

The *TIMES* of... SKINKER DEBALIVIERE

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November - December 2025

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

The oldest neighborhood newspaper in St. Louis

FREE

Independent and all volunteer-run since 1970

RECA MAY BENEFIT NEIGHBORS

As of July 2025, Missouri residents who are diagnosed with qualifying cancers may be eligible for compensation under the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA). This federal program is administered by the U.S. Department of Justice Civil Division. The Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA) now includes 21 specific ZIP codes in Missouri, primarily in the St. Louis and St. Charles areas, for individuals exposed to Manhattan Project-era waste. Eligible individuals must have lived, worked, or attended school in one of the affected ZIP codes for at least two years after January 1, 1949, and have developed a covered illness. Compensation is either a one-time \$50,000 payment or reimbursement for out-of-pocket medical expenses, whichever is greater.

Eligibility

- **Physical presence:** You must have lived, worked, or gone to school in one of the designated Missouri ZIP codes for at least two years after January 1, 1949.

- **Covered illness:** You must have been diagnosed with a specific cancer or other illness listed in the legislation. RECA includes a specific list of cancers, such as leukemia, multiple myeloma, lung, thyroid, colon, and brain cancers, which are eligible for compensation if they are linked to radiation exposure. The list also includes other primary cancers of the stomach, esophagus, pharynx, small intestine, pancreas, bile ducts, gallbladder, salivary gland, and urinary bladder, among others. The exact list depends on the specific RECA program or claim type
- **Timeframe:** The exposure must have occurred after January 1, 1949, and the diagnosis must have occurred after the two-year period of physical presence.

Compensation details

- **For living individuals:** A one-time, tax-free payment of \$50,000 or reimbursement for out-of-pocket medical expenses related to the illness, whichever is greater.
- **For deceased individuals:** A one-time, tax-free payment of \$25,000 is available to a

survivor or beneficiary if the individual died from a covered illness.

How to apply

- **Proof of residency:** You will need to submit documents proving your physical presence in an affected area for at least two years after January 1, 1949.
- **Claim forms:** You can find application forms on the U.S. House of Representatives website and the Missouri County government website.
- **Warning against scams:** Be cautious of anyone charging exorbitant fees to help you fill out the application. By law, they can only charge a maximum of 2% of the compensation amount.

Affected ZIP codes

- **St. Louis County:** 63031, 63033, 63034, 63042, 63045, 63114, 63135, 63138, 63140, 63147
- **St. Charles County:** 63304, 63341, 63367, 63368
- **Other:** 63074, 63121, 63145, 63102, 63134, 63043, 63044

ST LOUIS RECYCLING CHANGES 2025

The St. Louis City recycling program has changed from alley pickup to an expanded system of drop-off locations to address high contamination rates and costs as of August 2025. The city will instead grow its number of recycling drop-off locations by 50%, increase its number of alley refuse dumpsters by 100%, and commit additional staff to the collection of trash.

Recycling costs the City almost five times more per ton than trash. Yet, more than half of the recycling collected in St. Louis this year is rejected at the recycling center due to contamination. For those materials, St. Louis taxpayers have been paying the full cost of recycling without receiving any of the benefits.

Residents with alley recycling dumpsters should now use the new drop-off sites for their recyclables and are encouraged to use their alley dumpsters for trash only. This shift also includes a commitment to improving trash collection and is part of a broader plan to modernize refuse services.

Key changes

- **Alley recycling has ended:** Alley recycling pickup has been discontinued due to high costs and contamination issues.
- **Focus on drop-off locations:** The city is expanding its network of drop-off locations, with a goal of having a site within a mile of every resident.



RECYCLING CITY RECYCLES

WHAT GOES IN YOUR BLUE BIN

- Paper
- Flattened Cardboard
- Plastic Bottles & Containers
- Metal Food & Beverage Cans
- Food & Beverage Cartons

AND WHAT DOESN'T

- Bagged Recyclables
- Plastic Bags & Film
- Styrofoam
- Food Waste
- Sharps & Needles
- One-Time-Use Disposables

Project funded in part by the St. Louis-Jefferson Solid Waste Management District and the Missouri Department of Natural Resources.

Always keep items loose, clean & dry. Flatten your cardboard.
Recycle plastic bags & film at your local grocery store.
Report problems to the Citizens' Service Bureau: (314) 622-4800
www.STLCityRecycles.com

- **Alley dumpsters repurposed:** The blue alley recycling dumpsters have been converted to regular trash dumpsters and should be used for trash only.
- **Improved trash collection:** The city will increase its focus on trash collection, with more frequent alley refuse dumpster pick-ups and additional staff dedicated to trash removal.
- **Single-stream recycling continues:** You can continue to put paper, plastic bottles and containers, metal cans, glass bottles and jars, and cardboard into the drop-off dumpsters without sorting.

What residents should do

- Take your recyclables to one of the new drop-off recycling locations.

- Use your alley dumpster for trash only.
- For roll cart recycling, continue to use your roll cart as you did before, as this service is not changing.
- The location for the Skinker DeBaliviere neighborhood are on Des Peres Avenue at the intersection near Washington Avenue.

SAVE THE DATE FOR WINTERMARKT SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6TH AT FOUR CORNERS

HAND MADE ART AND GIFTS,
MUSIC, WARM FOOD AND DRINKS



Editor's Notes

By Linda Cross

Anyone who knows me or has read this column knows that I am no fan of winter. This year, however, I am trying to have a better attitude and concentrate on what makes me happy instead of how bleak the weather will be.

These past months have been good personally. Both of my girls are home for a while, and although Sarah's return was precipitated by a fall and some broken vertebrae (she is perfectly fine now), I have loved having them both with me. Not only do I love the activity and company in the house, but because Sarah is between jobs, I have been hiring her to do the many things in my house that I have dropped the ball on. I don't even want to admit that I stopped stripping the woodwork in the house (mid process) when I got pregnant with Emily. That was 34 years ago!!

It is interesting to discuss perspectives on what is acceptable in different cultures in terms of cohabitation. Americans seem to think that a family is a failure if we do not launch our children out in the world to live and work on their own at a pretty young age, where other cultures are perfectly comfortable with multi-generational living.

That is also another thing I love about our neighborhood. There are so many families here that are second and even third generation. At one point, the two houses next to ours were friends that Andy grew up with as a child. I have loved knowing the parents of our friends and then getting to watch the children of our friends grow. Some of them even move back into the neighborhood (if they can afford it). I have lived here so long that my mother-in-law once asked if a neighbor was in the grade school class after me. I had to remind her that although it seems like Andy and I got married in grade school, in fact we did not. But that is what is so wonderful about Skinker DeBaliviere. There are so many people that have stayed in the neighborhood so long that I do feel like I grew up here. Let's continue to make our newer neighbors feel like that as well. Not necessarily that they grew up here, but that they consider us a multi-generational family living together.

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 articles in The Times depend on submissions from area residents who are not on the paper's staff.

The writer is solely responsible for the accuracy of data, including times, dates, locations and the spelling of names. The Times retains the right to omit or alter any material. All opinions expressed are solely that of the author.

The deadline to submit copy for our February - March issue is January 15, 2026. Please send submissions by e-mail to Linda Cross at lcross@sdtimes.org.

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.

Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council (SDCC)

September 8, 2025 Board Meeting Minutes

Board Members Present: Tracy Granneman (Vice President, Rosedale), Molly Rater (Secretary, Kingsbury Square), Yvette Kell (Treasurer, Washington Heights), JoAnna Schooler (Washington University), Jeff and Karen Stokes (Grace Methodist), Jim Holzer (Rosedale), Adam Bergeron (Rosedale Neighbors), Callie Kesel (Rosedale Neighbors), Kathryn Bulard (Busey Bank) Stefan Pabst (Parkview Agents) Roger Harris (Washington Heights), Michelle Davidson (at large), Auriann Sehi (At large)

Not Present: Mike Stephens (President, Parkview), Carl Merritt (Cote Brillante), Nathaniel Rivers (Washington Heights). Tracy led meeting in Mike's absence

Visitors: NIS Max Magee, Andy Cross, Grady Vaughan (Security Chair), Samantha Smugala (East loop, Commercial Districts) Meredith Howard (Dog Park), Bob Dogwillow, Neil Eisenberg, Kenneth Brandt (Kingsbury Square)

Project Manager: Victoria Headrick
Aldersperson: Shameem Clark Hubbard

Meeting was called to Order at 7:05 PM in the SDCC office. Quorum with 13/16 board members present

NIS/Aldermanic Report: Max McGee reported that there were 477 service calls since last meeting-most commonly for debris, towing and refuse.

Spirtas Debris was the former debris collector and we were one of the last priorities for pick up. New contractor will be starting next week. JoAnna reported that Wash U students are given move in instructions regarding trash disposal.

Stump removal: We are waiting on federal funding. Trees are being planted on Skinker. Max reported that water/streets and forestry all have to work together on this which

has been a challenge. Shameem reported that she tried using her personal city funds but this is not allowed.

Recycling: Max reported that there are 27 city recycling sites now. Alley recycling has gone away, mostly because of contamination. Recycling centers have less contamination historically. Alley recycling bins can be used for regular trash now. Roll out carts are still being collected. Shameem reported that locations of recycling centers are not set in stone and can be revised.

Shameem also reported that we have been approved for playground updates

We are also in line for new Speed humps

R&O Board Bill 44 and 45 in works facilitating better communication from city to communities

May and June Meeting Minutes approved. Adam questioned why July meeting was not moved to Zoom rather than cancelled due to lack of AC. Tracy replied that there were no major discussion items for the board so the meeting was cancelled to respect people's time. She pointed out that if board members or community have topics for the board meeting they should bring it to the attention of the Executive Committee.

Project Manager Report:

Victoria reported on unexpected expenses including 2 AC repairs and WiFi outage. Adam questioned why the money for the AC was not brought to a vote since over the 500 dollar expense requiring board approval. Victoria pointed out that this repair was time sensitive and we had to make a decision quickly or risk a long delay in the repair. Tracy pointed out that this was not a controversial issue (most would have approved the repair) so not as critical to send to the full board. It was approved by the Executive Committee. Tracy and Yvette agreed with Adam that expenses over 500 dollars do have to be approved by

SDCC Sept 8 *continued on page 4*

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News of Neighbors

Our neighborhood lost another two long-time residents who helped shape and mold what Skinker- DeBaliviere has become. We mourn their passing.

Ruth Elizabeth Blanchard Johnson passed away on October 1, 2025. She was born in Aberdeen, Mississippi, on December 11, 1931 and moved to St. Louis at six years old. Ruth was a teacher for 37 years in the St. Louis Public School system holding a variety of roles. She had a strong desire to serve her community. Ruth was deeply committed to service and community. She volunteered with Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., St. Philip's Evangelical Lutheran Church, the YWCA, the Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council and Annie Malone Children's Home. Her passion for helping others also extended to Barnes Hospital's Community Involvement for Patient Safety, the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr Annual Celebration and the Policeman and Firefighter's Valentine's Day Celebration.



Ruth Married Herbert A. Johnson in 1953 and had two children, Michael and Deborah. Because of their love, Herbert surprised Ruth with a 90th birthday gift of the Ruth Elizabeth Blanchard Johnson Live and Learn in the Lou Scholarship that totaled \$50,000.

As a lifelong lover of travel, Ruth began touring the U.S. by car with her husband and young children, exploring 48 of the 50 states. Ruth and Herbert eventually visited 5 of the 7 continents.

Ruth truly embodied sentiment, "It's not the length of time you have been given, it's how much you've given to others during that time."

John Francis Cross, Ph.D. was called to the Lord on October 27, 2025, in St. Louis, Missouri. John was born on September 24, 1932, in New York, NY. He grew up in New York and lived part of his boyhood in St John's Newfoundland, birthplace of his father.

After graduating from Saint Peter's College, John joined the Navy, serving as a pilot. He conducted aerial reconnaissance, landing

on aircraft carriers during the Korean War (Lebanon crisis). He was stationed at NATO airfields including Chania, Crete, Valletta, Malta, Rabat, Morocco, Barcelona, Spain, and Keflavik, Iceland. He went on to earn a master's degree at Fordham University and a Ph.D. in Psychology from Saint Louis University. During his time at Fordham, he met the love of his life, Jane Powers.

Later, he became a NASA Fellow and worked actively on the USAF human spaceflight program including the Manned Orbiting Laboratory. He taught at the University of the Virgin Islands, where he was appointed Dean of Social Sciences in 1970. Later, he returned to Saint Louis University, serving as a professor and academic vice president. He was a recipient of the Severin Award



for his outstanding contributions and retired as Emeritus Professor

of Psychology.

John was known for his love of the symphony, opera, art, and sailing. He and Jane had sailboats in the Virgin Islands and later, on the Mississippi River near Saint Louis. He enjoyed sailing trips to the Dry Tortugas, Lake Michigan and many other destinations. He loved nautical maps and maps of the constellations and could navigate by the stars. It was not uncommon to find him on his boat anytime the weather allowed, bringing family and friends with him. He continued to sail until he was in his late 80s.

Family was important to John. He was the father of five children and was active in the life of his grandchildren and great grandchildren. Every Monday night, he and Jane gathered family for Monday Night Dinner, and anyone within driving distance was welcome. He was a long-time member of St. Roch's Catholic Church in St. Louis, where he spent several years singing in the choir and was always remembered for offering grace before dinner.

He will be remembered as a highly intelligent, caring man, and as a devoted father and grandfather. He will be greatly missed.



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FAQs

Hours	8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
AM/PM schedule	Free play, circle time, outside, food
Outside time	Two 45-minute periods per day
Kid/teacher ratio	5:1
Food	Breakfast, lunch, 3 snacks per day
Experience	30+ years combined for David and Fei
Positive parenting	Yes!
Potty training	Of course!
Part-time hours	No
Montessori	Mixed ages, home setting, student-led
Vaccinations	All shots required (including covid and flu)



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David: (323) 868-7000 | Fei (314) 308-2627
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JOIN GRACE UMC FOR A FESTIVAL OF LESSONS & CAROLS

Celebrate the Christmas season with festive music at Grace United Methodist Church! Our candlelight Lessons and Carols service tells the Christmas story through music and scripture readings, following a tradition dating back about 150 years to Kings College, Cambridge. Candlelight carol services have been sung at Grace since the 1950s, and this year, the spotlight is on American music: Gospel, Spirituals, and Appalachian and Southern folk styles. The service features choir, organ and bell choir and will take place at Grace UMC (6199 Waterman Blvd., 63112) on Sunday, December 14th at 4pm. Childcare will be provided. If you can't join in person, the service will be livestreamed at www.facebook.com/GraceUMCSTL.

You're also invited to join Grace UMC for two Christmas Eve services in our candlelit sanctuary on Wednesday, December 24th. At 4pm, we'll have a Christmas Eve Worship Service & Children's Black Light Extravaganza with activities for the whole family. Childcare will be provided for the 4pm service. The 8pm Christmas Eve Worship Service with choir will be livestreamed at www.facebook.com/GraceUMCSTL. Both services will conclude with congregational singing of Silent Night by candlelight. For more information on special services and events during the Christmas season, visit www.graceumc-stl.org/advent.

SDCC Sept 8 *continued from page 2*

the board and the Executive Committee will improve on this in the future.

Victoria is working on a new website and is starting minimal with capacity to grow. She wants the board to review and add comments on the first version

Friends campaign has achieved almost 50% of our goal of 10,000 dollars

Rags to Riches was a success with 22 sellers and 6 vendors. Net income to SDCC was 600 dollars. She suggested flyers go out earlier.

East Loop Streetscape Project. Samantha reported that all neighbors should have gotten notices about this. This project includes Wabash to Laurel, 2800 linear feet, possibly extending to DeBaliviere. The main goal is to improve safety with traffic calming. This is a high crash corridor and needs a "Street Diet". The project is still in conceptual stage, estimated to be one year from grant approval and 2-3 years until "shovels in the ground". They hope to get transportation funding by end of year. Sept 18 will be a demonstration of lines and boundaries for public to review 12-6 pm. We will be asked to give a letter of support at some time

ZOUP: City is updating Zoning codes to be less complicated. They will be getting away from

design parameters with more opportunities for community engagement. There will be more graphics in the new code and it will be more fluid so changes can be made. This will be a 1-2 year process. Advisory board position open for anyone interested

Commercial District Report: The owners of BeLeaf Medical/Swade will be operating the Church on Delmar as an extension of their business, but also as an event space. Some Cannabis friendly events will be happening but they have been asked to be conscious of noise, smoke odor and security. They will be seeking a letter of support from SDCC.

Addendum: An email vote was done one week after meeting and quorum with 11/16 board members voted in favor of supporting this expansion. 5 members did not vote.

Financial Report: Yvette will be complying new financial report. We have updated our insurance which has been laborious.

Dog Park: Funds will be transferred to new committee by Oct 10th. Email will be sent to previous donors to make sure it is OK to transfer their money or will be returned to them. Motion made by Karen Stokes approving notice to previous donors to Dog Park to transfer money to new Dog Park Committee or request refund. Aurianne seconded the

motion and it passed unanimously

Committee Reports: Security Committee: Report submitted separately on the SDCC website. Grady reported that there was a homicide on the 5800 block of Pershing but this was a targeted attack and not considered to be a threat to the neighborhood. Drug activity at Nina Place and Waterman has resolved. Security camera in Lucier Park is now operational and tied to Real Crime Center.

Historic Committee: No report

Community Development: No report

Porchfest Committee: Molly reported that the committee has been meeting and event will be great this year with 51 bands. Event will be Sunday September 21st to coincide with the Balloon Race weekend. Victoria has filled most of the volunteer slots with students which is great but still need some non-student volunteers that can handle money

Beautification: On August 2 the Times of Skinker DeBaliviere had a fundraiser to keep up with printing costs for the oldest neighborhood newspaper in St Louis. It was held in the Art Studio at 5949 Kingsbury. The Sophisticatos performed live energetic music featuring neighbor Fei Powell. Delicious street tacos were custom made to order by neighbor chef

SDCC Sept 8 *continued on page 5*



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LOCAL EVENTS TURN OUR AREA INTO A COMMUNITY

By David Powell

Nothing makes me happier than watching our daughter Feronia dance with her friends on our front lawn while her mom sings as part of her band during our neighborhood's annual Porchfest.

It's exactly the kind of event that turns Skinker-DeBaliviere into a micro-community, a true gathering of neighbors within this larger city of St. Louis (which I also love). Our neighborhood does a fantastic job of scheduling, sponsoring and organizing countless community events throughout the year.

In fact, one of the reasons we chose the house in which we live is because our neighbor was gardening in his yard when we toured the house. He took the time to chat and fill us in on Skinker-DeBaliviere's history. We knew instantly that this is a tightly-knit community. Chatting with neighbors was baked into our lives here from day one.

Porchfest is one of our favorite local events because we love sharing Fei's music with our friends and neighbors. But the coolest thing was when I realized our mailman was leaning against a tree and enjoying the show. He came on his day off just to participate in the day. He's a great guy and we're lucky to have him.

Sometimes our neighborhood events are even more hyper-local. Each autumn our street organizes a block party for the 6000 and 6100 portion of Westminster Place. It's great because the street is closed off for the afternoon and everyone brings out lawn chairs to chat, listen to music and eat together. Our daughter's favorite part of the day is when the local firehouse sends over a ladder truck. Nia loves the Dirty Thirty and is quite smitten by the firefighters.

I love bragging about our street and we're lucky to be here. But I also believe our neighborhood is following a model that has been replicated for generations but that is too often lost in this busy modern era. It's no one's fault because organizing things like block parties, neighborhood yards sales or the upcoming Wintermarkt takes a lot of time and energy, things that are in short supply nowadays.

But it takes a village to make a village. Volunteers, local shops and area business all benefit from each other. I'm certain that our own small business (a home daycare) benefits from participating in local events. And I hope that the families we meet benefit in return when their kiddos become members of our family.

On a personal level, I'm quite a chatter so I really enjoy hanging out with my neighbors and making small talk. It's also a great time to build ties across generations in a way that interest-based activities (as opposed to location-based) don't do in the same way. I enjoy running groups, for example, but they aren't the best way to meet everyone from the age of three to 83.

In contrast, many of my neighbors have met both my octogenarian dad and our eight-month-old daughter. Multi-generational ties give the neighborhood a sense of continuity that is both geographical and durational. The amazing stories of prior generations provide an example of who we can be today and into the future.

So I really hope to see all of you at the upcoming Wintermarkt. And at the next dinner social, dog park fundraiser, newspaper party or garden tour. Wherever we meet, thanks for being part of our community!

SDCC Sept 8 *continued from page 4*

Tim O'Sullivan. Neighbors mingled with old & new friends on the patio and under the gazebo. Thank you to all who attended for helping us keep this newspaper going.

On Sept 6 Rags Riches enjoyed beautiful weather, along with great neighbors meeting each other at over 20 yard sales throughout SD and 6 vendors at the Skinker/McPherson parking lot. Thank you to Washington University and Grace Methodist for allowing us to use the lot and to coordinate the date with WU campus schedules.

A friend who works with Forest Releaf contacted me about how to

get new trees to replace some of the trees we lost from the tornado. We are starting that conversation and I am making a tally of where trees were lost. Neighbors would be responsible for taking care of the trees. Forest Releaf does not plant the trees, so that is part of the process we will work on, along with tree selections and locations etc. I have received tree grants from Project Releaf before and they provide high quality trees.

Skinker DeBaliviere Community Council (SDCC)

October 13, 2025 Board Meeting Minutes

Board Members Present: Tracy Granneman (Vice President,

KIDS CORNER

By Jenny Matthews

As the weather gets colder, incorporate ice into your play! Our family favorite is to fill water balloons (or normal balloons, just don't fill too big!), add food coloring and freeze them. Once frozen solid, we take them outside, peel off the balloon & have fun playing with colorful ice globes. A variation is to add toys or nature items to the water, then "excavate" them. Here is a list of other ice activities your grown up can look up online!



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Rosedale), Molly Rater (Secretary, Kingsbury Square), Yvette Kell (Treasurer, Washington Heights), JoAnna Schooler (Washington University), Jim Holzer (Rosedale), Adam Bergeron (Rosedale Neighbors), Stefan Pabst (Parkview Agents), Roger Harris (Washington Heights), Auriann Sehi (At large)

Not Present: Mike Stephens (President, Parkview), Carl Merritt (Cote Brillante), Nathaniel Rivers (Washington Heights), Jeff and Karen Stokes (Grace Methodist), Callie Kesel (Rosedale Neighbors), Kathryn Bulard (Busey Bank), Michelle Davidson (at large on 3

SDCC Sept 8 *continued on page 5*

SDCC Sept 8 *continued from page 4*

month leave).

Visitors: NIS Max Magee, Andy Cross (Beautification chair), Grady Vaughan (Security Chair), Samantha Smugala (East Loop, Commercial Districts), Eric Mason and Judy ___ (guest NISs from other areas), Darryl Grandberry (assistant to Alderwoman Hubbard), Addisons (citizens of neighborhood)

Project Manager: Victoria Headrick absent

Aldersperson: Shameem Clark Hubbard

Meeting was called to Order at 7:05 PM in the SDCC office. Quorum with 9/16 board members present. Tracy led meeting in Mike's absence.

Public Comment: Samantha Smugala reported on upcoming Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) event to be held in the East Loop November 1st. Part of Delmar will be shut down and detour maps will be available. There will be food, vendors and costume contests. Event is dog friendly and there will be a dog costume competition.

Darryl Grandberry reported that Shameem will hold a trunk or treat event at an autoshop at Kingshighway and Enright on Oct 27th 4-6 pm. This will be in place of her usual town hall meeting on the same date.

Approval of Minutes: Minutes approved with one correction requested by JoAnna Schooler.

Presidents Report: Mike was absent tonight. He wanted to communicate that commitments are needed from board members by end of year and should be communicated to any

member of the executive committee.

No Project Manager Report

Porchfest: Molly reported that event was a big success with more bands and attendance higher than ever. Debriefing meeting next Monday Oct 20th

Financial Report:

We have hit our goal of 10,000 dollars for the Friends campaign!

Yvette is waiting for some information from the accountants to settle the financials

Yvette reported that one of the large donors to the Dog Park has asked for a refund of their money. Yvette asked for a copy of the contract with the SDHC. Apparently there had been an agreement for naming rights. 10,000 will go back to donor and 6500 to Dog Park Committee.

NIS/Aldermanic Report:

Max McGee reported that there were 121 service calls since last meeting

Tree work-there is a contracting team that has been surveying trees and stumps. Some trees were already deemed hazardous even before the tornado. Emergency Stabilization Program provides compassionate demolition-all external work-for tornado victims

October/November will be months for leaf removal if leaves put out on curbs. Yard waste ends at the end of November

Recycling: Max reported that 55% of alley dumpsters were contaminated and down to 24% in recycling centers. Aurianne suggested that recycling dumpsters be relabeled as regular dumpsters in alleys

Construction on sidewalks will start in January

There will be an electronics recycling event at the City Water Division on October 25th

Committee Reports:

Security Report: Grady reported that crime stats are down. There have been some incidents on the 6100 block of Washington and more patrols have been added.

2 gunshot reports were not really gunshots.

Report with crime stats filed separately under committee reports on SDCC website

Historic committee: No report but Bob put out a link re: Tile and Slate roofs

Commercial Report: Church on Delmar above Swade got approval to hold events

Committee met today re: Potential lease for 6195 Delmar for an arcade (Claw Machine) business

Materials still needed for Skinker Station. Melissa Web available for informational sessions re: Metrolink Station

Beautification Committee:

The Triangle greenspace at Laurel/DeGiverville/Waterman lost a large magnolia tree in the center of the park due to the tornado. The center sculpture known as "Flight" was damaged. Large branches were cleared away last week by heavy equipment. The beautification Committee cleared a load of broken branches and removed 5" of dirt to clear the sidewalk and is working to stabilize the soil there.

Young trees in our neighborhood greenspaces are getting watered to help them survive the drought.

2 of the wood postcovers have been replaced on the Westminster/Rosedale barricade.

Our annual fall Food Drive is Sat October 25. Signs are posted and flyers are being delivered.

Wintermarkt is on Sat Dec 6.

New Business:

Free Little Pantry:

Auriann proposed establishing a Free Little Pantry by the Free Little Library across the street from Greg Freeman Park. She was flexible on the location of the pantry. Andy has the materials to build the structure. Yvette pointed out that maintaining the pantry would be the hardest part. Suggestion made to solicit donations on the weekly e-blast. Tracy suggested that we talk to institutions about research they have done on the topic and could also help identify potential locations for the most impact. She will connect Karen Stoles and Auriann re: Grace Methodist's food bank.

Washington University: JoAnna reported that Wash U will have Neighbor's Day at the Football game this Saturday beginning at 11:30. Admission is free for neighbors and free refreshments available

Grace Methodist: They will be sponsoring a sign making party Friday at noon for a No Kings march

Aldermanic Report:

Shameem reported that we have been approved for playground updates but there has been a stall in the city for this and the speed humps.



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WORLD WITHIN SKINKER DEBALIVIERE: PERUVIAN CUISINE BLOCKS AWAY

By Cecilia Nadal

One of the delightful benefits of living in the Skinker-DeBaliviere community is having the ability to walk to great restaurants within the Delmar Loop. Recently I learned about Brasas, a Peruvian restaurant located at 6138 Delmar Blvd. Here is the American story about a son of immigrants who is beating the odds!

During the early days of the Covid pandemic in 2020-2021 there were approximately 30 restaurants that closed in the St. Louis metropolitan area. Against all odds, Chef Andrew Cisneros, the son of Peruvian immigrants boldly became a first-time restaurant owner during covid. At the age of 28 he started Jalea Peruvian Bistro on Main St. in St. Charles specializing in seafood! During such a difficult period it would be reasonable to ask how such a culturally specific restaurant could possibly be successful. Just one year before Cisneros started Jalea, a very popular Peruvian restaurant known as Mango closed in downtown St. Louis after 16 years of operation due to the pandemic. The young and enthusiastic Cisneros was not deterred!

Chef Cisneros understood that sometimes it is during crisis that opportunity presents itself! He'd been hunting for a spot to locate his restaurant when a family member connected him to the owners of the Red Sun restaurant that was closing in St. Charles. Cisneros knew his recipes were refined, tested and ready to go. He had saved money and was poised to seize the opportunity in a restaurant friendly location. Most importantly, Chef Cisneros was ready to put in the hard work to make Jalea Peruvian Bistro a success in spite of the overwhelming odds.

Perhaps it was his upbringing and early introduction to cooking Peruvian food side by side with his mother and grandmother that nurtured his confidence. Cisneros grew up loving the delicious dishes of his family including unique spices and preparations native



to his homeland. Cisneros attended L'Ecole Culinary School learning the basics of French cooking but he knew that the cuisine of Peru was one of the best in the world because of the remarkable multicultural contributions

of Africans, Spanish, Italian, Japanese, Chinese and indigenous people.

The fact is that Chef Cisneros was right!

Peru has been recognized as a World's Leading Culinary Destination for at least 12 years in a row including 2024! This year Maido in Lima, Peru was voted #1 in the Worlds 50 Best Restaurants for its fusion of Japanese and Peruvian cuisine. The James Beard Culinary Awards, often thought of as the Oscars of the culinary industry, have recently recognized Peruvian restaurants in the USA.

By 2024 Cisneros opened Brasas on the border of Skinker DeBaliviere. Brasas, specializes in rotisserie chicken made with dried red pepper, lime juice and beer with oyster sauce. The recipe, developed by Cisneros is unique to Brasas but deeply rooted in Peruvian culture. Though Jalea in St. Charles specializes in seafood including traditional Ceviche and a popular "seafood paella" both restaurants have charcoal grilled meats such as beef and pork and reflect the balance of innovation and tradition that Cisneros brings to the preparations.

I asked Chef Cisneros why he came to our neighborhood. His answer simply put was that he loved the Loop and had experience working with the well-known restaurant Publico, which had three James Beard semi-finalist nominations for culinary excellence but later closed. Undoubtedly, Cisneros learned from

his experience with other restaurants and soon became a "go to person" for owners in the industry. St. Louis Magazine reported in February 2025 that Chef/Owner Cisneros

was "tapped to develop the food menu at Rockwell Brewery" and is considered by many as a rising star in the industry.

Cisneros has a long-standing relationship with another very successful restaurateur, Qui Tran of Mai Lee's and Nudos which is across the street from Brasas on Delmar. Cisneros is very fond of

Qui Tran and the two share a desire to make St. Louis a top spot for international foods. I can only imagine the energy and excitement that these two dynamic people bring to the table when they get together!

In 2003, as a world music and theater producer, I was surprised to learn there was a very unique genre of music and dance in Peru that was distinctly African. I was so moved by the music that I went to Lima, Peru in search of Peru Negro an internationally known music and dance ensemble known for their mastery of this genre. The very next year in 2004 I brought the group to St. Louis performing at the Community Music School at 560 Trinity Avenue in University City. We engaged the Peruvian Society of St. Louis and Rosa Schwartz, then Honorary Consul of Peru inviting them to collaborate on the project. We planned and managed the event together, packed the house and served Peruvian food to the delight of all who came! Before the performance we engaged Peruvians, African Americans and other groups at the home of a Peruvian Doctor to learn about similarities and differences in our respective cultures. The exchange was meaningful, enlightening and fun!

When I learned that an authentic Peruvian restaurant called Brasas opened around the corner from my house in the Skinker DeBaliviere neighborhood I was genuinely excited. I met and interviewed the impressive Andrew Cisneros at his quaint restaurant and thought that his parents, who worked so hard in the hospitality industry in housekeeping and bartending, must be very proud of their son. He loved the cooking he learned from the strong women in his family and has allowed that passion to fuel his enthusiasm and success! Cisneros loves his culture, celebrates his family and displays great leadership in contributing to food culture in St. Louis and he's getting attention for his skills and creativity from the St. Louis hospitality community. Cisneros plans to open Aya Waska, a gastropub with cocktails and small plates next door to Brasas.

Welcome to the Skinker DeBaliviere community Andrew Cisneros!

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IN YOUR EAR

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

What book would you recommend to a college freshman? A decade ago, that question was posed to me at a dinner, and it elicited a wonderful conversation. But much has changed since then. Today, AI causes us to question the value of education, in general, and preparation for work (life?), and “freshman” has thankfully been replaced by the less chauvinistic term “frosh.” Still, I thought this good question might lead to an interesting column so I presented it to some non-random linguistic friends. But before you read further, what book would you recommend?

I was struck by the absence of classics in their responses (even though I’m not sure what constitutes a classic). Is a classic book simply old, dense, or required reading? Is it all of the above? As a kid, I read “Classic Comic Books.” By definition, those books were classics. Life is fuzzier on this issue today (indeed, fuzzier on all issues).

Beyond that, their recommendations brought two surprises. First, most of the books were fiction. Does that also surprise you? My second surprise, I share with some chagrin, is that I haven’t read most of these books. (I’ve been seized by Netflix.) Their choices and their small descriptions follow.

I begin with what I think were the recommended classics. Jim selected *For Whom The Bell Tolls*, observing, “It’s a stark reality that shows the pointlessness of war and the ease in which people can be led to it.” *Grapes of Wrath* by John Steinbeck was recommended by Kathleen. “It created a moral drive for me to treat all people with dignity and respect.” (I did read this one!)

Chris suggested *This Is Water* by David Foster Wallace, a book she gives to high school grads. From Amazon: “How does one keep from going through their comfortable, prosperous adult life unconsciously? How do we get ourselves out of the foreground of our thoughts and achieve compassion?” Amazon didn’t say it’s a classic so it must not be.

Billy, a former teacher, says, “*Either Mountains Beyond Mountains* by Tracy Kidder or *Behind the Beautiful Forevers* by Katherine Boo.” He taught these books to high school seniors and they loved reading them. *The Last Great Sea* by Terry Glavin was recommended by Barry. “A useful book to initiate discussion about the role and impact of humans on the environment. Especially helpful in clarifying that continuing the current course will soon be impossible.” Maybe the president should read this book.

A recent publication, *Orbital* by Samantha Harvey, was nominated by Ellen. Wisely, she says “It’s short and easy enough to read, guaranteeing that most students might actually read it. It alludes to our aloneness and mentions climate change, but gently. The prose is rhythmic with many metaphors.” (Sigh of relief. I read this one, too.)

Josh McDowell’s *More than a Carpenter* is suggested by James. “It is a succinct introduction into the defense of the Christian faith. For many young Christians, college tests their faith. This book helps them realize their faith is grounded in truth. For sceptics, this book provides the basic arguments for Christianity. It is clear, approachable, and compelling for readers who are just beginning to explore the claims of Christianity.”

Bahram favors *The Little Prince* by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry. “An enchanting novella rich with wonderful quotes.” I’ve heard of this before so is it a classic? A timely book is cited by Anastasia, *I Never Thought of It that Way* by Monica Guzman. “It’s about how to talk across the political divide. Critically necessary for us to move forward together as a country.”

Mark makes a strong case for *The WEIRDest People in the World: How the West Became Psychologically Peculiar and Particularly Prosperous* (that wasn’t a typo) by Joseph Henrich. He says, “It is the best book I have ever read as to how the modern world came to be because it includes history, psychology, and wonderful experiments. It can stimulate curiosity and thinking in a plethora of directions, perfect for a college freshman embarking on a liberal arts education.”

The youngest respondent, Michael, barely out of college, says, “I would recommend to a first-year college student (or really any young person) *Dopamine Nation* by Anna Lembke. The whole book is a fascinating exploration of the balance between pleasure and pain, in both our bodies/brains and in our culture today. She explores how modern society bombards us with endless high-dopamine stimuli: social media, gaming, shopping, food, your phone, and more, and how that is changing our brain chemistry and negatively impacting our quality of life.”

Susie’s selection is *The Book of Questions* Pablo Neruda, translated by Sara Lissa Paulson and illustrated by Paloma Valdivia. “Published just months after Neruda’s death, this was his final collection of (micro) poems. A crossover text, it captures the unanswerable, big questions that children have the courage and curiosity to ask. The questions will leave readers wondering, wandering, and pondering long after the book is closed.” Sorry, Susie, this is one I would not read so it probably is a classic.

Designing Your Life by William Burnett and David J. Evans is suggested by Mindy. “It allows undergraduates to get a jump on living a well-rounded life with intentionality.” Educated by Tara Westover, says Jan, “because it’s relatable for students. They will connect with her struggles of belonging,

finding her voice, and balancing family expectations with personal ambitions.” (Thankfully, this is another one I’ve read.)

Gandhi’s autobiography, *My Experiments with Truth: An Autobiography*, is recommended by Howard. From Amazon: It is an extraordinary journey from an ordinary upbringing in India to becoming a global symbol of peace, justice, and nonviolent resistance. Jean recommends Percival Everett’s *James*. “Hearing the Twain story from another point of view was wonderful.” Does a classic retold remain a classic?

Me? My choice is my favorite all-time book, *Guns, Germs, & Steel* by Jared Diamond. He uses science, geography, and history to explain how race, power and income became so correlated. It should be a classic!

Finally, a disquieting response came from Angela, mom of three young adults: “This doesn’t really answer your question,” she writes, “but my first reaction is that it’s an interesting question to ask because my kids, who have grown up with a commitment to education, would not want to read any book as a college freshman (and it breaks my heart). But they are so much more comfortable/prefer absorbing knowledge in different ways. And can you imagine the change for children being born today - they won’t know a world without AI.”

OK, what about YOU? I’d welcome an email with your recommendation. Send it to Hawkeye at trhoerr@aol.com. Happy reading!

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