnessed a person in a car knock over a person on a bike who was crossing with the light. When the person who was struck picked up the bike to carry it to the side of the road, the person in the car drove away.

Together, as kind neighbors, we can help. First, recognize that people on bikes or on foot are more vulnerable than people in cars. Cars are heavy and move fast, and even at slow speeds can be dangerous especially for older adults and children. Also, remember that

pedestrians and bicyclists are just as entitled to safe travel as people in cars. In fact, others not driving benefits drivers. There is less traffic, more parking at your destination, and less pollution when others walk or ride.

Practical suggestions for being a kind driver include stopping short of the crosswalk, far enough to see the first line of the crosswalk. Someone you may not see may be crossing in front of those cars. Be especially careful when turning right. Drivers can be too focused on people crossing towards them, and do not realize that a person on a bike coming from behind may appear suddenly. Give people on foot or on bike plenty of clearance. Many states now have laws requiring drivers to give bicyclists at least three feet of clearance when they are on the road. Don't let screens steal your attention. Budget adequate travel time so that you don't feel rushed. Finally, don't drive while impaired by drugs, alcohol, or lack of sleep.

None of these things are difficult, but paying attention to them will help ensure that our neighborhood stays safe, walkable, and bikeable. So please watch out for others.



ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL FOOD DRIVE!

1236 items were collected. The pantries and SDCC thanks all who donated and the volunteers who picked up and sorted all the donations!



SDCC Board Meeting *continued from page 5*

home. She has a garage but does not feel safe using it because it is not attached and on the alley. She also reported that students often leave pets when they move out. She will meet with the Housing and Zoning Committee to work on solutions. Marv Nodiff who is on the HCZ committee talked with her after the meeting. Page 2 of 2 Aldermanic Report: Shameem reported that the short term rental board bill will have its third reading on Friday. Comments or suggestions can be sent to Shameem. BOA has also been dealing with the issues of the unhoused in the city. She has pulled back support for Brent Cowin acquiring property in neighborhood. Shameem will help with getting new trash dumpsters for the Skinker DeBaliviere neighborhood. Motion made to end meeting and move to closed session at 7:54 PM. Closed session extended and met on Wednesday, October 18, 2023. Minutes submitted by Secretary Molly Rater Tuesday October 17, 2023

Changes in SDCC Staffing

The SDCC Board has voted to adopt a new staffing model that reduces overhead and focuses on direct programmatic/funding support for events and neighborhood initiatives. As part of this effort, the SDCC Executive Director position has been eliminated. The Board will be recruiting for a Program Manager that will support the events and programming that will specifically benefit the neighborhood.



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A REPORT FROM 61XX PERSHING

By Bob Dowgwillio

This past summer, the Skinker-Debaliviere Community Council Community Engagement Committee embarked on an effort to reinvigorate the block captain program. A first step in this effort is the recruitment of ready, willing, and able block captains. At the suggestion of long-time neighbors, June Vaughan, committee chairperson, invited me and my wife Heidi to be block captains for the 6100 block of Pershing Avenue. Our history with the neighborhood began in 1981, when I purchased a wreck of a duplex to renovate. After our children graduated from college, Heidi and I moved back into the duplex to downsize from our single-family house in University City. Even though this is our first stint as "official" block captains, we are quite used to monitoring the local activity. In short, we have seen it all.

Our block has 49 properties listed on the city's property records, including buildings that end-cap our block on Skinker and Rosedale. There is much variety: single, two, three, six, and twelve family properties, condominiums, shops, and offices. Only 15 properties (31%) are owner-occupied, and four of those are condominium units in the same building.

Our block is just off the northeast corner of the Washington University campus. The university owns twenty-one of the properties (43%) as student housing and fully renovated the multi-families a few years ago. Their buildings across the street from us are beautiful. Other non-owner-occupied buildings also cater to students.

The annual student move-in/move-out periods generate an unbelievable amount of trash, our most persistent problem. 2022 was especially bad, with overfilled dumpsters, piles next to the dumpsters, alley obstruction, and abandoned furniture. Since then, the City, SDCC, Quadrangle Properties, and JoAnna Schooler, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Community & Local Government Relations at the university, have joined the few permanent residents to bring about a noticeable improvement. However, some students continue to dispose of their trash improperly, requiring special appeals. We have distributed cards in Mandarin about recycling, provided by Brightside, and made up our own flyers illustrating basic dumpster etiquette. This year the move-outs took on a new wrinkle, with students leaving furniture on the front lawn of their buildings. Some of it remained an eyesore for days, exposed to the weather.

Litter, mainly from the nearby eateries, appears on sidewalks and streets. About once a month, using a bag and rubber gloves, I pick it up while walking the dog - getting some much-needed exercise. I hope my example encourages our student residents to do the same.

Living a short walk from the campus, on weekdays we watch the street parking fill with the cars of commuting students. Apparently, they choose to use our parking rather than pay for on-campus parking (\$874 per year) or use a free, university-provided, Metro pass. Every parking space is taken by 9AM. For years, this effectively made street cleaning impossible. Often a dozen commuter cars lined the street-side being swept. In recent months active enforcement of parking restrictions by the City has brought noticeable improvement. We do our part on street cleaning days by calling the police to request a visit by a parking enforcement officer. Last month almost the entire street was swept. Progress!

A report from 61XX Pershing *continued on page 8*

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IN YOUR EAR

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

What's the worst thing you've done in your life?

Relax, dear reader, no one awaits your answer and Hawkeye cannot read your mind. That's a good thing! Further, Hawkeye isn't even interested in your response, playful or prurient as it might be. Rather, he asks simply to get at the ludicrousness of college admission essay questions. Do you remember your college admissions essay? Do you recall your response? (To those of Hawkeye's age group, do you remember college?!?)

There's been a great deal of discussion about college essay exams, actually more than the topic warrants. After all, acceptance to college is usually semi-perfunctory. If your g.p.a. is higher than sea level and you can pay, welcome! Someone has to pay for the new fancy dorm and the world class sports center. Colleges value diversity so they will accept Master Card, Visa, American Express, and Discover.

Realistically – and Hawkeye hates being realistic, but like categorizing the various flavors of bacon, this is an important topic – most colleges accept most students as long as most of their tuition is going to be paid. There are maybe 50 colleges and universities that

are discerning enough so that the essay syllables you submit will make a difference in whether you are accepted. Of course, nothing increases attractiveness more than elusiveness, so just about every high school senior wants to attend one of those 50 schools. Thank you, supply and demand! Consequently, students, students and parents, and students and coaches spend a great deal of time crafting those essays. Yes, I said, coaches. Believe it or not, there are actually people who are paid to help students write the admissions essay! Is nothing sacred? What's next, people who are paid to hold political office?

It's easy to cast blame at essay coaches and their customers, but everyone wants what they can't have, and who can blame them? To my mind, the real culprits in this admissions dance are the colleges and universities. They determine the process, after all, and their questions illustrate that they really aren't interested in what they can learn about their applicants. When I applied to college, the essay question was "Should today's prohibition laws be eliminated?" I'm not sure how I responded, but I do recall drinking a gin & tonic while I wrote.

Many years later, the quality of the essay questions has not improved (although I am drinking a higher quality gin). Here, for example, are a few essay question examples that are used today, courtesy of Dr. Google:

- What topic do you find so engaging that it makes you lose all track of time?
- How has a failure affected you?
- What has someone done that has made you happy in a surprising way?

Give me a break! Of course, the answers to those tepid questions are the equivalent of applehood and mother pie. Responses that generate a check in the admissions box are (a) watching a clock; (b) it hurt; and (c) no one has ever done this. See what I mean?

Instead, if college admissions officers really wanted to know their applicants, if they truly sought to ensure that the right kind of student was accepted, they would ask far more intimate, probing, and illuminating questions. Envision the responses that the following queries might generate:

- What's the worst thing you've done in your life? (Yep, you were ready for this one.)
- What's the almost worst thing you've done more than once in your life?
- When was the last time you made fun of someone behind their back?

- While driving, when did you last make an obscene gesture to someone in a smaller car?
- When did you last make an obscene gesture to someone because of the bumper sticker posted on their car?
- When were you most appropriately embarrassed?
- How many consecutive days have you ever gone without lying? OK, the most consecutive number of hours? Alright, how many minutes?
- What reprehensible thing do you do regularly?
- Will you donate an inordinate amount of your earnings to this university?
- How could you ever have voted for Trump?

Yes, responding to these questions would speed up heart rate, elicit sweat, and encourage eating fistfuls of M&Ms while writing. But the essays would serve as a Rosetta Stone into the soul of the writer. The essence of the responses would be bare, brazen, and bodacious, and create a student body to remember.

Hawkeye welcomes your responses to any/all these essay questions at trhoerr@aol.com. You can be candid because your answers will neither hurt nor benefit your application to H.S.H.K. (Hawkeye's School of Hard Knocks).

A report from 61XX Pershing *continued from page 7*


Several dead trees have dropped branches for years with every windstorm, while some healthy trees damaged by delivery trucks need limbing up. Complaints to the Citizens Service Bureau brought only acknowledgements. Then we engaged our new Neighborhood Improvement Specialist (NIS), Sheree Hickman, to help. Now we are hopeful that our permit to do tree-trimming ourselves, applied for via the CSB, arrives before wintertime.

Like nearly every other street in the neighborhood, Pershing is one-way (our block is westbound). However, unlike the other streets, there is a short stretch of two-way traffic at the west end of our street to provide access from Skinker to the parking lot behind Kaldi's Coffee. Consequently, despite the curb bump out with two Do Not Enter signs, we get wrong way traffic as far as Rosedale several times a day: cars, delivery trucks, postal service trucks, scooters—even the odd police car. It is an accident waiting to happen. We have engaged with our former NIS who is now a supervisor, Karen Clifford, to upgrade the current signage. We also filed a complaint with the local postmaster, including times and vehicle identification. This seems to be working.

We have been pleasantly surprised that there are few loud, late-night parties. However, we have had good results calling the police and Washington University Security when things get out of hand.


Commercial dumping is an occasional problem, when dumpsters are filled with building material and apartment cleanup items. Heidi is especially vigilant about this, recording the dumpers in the act and promising to report them to the police dumping hotline. The dumpers take their debris and leave, probably just to do the deed a few blocks over. Someone else needs to be watching there!

Block Captains can help SDCC preserve one of the reasons we all live here: a quality of life. We are looking forward to meeting the other block captains and exchanging our experiences, resources, and ideas.



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