

# The *TIMES* of.... SKINKER DEBALIVIERE

Vol. 54, No. 3

September - October 2024

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

The oldest neighborhood newspaper in St. Louis

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## PORCH FEST ST. LOUIS 2024

On Sunday, September 22, Skinker DeBaliviere will once again be filled with the sounds of music emerging from all kinds of unexpected corners. PorchfestSTL returns for its sixth year, with almost 50 performers (bands, solo performers, and DJs) signed up to play on neighborhood porches and in front yards. The event runs from 1 pm to 6 pm.

The headline band is the ever-popular and ever-funky St. Boogie Brass Band who will perform at 5 pm at Greg Freeman Park (aka Four Corners) at Kingsbury and Des Peres.

Of the almost 50 “porch performers” about half are returning and half are new to Porchfest. Returning performers include traditional rock bands Barefoot Jones, Rolltop Sweetgum, The Bedlam Brothers, and Lousy With Coyotes; psychedelic jam band The PeaceLords; and the genre-bending novelty band The Opera Bell Band. For those seeking a mellower vibe, you could try alt country duo The Erker Brothers or singer-songwriters such as Steve Perron or Devon Cahill. Also returning are soul songstress Laka; hip-hop artist JinKae; and lo-fi electronica musician 3 of 5; and choral group CCG, whose membership overlaps with the Grace United Methodist Church choir.

How many music festivals of whatever size can boast such an eclectic range of performers?

Other noteworthy acts this year include teenage musicians from School of Rock (Kirkwood) and classical guitarist Vassily Fedotov, performing



Sunday, September 22, 2024

as The Shadow of Your Smile. One artist, Christopher Morse, a singer songwriter from Boulder, Colorado, is a touring musician who has managed to fit Porchfest STL into his itinerary.

The event is organized around several walking paths so that as each one of the 45-minute concerts ends another begins close by, no more than a block away. The suggested paths are configured to help guide people from the edges toward the mainstage event at Kingsbury and Des Peres for the closing act.

Maps, restrooms, drinks, and snacks will be available at the mainstage area throughout the day.

Food truck Moo-bile, owned by former neighborhood resident Rachelle L'Ecuyer, and selling burgers made from Locally Raised Beef, as well as vegetarian options, will be present at Four Corners in the second part of the afternoon.

While perfect weather cannot be guaranteed, the date – the Sunday after the Forest Park Balloon Race, which occurs on Saturday – has been chosen with the chances of optimal fall weather in mind.

The performance schedule is being finalized and will be available at [www.porchfeststl.com](http://www.porchfeststl.com) about a week before the event. The website also includes a link to a four-minute video made by HEC-TV about last year's event.

Porchfest STL is also active on social media with daily teasers leading up to the event on Instagram – please follow @porchfeststl.

Hope to see you there!



## Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council Hires a New Project Manager

We are excited to announce that our new Project Manager will be starting on Monday August 12th!!! The following is Tina-Victoria Headrick's hello to everyone. She goes by Victoria. We are finalizing her office hours and will post them so you can say hello.

Hello! I'm Tina-Victoria Headrick, and I'm delighted to join this wonderful community. With a bachelor's degree in psychology and a background rich in client-focused roles, I'm passionate about creating meaningful and impactful interactions that truly enhance our experiences together.

My journey has been about more than just working with clients and teams; it's been about connecting on a deeper level to foster positive, nurturing relationships. I believe we are at our best when we support and uplift each other, and I'm dedicated to understanding and addressing the unique needs of those around me.

I'm excited to contribute to our community by building strong, genuine connections and fostering a collaborative spirit. Let's work together to make a heartfelt difference and create a space where everyone can thrive

You can reach Victoria at [sdcc@skinker-debaliviere.com](mailto:sdcc@skinker-debaliviere.com) or 314.862.5122.



Tina-Victoria Headrick

## Grace UMC Community Wide Food Packing Event

On Saturday, September 28th at 9am, Grace UMC (Skinker & Waterman) will host a community-wide food packing event to pack 2,400 meal kits (14,400 meals) for Midwest Mission to distribute to international destinations. In previous years, meal kits have been distributed through “Food for the Poor”- which distributes food in 17 different Latin and Caribbean countries. Children who are in first grade or older may participate in the food packing (although those younger than 13 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian). When signing up, please provide the ages of all participants under 13, and the names of any family members or other individuals you would like to work with, so that we can place related participants on the same team (although there may be others on that team also - since each team consists of 10 participants). Childcare for children not yet in first grade will also be provided (if needed), so parents who would like to participate and bring children who are not yet in first grade are asked to also note their names and ages when they sign up so that we can plan to have childcare if it is needed.

To add your name to the list of participants, please complete the form at <https://bit.ly/FoodPacking2024>, call the church office at 314-863-1992, or email Amy at [secretary@graceumc-stl.org](mailto:secretary@graceumc-stl.org) by September 24th.

Note: If your plans change after you register, please let us know. We assign participants to teams, and determine the equipment needed based on the number of participants. The event runs less smoothly when we have “no-shows” at the last minute. This event is also subject to capacity limits, so we may close registration when we reach capacity.

# Editor's Notes

By Linda Cross

As I write this, the Munny is having their last show of the season, Andy's last day there was Monday August 20th, for us, the unofficial end of summer. Although summer is my favorite season, there is almost too much to do. I can't keep up with all the activities that are available to us, a significant portion of them being free. People often ask me if I have been to this place or that restaurant, I say to them 'is it more than six miles from me?', because I have everything I need right here. I am not saying that there is anything wrong with those that venture west of 270, but I have my comfort zone and I am happy with that, right between the loop and Forest Park. And although summer is winding down, I am looking forward to activities and events that we have in the neighborhood and surrounds. We will have had rags to riches, Porchfest is approaching, maybe a concert series, and Wintermarkt just in our neighborhood. Also, there are Delmar festivals and Halloween with Boo at the Zoo. (Although I am miffed at them because Andy adopted a little river otter for me for Mother's Day and they don't even have them there right now.)

Sadly, there won't be children walking to St. Roch anymore and since I work from home, I will really miss hearing them playing outside at recess. We are not folding yet on the closing of the Parish and are now fighting all the way through the Vatican appeal process. However, the grown-up students are coming back to the university and schedules and routine will again be a part of our lives.

Continue to walk the neighborhood and greet your neighbors while the weather is so nice and look forward to the changing of the leaves and cooler weather. We have one of the best places to enjoy it.

## 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: October 15, 2024 for our November-December issue. Please send copy by e-mail to Linda Cross, [lcross@sdtimes.org](mailto: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.  
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## NOVEMBER GENERAL ELECTION

By Linda Cross

The August primaries are behind us and the November general election is on the horizon. Knowing who to vote for is always a difficult and personal choice, I feel that it is a duty and responsibility of citizenship. I used to take my kids to the voting booth when me when they were very young, and I tell their friends if you don't vote you can't come to my house. Emoji I use multiple resources to decide which candidates values align with my own. First there are resources that have sample ballots and research information on the candidates. <https://www.ballotready.org/> is a website with sample ballots, registration information, and descriptions of ballot initiatives, and <https://www.vote411.org> will give you similar information. You can always read information about the candidates on the internet, but be sure to validate the bias of your resources with the Ad Fontes media bias chart at <https://adfontesmedia.com/interactive-media-bias-chart/>. This chart is put together by a public benefit corporation that's mission is to publicly rate all news. Finally, since there seems to be way to much to master, I reach out to knowledgeable friends and ask their opinions.

The election is a very consequential election - From President to local initiatives. Please ensure that you are registered, make a plan and VOTE!

Below are the list of primary winners from the August elections who will appear on the ballot in November

### Candidates for the November 2024 General Election

Office	Democrat	Republican	Libertarian
President/ Vice President	Kamala Harris/ Tim Walz	Donald Trump/ J.D. Vance	
Senate	Lucas Kunce	Josh Hawley	W.C. Young
Governor	Crystal Quade	Mike Kehoe	Bill Slantz
Lietenant Governor	Richard Brown	Dave Wasinger	Ken Iverson
Secretary of State	Barbara Phifer	Denny Hoskins	Carl Freese
House of Representatives MO-01	Wesley Bell	Andrew Jones	Rochelle Riggins
State Treasurer	Mark Osmack	Vivek Malek	John Harwig
Attorney General	Elad Gross	Andrew Bailey	Ryan Munro

Missouri initiative to reverse the Missouri Abortion Ban

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## FREE MULCH:

Thanks to the efforts of parishioners Andy Cross and Bob Dowgwillio, the City's Division of Forestry has delivered mulch for just this purpose. The mulch is located on the 6100 Block of Pershing and is free for the taking. Please help yourself.

## SKINKER-DEBALIVIERE COMMUNITY COUNCIL (SDCC)

May 13, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Board Members Present: Tracy Granneman (President, Rosedale), Jim Holzer (Rosedale), AnnaMarie Bliss (At Large, HDRC, Rosedale), Nathaniel Rivers (Washington Heights), Tim Woodcock (Rosedale), Karen and Jeff Stokes (Grace UMC), Mike Stephens (Parkview), JoAnna Schooler (Washington University)

Not Present: Yvette Kell (Treasurer, Washington Heights), Molly Rater (Secretary, Kingsbury Square), Carl Merritt (Cote Brillante), Linda Cross (Rosedale), John Wright (Parkview Agents), Roger Harris (Washington Heights)

Visitors: Michael Holohan (Westminster), Ryan Finlen (Westminster), Michelle Davidson (Pershing), Andy Cross (Beautification), Alderwoman Clark-Hubbard

Meeting called to order at 7:04, Quorum with 8/15 board members present.

Approval of Minutes: Motion to approve (Mike), Second (Jim). All in favor.

Vote on New Member – Michelle Davidson: 5800 block of Pershing - Washington Heights. Love the neighborhood and interested in being a support in a formal way on the council. Can fill the additional at large.

Karen Stokes moves to approve. Nathaniel seconds. All in favor.

Des Peres Property – Support for purchase: Sarah Christman at 6011 Washington seeking support for purchase the empty lot at 533 Des Peres. They have been in communication with city. Working through the financial side and coming to city with offer. Would appreciate letter of support from the board. Have lived in neighborhood as renters previously in early 2000s and owners for 7 years. Long ties to neighborhood. They have been using property and engaged in maintenance of the lot. Would like to keep open space next to home.

Mike Stephens moves to approve Sarah Christman and family approving lot at 533 Des Peres with understanding than no building improvements will occur. AnnaMarie Bliss seconds. All in favor.

Alderwoman Clark-Hubbard Report:

Khimonna Stith working with Alderwoman C-H. Bought house at 5946 Waterman. Purchased 3 years ago, 2 years ago rebuilt the deck and it was extended. Contractors/owners did not pull proper permits and the structure is too close to the neighbors' fence on enclosed porch side. Homeowner working to remedy the issues with the city and will require a variance from zoning. Ms. Stith has been talking to the alderwoman. Had a signed maintenance agreement, but that has since been voided. Ms. Stith has a hearing with City Zoning on Wednesday. She is seeking a letter of support from SDCC. We would have to assess situation to provide support and cannot do so before the hearing.

The neighborhood is in transition with no NIS at this time. Please forward issues to the alderwoman and she will take it back to CSB. They are just getting back to legislative session.

Metrolink investigation – suspect in custody regarding the shootings at the Metro. 4 layers of police and amazing camera system and NSI was a great help to quickly identify the suspect.

If neighbors can benefit from senior tax freeze, apply by end of the month. There is no cap on it.

1-on-1 meeting is not occurring in May. Will be in June and location will be shared.

Preservation Board – spot available is for an engineer.

Status on city hiring freeze – Shameem doesn't believe it ever came to fruition. We need workers. Send folks who want to apply to Shameem. Advocating for our CSB position. Would be deemed essential.

City Charter Reform Presentation:

Anna Crossland to present talking about the St. Louis Charter

**Skinker-DeBaliviere Community Council** *continued on page 4*

## News of Neighbors

UMSL Scholar-in-Residence Tom Hoerr and his wife Karleen, a fellow UMSL alum, are making a donation to support the College of Education and the Transform UMSL initiative. (Photo courtesy of University Advancement)

From an article by Melissa Landy, UMSL University Advancement



Tom and Karleen Hoerr

Tom and Karleen Hoerr's generous donation to transform UMSL is helping create state-of-the-art spaces for students, faculty and staff of the College of Education and the Pierre Laclède Honors College as they prepare to relocate to North Campus.

Both Tom and Karleen received their master's degrees from UMSL – Tom in school administration and Karleen in special education. Karleen taught for over a decade before becoming a real estate agent, promoting city living.

Tom pursued advanced degrees with the hopes that he could progress in his career as a teacher to make a larger impact. He went on to earn a doctorate from Washington University in St. Louis, becoming principal at Pershing School in the School District of University City in the process. He then led the New City School for 34 years, during which time he also founded the Non-Profit Management Program at Washington University and led the ISACS New Heads Network.

"I've done a lot of things hopefully that helped people, and none of them would have been possible, really, without UMSL," he said.

"Karleen and I both recognize and appreciate the role that UMSL plays in the St. Louis community," Tom said. "At the same time, we recognize the important role that education plays for the future of our society. When the two come together, our thinking was, by helping the College of Education, we were certainly helping UMSL, but we're also helping the St. Louis community and, in a larger sense, we're helping the world."

"Our gift is an investment in the future of St. Louis society, in the future of all the young people who are fortunate enough to attend UMSL," Karleen said. "I would encourage other people who are considering making a gift to view it, again, not just as a philanthropic exercise but as an investment in the future."

## Skinker DeBaliviere Students Graduate Metro High School

By Nicole Blummer

Did you know that the top public high school in the state of Missouri is located just two miles from our neighborhood? Metro Academic and Classical High School is a magnet school in the St. Louis Public School (SLPS) district. It has an International Baccalaureate (IB) program as well as many AP courses to prepare students for college. And the school also has dozens of clubs and athletics. Go Panthers!

The Metro Class of 2024 included four students from the Skinker DeBaliviere neighborhood! We want to congratulate them and share with you their college plans. Grace Fuchs will be a first-year student at University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana. She plans to major in global affairs and international economics. Griffin Dyer will be attending St. Louis University. His intended major is Computer Science. Vera Rosenblum will study at Pitzer College in Claremont, California. She is interested in political



Vera Rosenblum and Grace Fuchs



Will Young



Griffin Dyer

science and is excited to further her passions in college. Will Young will be a student at Occidental College in Los Angeles. He arrived early on campus this summer to begin his journey with a multicultural leadership program. Congratulations Grace, Griffin, Vera and Will!

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

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Reform initiative.

Resident of Shaw neighborhood. Was president of International Institute until 2021.

In 2023, voters in STL passed an amendment to establish charter reform commission with idea that charter will be reviewed. Charter is overarching guidance for city.

City was passed in 1914. Only been minor changes over period of years. Some items changed through aldermanic ordinance.

Ms. Crossland believes charter is out of date and needs to be reviewed.

BOA voted on candidates and sent to Mayor.

Volunteer commission – Ms. Crossland is on commission.

They are looking at many things:

Board of ENA – we are one of last cities to have this. How can we check structure to help speed up the process.

Controller's position – should there be a publicly elected controller? No check on audit and finance.

Personnel – vacancies and issues to be reviewed. 286,000 people in city and 5,000 employees.

Not tackling county offices at this time which are a duplicate layer from past.

Encourages everyone to register to vote.

Vetting initial options for amendments. Week of June 15 there will be a public hearing to learn about the options. (Location and date TBD)

Draft amendments would be available after the meeting in June. Final language due in August.

Final vote by commissions to approve before the amendments go to the ballots in August. Will take 60% to pass. If not passed will take another 10 years to pass this. May be an up or down vote instead of individual amendments.

Event Updates:

Andy Cross: Some flowers leftover from planting day. Blitz day was a good turnout. Big event is Breakfast Garden Tour on Saturday June 1. Starts at McPherson Community Garden at 8:30am with breakfast. Fundraiser for the SDCC. \$10 for tickets. Needs help selling tickets and distributing flyers. Has all gardens already set up and will have the volunteers. Dog Show is June 11 at 7pm.

PorchFest Sponsors: Letters going out for sponsorships. Please help identify sponsors and would like each board member to bring in at

least one. September 22 is the date!

Historic District Event: Educational event in July with CRO and city officials.

Office Updates:

Painting is done. Flooring almost in. New chairs are in.

SDHDC is getting lighting replaced.

Soft opening next week (May 20).

Position description for project manager is up on website and will go on eblast. Will post to Indeed.

Mike Wisenhunt has been volunteering to do our IT. All computers rebuilt. Will have one for public use. Email addresses for committees. Making good progress on the website.

Please let us know if you see any additional or old pages we need to address.

Volunteers for cleanup and have sponsorships for update inside and outside. Donate specifically to something.

Lots of complaints about city responsiveness:

AnnaMarie Bliss, Marvin Nodiff, and Tracy Granneman met with Anthony Morrow to understand his role.

He will prioritize safety and public spaces.

Some constraints around what he can do with regard to 4th amendment

Highlighted that all complaints must go to the CSB.

Yvette Kell will restart Finance Committee.

Dog Park:

Entity considering donating land to the SDCC. Could be used for dog park or other functions.

Need to conversations around governance, maintenance, etc to figure out what we have capacity to handle.

Tracy believes there would need to be a sustainable revenue stream to be able to maintain a property

Space could also remain green space and limitations around what the property could be used for

Need to investigate what does insurance look like and long-term financials. Need to have inspection of the property. Soil structure specifically.

New lot would be a better model and no land lease impediment.

Could we use an open space committee to help oversee all open spaces.

All committees will report to Executive Board in the absence of Executive Director.

Dog Park:

Add on insurance to SDCC insurance is about an additional \$2500 per year. Without SDCC it would be \$6000.

Want to know if Dog Park non-profit is under the SDCC or separate entity. They need SDCC support to apply for permit.

SDCC does not have evidence yet of financially stable plan.

They are working toward permits.

6000 Washington:

Dan Schesh is developer. Interior work is beginning as building is weather tight.

Believes he was not made aware of issues with property.

Bothered that there was no one that contacted him.

Some neighbors when straight to CSB to report issues.

Building inspector should look at set back and overhang.

Dan should let us know that he made changes. We would like to have an open line of communication.

JoAnna thanks for the floral arrangement and support.

Clarification for Times: Cayrn is liaison for the students. JoAnna is the WashU liaison.

Meeting adjourned at 8:21pm.

Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council (SDCC)

June 10, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Board Members Present: Tracy Granneman (President, Rosedale), Molly Rater (Secretary, Kingsbury Square), Yvette Kell (Treasurer, Washington Heights), Jim Holzer (Rosedale), AnnaMarie Bliss (at large), JoAnna Schooler (Washington University), Karen and Jeff Stokes (Grace Methodist), Mike Stephens (Parkview), Roger Harris (Washington Heights) Kathryn Bulard (Busey Bank), Linda Cross (Rosedale), Tim Woodcock (Rosedale)

Not Present: Carl Merritt (Cote Brillante), John Wright (Parkview Agents), Nathaniel Rivers (Washington Heights), Michelle Davidson (at large)

Visitors: Marv Nodiff, NIS Karen Clifford, Andy Cross (Beautification), Kaitlin Daniels (Dog Park), Carynn Smith (Wash U student liaison), Cordell Whitlock (Steinberg project), John O'Gorman (Forest Park Forever), Marlene Mestres (5700 Kingsbury), Steven Buckley (BSP/Metro), Grady Vaughan (Security), Bob Johnson (Architect with Steinberg Project), Bob Dogwillo

Meeting was called to Order at 7:03 in the SDCC office. Quorum

with 12/16 board members present

Guest Reports:

Update on Steinberg Rink Restoration and Transformation: John O'Gorman gave an update and outlined how renovations of the Steinberg Rink aligned with the Forest Park Master Plan. The transformation will be a nine step process and they are on steps 4/5 of 9. Hoping restoration will start in Spring 2025 and will last about 18 months resulting in one lost skating season. Community engagement has occurred in phases including surveys and open houses. More than 5000 people have weighed in on options including more food options, more seating, keeping the ice rink as is. Questions from the group answered. Tracy asked if any action was needed from the board and publicity for the next survey was requested

Approval of May Minutes: Deferred due to time constraints

Aldermanic Reports: Shameem reported that her 1 on 1 meeting in June would include the new circuit attorney and the crisis response team (purple shirts). She and Grady Vaughan reported that several armed carjackings happened over the weekend: 3 on Pershing and 2 on DeGiverville. It is believed that it was the same individual. Neighbors alerted police and Shameem quickly and action was taken. There are now security cameras on DeGiverville. Dedicated staff have gone door to door trying to get Door camera footage. Tracy asked if any action was needed from board and Shameem suggested letting residents know that we are aware and following up.

Refuse pick up getting back on schedule according to Shameem and NIS Karen Clifford

Shameem will follow up on concern that public lot at the end of Westminster is not being maintained with overgrown bushes posing a security risk.

Tracy asked if there was a list of items funded in the Traffic study and Shameem suggested to contact her-no list exists.

MetroLink Secure Platform Upgrades:

Melissa Webb of BiState Development (former Police Captain) spoke of security upgrades including fencing and gates for only ticketed passengers. Security staff will also be on site. Loitering around MetroLink stations will also be targeted. BiState has completed 87/99 recommendations from the WSD survey. She reported that they

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have a Real Time Camera Center with 1000 cameras including every area that BiState touches-this will be increasing to 2000 cameras. The project has been divided into 6 construction packages comprised of four to eight MetroLink stations each. The FP and Delmar Stations are in package 2/6 development stages with the Skinker station in package 4. Construction has already begun in Package 2 stations. BiState will also be piloting a program to have metal detectors at each station. There is no facial recognition at this time but possibly in the future. Melissa reported that city, county and federal law enforcement agencies are sharing information. Fare increases are still to be determined. Melissa submitted her contact information [mmwebb@metrostlouis.org](mailto:mmwebb@metrostlouis.org) and can be contacted to do more public outreach.

**Make Music Concert:** Molly announced that the event will be happening at Greg Freeman Park 6-9 pm next Friday June 21st and is part of an international musical event commemorating the Summer Solstice

**Committee Reports** submitted before the meeting:

**Beautification report:** The Breakfast Garden Tour was wonderful! We had a wide variety of backyards, some were only 2

months old & others were very well established gardens by long time neighbors. The number of tour goers was not as big as usual this time but they loved the event and the gardeners were very happy with the visitors. It is challenging to have an event like this without office staff, sometimes just for the many simple things like locating items in the SD office or to give information, and a place to hold tickets or buy tickets in advance. The SD Dog Show is tomorrow night, Tues June 11 at 7pm at Greg Freeman Park. Join us for this tall waggin' good time.

**Security committee:** June meeting minutes posted to SDCC website under committee reports

Meeting adjourned at 8:37 pm

Minutes submitted 6/17/2024 by Molly Rater, SDCC Board Secretary

Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council (SDCC)

July 8, 2024 Meeting Minutes

**Board Members Present:** Tracy Granneman (President, Rosedale), Molly Rater (Secretary, Kingsbury Square), Yvette Kell (Treasurer, Washington Heights), Jim Holzer (Rosedale), AnnaMarie Bliss (at large), JoAnna Schooler (Washington University), Karen Stokes (Grace Methodist), Mike Stephens (Parkview), Roger Harris arriving too late to be counted in

**Skinker-DeBaliviere Community Council** *continued on page 4*

# KIDS CORNER

By Jenny Matthews

**DID YOU KNOW** there are a couple of **GREAT HORNED OWLS** who live in Forest Park?



Local naturalist, Mark Glenshaw has been documenting their lives along with other Forest Park creatures for over the past 18 years! Ask your parent to help you check out his work at [@forestparkowls](https://www.instagram.com/forestparkowls) on instagram or [@markglenshaw](https://www.youtube.com/@markglenshaw) on youtube.

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# THIS LAND IS YOUR LAND Cover your soil!

By Mark Banaszak



Fall is the perfect time to clean up your garden and flower beds, especially when the heat of late summer has kept you inside. One important thing you can do as you clean up is care for the soil. When the soil has problems, it often has certain characteristics; it can look grey and dull, have a hard surface, shed water, and have spindly, weak-looking plants. Even if you don't have any problems, covering your soil can help keep it healthy for the coming year.

There are two main strategies for improving the soil for next year - mulches and cover crops. Mulches can include things like landscape fabric or stones, which can look attractive, but must be removed for replanting. This can be difficult. Stones or gravel can provide great drainage and is sometimes used for Mediterranean gardens. Landscape fabric can prevent weeds for a time, but is difficult to remove later, when it wears out and weeds have poked through.

Many types of wood-chip and bark mulches can help your soil keep its moisture and can help soil texture as they decompose, but they may decompose slowly, and depending on what kind of tree the mulch is made from can make soil more alkaline or acid over time. Leaf mulch is a great choice; it is simply ground-up leaves that have been aged. Spread in vegetable or flower beds, it keeps moisture in the soil, decomposes quickly, and can prevent weeds from sprouting.

It is a good idea to spread a thin layer of compost on your soil. Compost increases nutrients over time and can help soil avoid compaction. There are many kinds available at garden centers, but cotton burr compost can be a good choice because it is a byproduct of cotton production. Farmers traditionally burned it to dispose of it, but composted and spread on a garden bed, it adds nutrients and structure to soil.

Cover crops can be useful when improving a garden bed for next year. Cover crops serve numerous purposes and are generally very easy to grow. They suppress weeds, prevent erosion, and can leave behind valuable nutrients, just like adding fertilizer or compost.

When a cover crop is grown with the specific goal of adding nutrients to the soil, it is called green manure. Often green manures are legumes (members of the pea/bean family) because they can add nitrogen to the soil. Some examples are hairy vetch or field peas. Oats and buckwheat are other common green manure plants. Seeds for green manure are available at some seed stores. One great place is OK Hatchery. For green manures, it is important to remember to cut the plants no later than the flowering stage - after flowering, a plant like buckwheat will reseed itself and can become bothersome. At this point, the plant material can be left on the surface to prevent weeds and decompose, or it can be turned in to the soil.

Whatever you choose - mulches, compost, cover crops, or green manure - covering your soil for the winter will help keep out weeds, prevent erosion, maintain good structure, and add nutrients, so don't forget to cover your soil

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## Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council

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quorum (Washington Heights), Linda Cross (Rosedale), Michelle Davidson (at large)

Not Present: Carl Merritt (Cote Brillante), John Wright (Parkview Agents), Nathaniel Rivers (Washington Heights), Kathryn Bulard (Busey Bank), Tim Woodcock (Rosedale)

Visitors: Marv Nodiff, NIS Karen Clifford, NIS Max Magee, Andy Cross (Beautification), Kaitlin Daniels (Dog Park), Carynn Smith (Wash U student liaison), Adam Bergeron, C.L Smith (5700 Waterman), Tiffany Marsh (5916 Delmar)

Meeting was called to Order at 7:03 in the SDCC office. Quorum with 10/16 board members present

Approval of May and June Minutes: Mike Stephens made a motion to approve minutes and AnnaMarie Bliss seconded. The minutes were approved.

Aldermanic Reports: Shameem reported that The BOA was quiet right now except for working on the Charter Commission. She stayed for entire meeting and was available for questions

Max Magee, our new NIS, was introduced by Shameem. He introduced himself and explained his background. He has worked in education for many years before taking this job.

Financials: Yvette reported that accountant is reconciling our accounts. We are in good financial shape at this time. Still need dues from Grace and Parkview from 2023. Washington University's check is coming in the near future. Some of the checks from Porchfest sponsors will show up on the next statement. Repair of air conditioner cost TBD

Project Manager Update: Tracy reported that she had several qualified applicants and Yvette, Molly and JoAnna did interviews with three of them last Tuesday. Hope to have someone hired in the near future. PM will have 10-12 set committed office hours per week and other flexible hours including evenings and weekends.

Porchfest: Molly reported that committee was working hard and meeting regularly. Rachele L'Ecuyer's MooBile foodtruck is committed as is Beer Outside to serve beer. Committee could really use some help getting sponsors. Signups for Porches and Bands is on the Email blasts.

Make Music Day Concert: This was held on June 21st as part of an international Music event celebrating the Summer Solstice. Weather was hot so attendance was a bit low but a lot of new faces which was great. Jim and Molly worked on this and hope it will be an annual event

## Skinker-DeBaliviere Community Council

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**Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council**

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Revision of Bylaws Discussion: Tracy reported that we should consider revising these to update our governance and fundraising structures. We used to have funding from the city and now are mostly being funded by Institutional members. We may not have enough community engagement to effectively represent our community. She also feels that we should have a more defined relationship with the Housing Corps. We may need a consultant or student interns to help with revision.

**Committee Reports:**

Beautification Committee report: Chair Andy Cross reported that the SD Dog Show was on Tues June 11 and it was a fine event as always.

On June 21st and into the early morning of Sat June 22 a group of young adults were speeding and peeling out in vehicles around SD. Neighbors said they were staying in the air bnb on the 6000 block of McPherson. One of them crashed into the barricade on McPherson & Rosedale and smashed the wooden cover of the metal post& chain and bent the post into a 45° angle. The vehicle was destroyed. A neighbor on McPherson has the license plate number if needed. I painted that barricade's curbs with street marking yellow paint where the old paint had faded. The reflectors on the planter box may have caused the driver to notice the barricade because the skid marks were well over 60 feet long before they hit the post. On Sat June 20th Kevin Koenig lead a cleanup effort at Greg Freeman Park. Some weeds were pulled from along the playground fence and along the curb, areas were swept up and woodchips were placed on the area where the playground maple tree grows. Kevin was joined by Robert Dowgwillo, Andrew Cross, and Adam

Bergeron. Thanks to Kevin for his leadership. The beautification Committee has carefully pruned the lower branches of the trees in Greg Freeman Park to make more visibility. The hot dry weeks were a challenge for all of us until the recent rains broke the drought. The beautification Committee had to water the Brightside seedlings in the Greg Freeman Park planters every day so their roots could survive the transition. They are looking good now and providing color. Andy thanked Adam for helping with removal of some dead plum trees

Historic Committee: Chair AnnaMarie Bliss reported that they will be having a presentation/open house at 6:30 PM this Wednesday 7/10. This will be to provide educational materials about our historical standards and will have some information about new slate roofing options. She is working on funding for signage to say that we are a Historic District to make people more aware. She has been busy and has approved 25 permits. She has also been making good progress with Dan Schesch on his development.

Commercial Development Committee: No report but JoAnna attends meetings and reported that they are still meeting monthly.

Dog Park Committee: Chair Kaitlin Daniels had specific questions that she did not feel had been answered by the Board. She wanted to know how many fund-raising events with alcohol she could have per year. Tracy expressed that the current SDCC insurance policy allowed 5 events with alcohol per year and the Dog Park Committee could request on an as-needed basis. More events could be added on but would cost more in insurance. Dog Park Committee cannot have a separate bank account at this time but Yvette forming a Finance Committee to look at Outdoor Activities (including gardens and

playground) as a separate entity.

Linda Cross made a motion that the Dog Park Committee be allowed an annual fundraising activity with alcohol if in accordance with insurance. Molly seconded and the motion passed.

Mike Stephens made a motion that the Dog Park Committee report to the Executive Committee and Linda seconded. The motion passed.

Security committee: July meeting minutes posted to SDCC website under committee reports

**New Business:**

Marne Madison of Herbloco spoke to group about proposed business at 5916 Delmar: Euphoria Kitchen and Cocktails. It is a members only Cannabis social club. They will be providing education about Cannabis, CBD and Hemp with the goal of dismantling the negative image of Cannabis. Meals will be infused with Turpines from Cannabis (but patrons can also opt for non-Cannabis infused options). This will be a locally owned business. Alcohol will not be served. No action was needed from the board but Marne expressed that they would be supporters of the SDCC.

SDCC Insurance: Marvin reported that insurance is a large fixed cost and SDCC should be getting new competitive bids every 3 years. JoAnna agreed to head up a task force and Michelle and Karen agreed to help. Karen will also ask neighbor Paul Kurtz who is an insurance agent.

CID (Community Improvement District): Marvin reported that the current financial situation of the SDCC was not sustainable but a CID may provide long term sustainability. We would **Skinker-DeBaliviere Community Council**

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# IN YOUR EAR

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

Being behind takes a toll, and it's particularly costly when it keeps us from connecting with others.

## We're Too Busy To Know

"May I pray for you?" the stranger asked after I told him my name. The room was crowded but fairly quiet, so I could easily hear him even though his voice was low and confidential. My wife and I were sitting in the surgical reception area and I was waiting to be called for my surgery.

"Tom," I had responded although his question startled me a bit, "and yes." Then he lowered his head, clasped his hands and said a small prayer. He mentioned my name as well as that of a man sitting next to him, someone who presumably was also waiting for surgery. I am not a religious person, as Angel Fred knows, but his kind outreach elicited a tear or three from me.

What's going on, I wondered. Why am I reacting like this, being so moved by the small act of a stranger. Of course, that's precisely why I was moved. Because it was the small act of a stranger.

We live in a world of hurry. No matter how much we do, we're never caught up. That's true whether it is our duties at work or in the home, or knowing and listening to others. Indeed, our inability to hear and understand others – a phenomenon that happens far too often -- is the focus of David Brooks' new book, *How to Know A Person: The Art of Seeing Others Deeply and Being Deeply Seen*.

Brooks' contention, one I have felt and lived, probably you have too, is that we don't take the time to really know one another; no, we don't make the time to really know one another. He says, "... building a friendship or creating a community involves performing a series of small, concrete social actions well: disagreeing without poisoning the relationship; revealing vulnerability at the appropriate pace; being a good listener; knowing how to end a conversation gracefully; knowing how to ask for and offer forgiveness; knowing how to let someone down without breaking their heart; knowing how to sit with someone who is suffering; knowing how to host a gathering where everyone feels embraced; knowing how to see things from another's point of view."

He continues, "No crueler punishment can be devised than to not see someone, to render them unimportant or invisible." Brooks notes how he and his wife often return from parties where no one asked them a question. "How are you?" and "How are you doing?" do not count.

This lack of true interest in others has always been present and is always a concern. To a degree we all exhibit it, and we show it more often when the others are different than us. Years ago, shortly after the killing of Michael Brown, we held an evening conversation with adults in the New City School community, and the topic was racism. We began with hearing a panel of speakers who shared their views on racism. This was followed by small group discussions, and then I asked everyone to come up with one strategy, one specific thing, they could do to personally work against racism. There were many good ideas, and the one that stuck with me was from a neighbor. He said that while he moved to the area because of its diversity, he realized that he was far more likely to nod at or greet people on the street or in the store if they looked like him, if they were white and middle-class. "I need to be better," he shared, "at recognizing, making eye-contact, and greeting everyone." I saw many nods of agreement as he spoke.

Brooks divides people into Diminishers, those who cause others

to "feel small and unseen," and Illuminators, people who have a "persistent curiosity about others." When Diminishers meet someone, they immediately begin to assess, identify, and categorize. In contrast, being an Illuminator begins by asking and listening. He calls this a humble approach because we want to know about the other person. Humble questions begin with phrases like "How did you...," "What's it like...," "Tell me about...," and "In what ways..." Since reading his book, I've been trying to do this, and it has been interesting and fun.

Think of the conversations that might ensue and what you could learn after you ask, "What experience in your childhood had a major impact on who you are today?" (Yes, this is much better than asking where someone went to high school.) Or "What holidays were important in your home and why?" The answers to these questions provide more than interesting information; the questions tell that person that they are valued and are not unknown. "A good conversation sparks you to have thoughts you never had before," says Brooks.

I wasn't asked a humble question in the surgical reception area, but the gentleman's overture meant a great deal to me. Since my surgery – I'm fine, thank you – I have often reflected on that interaction and how good it made me feel. Fortunately, I've not been in any surgical areas lately, but I've made a point to go beyond superficial greetings and to ask people about their backgrounds, their interests, and their perceptions. Recently I was being interviewed for a podcast and as we were about to record, I said to the host, "Before we begin to tape, tell me about you. How did you get into creating podcasts?" He paused, his eyes widened, and he said, "Wow, no one ever asked me that before!" It led us to an interesting discussion that gave me some new thoughts.

How about you? What happened in your childhood that had a major impact on the adult you have become?



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### Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council

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have to show value of our activities and potential expansion of our services to the community. It would involve taxing and would have to be put on a ballot for approval by homeowners. Jim reported that a survey to support a SBD (Special Business District) several years ago did not show support from the neighborhood and homeowners east of Des Peres were not engaged.

AnnaMarie emphasized that we would have to prove ourselves to be worthwhile and relevant to be supported by the neighborhood. Tracy reinforced our strategy to focus on community engagement. The board seemed generally in support and more discussion about this to come in the future.

Meeting adjourned at 8:25 pm. Minutes submitted 7/8/2024 by Molly Rater, SDCC Board Secretary



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