

Tower Grove Heights Gazette

Grand to Gustine Arsenal to Utah Place



October 29, 1994

Volume 7, Number 2

TOWER GROVE HEIGHTS GENERAL MEETING

By Tom Booth

The September meeting of the Tower Grove Heights Neighborhood Association was held on Monday evening September 19 at the Divine Science Church at 3617 Wyoming. A good turnout of interested residents was on hand to listen to and discuss issues with Rep. Pat Dougherty, Alderwoman Geraldine Osborne, Linda Horn, Recycling Program Manager of the city's Refuse Division, and Darlene Rich, the Grand Oak Hill housing manager.

Pat Dougherty led off the meeting presenters with a discussion of recent legislation that allows area residents to take an owner of a nuisance property to small claims court. Also discussed were the future ramifications of EPA regulations requiring emissions testing on our automobiles, and lastly, the Hancock II measure which will be on the ballot in November, which if passed will cut funds for education, mental health, and our prisons most dramatically.

Following Pat, Linda Horn, manager of the city's recycling program spoke about the effectiveness of recycling. she said that recycling reduces our energy usage and the amount of space we need in landfills. She identified our neighborhood's recycling center drop-off bins as located at the firehouse at 3523 Magnolia, and mentioned that the yard waste dumpsters would continue to be emptied throughout the Winter, but only once a month.

Following Ms. Horn, Alderwoman Geraldine Osborne spoke about the shortage of jail cells, and the fact that area residents need better access to find out the owners of problem property in their neighborhood.

Darlene Rich, Grand Oak Hill housing manager talked a little about the services available at the Grand Oak Hill center and then focused in on what is offered through their housing office. Property owners can receive information on certain low interest loan programs and can apply for MHDC home improvement loans.

Ms. Rich discussed the apartment owners association she started 2 years ago. The association was founded to help property owners understand how to manage their property better. They offer a credit screening service to screen rental applicants and a packet of information including real estate and inspection forms.

President elect Jean Iezzi continued the discussions in the same vein, talking about the Tower Grove Heights Neighborhood Association's renter referral service. Jean mentioned that they need more rental units since the service receives more requests for apartments than they have available. They also offer information packets to rental property owners, and a renter credit check for \$25. Jean discussed a number of things owners should be aware of when renting, and concluded the discussion by saying, "If you've got a quality renter, they want a quality apartment and THEY'LL PAY FOR IT."

Look for flyers announcing the next time and date of the general meeting.



IN THIS ISSUE

In this Gazette, Tom Booth recounts the happenings at the TGHNA general meeting; while Don Hardin asks residents their take on the O.J. Simpson case in "Since You Asked on page 2. Don Hardin reflects on his "city boy" roots and his sojourn to the hinterland in "You Can Take the Boy..." on page 4. Victoria Cusumano Miles provides a review of the steady progress on Grand on page 3. Marilyn Abbott profiles block captain Carol Hoffmeister on page 5. For helpful tips that could prevent illness, be sure to review the lead poisoning check list on page 7. In "Police Beat", follow the play by play of the Third District Police Public Affairs meeting on September 8 by dependable Ed Schroeder. On page 9, our own Ben Chu receives deserved professional recognition, and provides view of grass you might find surprising on page 13. Catch the word from the state capitol and Pat Dougherty on page 9, and news of another neighborhood improvement project on page 11. Terry Mayes explains what to do if you have a flat, on page 10; and on page 12, be sure to review some guidelines that could keep your child safe.

The Tower Grove Heights Gazette

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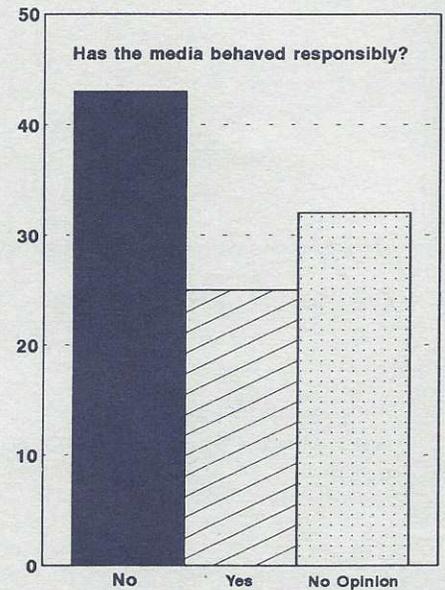
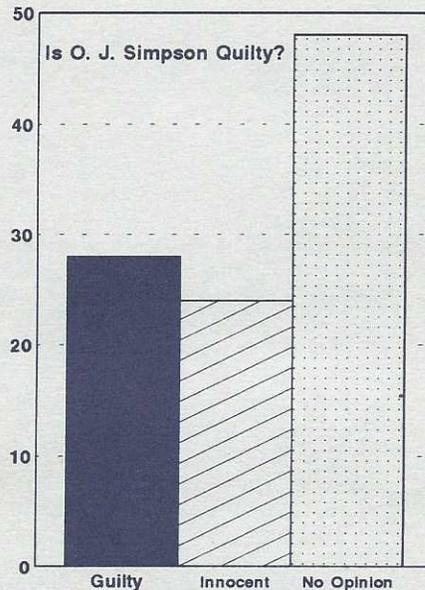
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SINCE YOU ASKED

by Don Hardin

In this informal poll we asked 30 residents the two following questions: Do you think O. J. Simpson is guilty? (and) Do you think the media has acted responsibly?

The results are illustrated in the two graphs below. The values represent percent of those polled.



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Most neighbors live on side-streets with the **Grand South Grand** being our own private *downtown*; the bustling business section of the community stretching from Arsenal to Utah. Personally, my perspective's somewhat closer to the site of commerce than most, since for a decade, I've lived right ON Grand... looking over, sometimes overlooking, the diversity of life from "the front".

I think we'd all agree things have changed dramatically on South Grand over the last ten years. In researching those changes and gathering info for this issue's "On Grand" I gave Lenita Moore a call. "Lenita, I want to tell the neighbors about all of our wonderful new businesses, can you help?" I learned in just two years, 21 have opened! I decided that was going back far enough - am I writing a book or an article? Opting for the shorter version I'd like you to use some imagery here; let's go for a walk to see the **new** businesses "On Grand".

Looking first west, from Grand & Arsenal (see where the tables & chairs are?) one of the newest mem-

ON GRAND

with Victoria Cusumano Miles



bers of our business community, "*MokaBe's Coffee House*" - an acronym formed from the owners' first names, *MokaBe's* is enjoying their new location and, by the crowds, likewise, I'm sure!

Head east (did I say that?) across Grand to "*Streetside Records*", the one-stop sound and ticket shop, conveniently located near your very own sound system! Now zig-zag south along Grand to the Dickman Building, our lone skyscraper, with 3 new additions! *Health Line Mgt.*, *Health Care Concepts & Triune Communications*. Zag, to *St. Louis Bread Co.* (more tables & chairs) and onward, to *Sears Portrait Studio* - that's only the **first** block!

Zig at Hartford for a trio on the west side of Grand; from the corner there's *SoHo*, *South City Diner* (still more tables & chairs) and *The Vintage Haberdashery*, all across from the new *Roosevelt Bank*. On Juniata, one stop west to *Fat Tuesday's* for food

and drink (you guessed it, more...); skip a block south on Grand to *Edward D. Jones & Co.*...zag over to *Books & Co.* for **not-so-new**

books, handmade jewelry and collectibles; where shop-keepers and patrons are pretty rare and collectible themselves.

Finally, the 3200 block of South Grand should get special mention for having the **most** new businesses open in the past 2 years. Seven in all! *CDS Group Insurance and Investment*, the *Law Office - Kathym J. Wysack, atty.*, *Siete Mares Mexican Restaurant*, (with even more tables & chairs!), *Whiz Bam* not your ordinary video store, *On The Grid & Around The World*, the *Smart Bar* and finally, *Picadilly Antiques*.

These 21 new businesses, new *neighbors*, join with the old "standards" and all the shops and people (that's US) to make Grand the **Very Grand South Grand** it is!

Do your feet hurt, my feet hurt, anybody see a chair?...

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YOU CAN TAKE THE BOY OUT OF THE CITY BUT...

By Don Hardin

I was born in south St. Louis, Lutheran Hospital to be exact. This was some time ago. Let it suffice to say that, at that time, if you talked about the Arch, you were talking about a monument in Paris, France.

I went to grade school at Schruggs School (Grand and Neosho). One of those cookie cutter architectural wonders. They don't make em like that anymore (they don't maintain them either). At age 10 I was dragged, kicking and screaming, out to the suburbs. Moving to the suburbs was the thing to do in the 50's. I immediately started planning my escape back to the city.

Thirty years later, I cut through the barbed wire fence that surrounds Spanish Lake and came back home. Home to the maze of one-way streets named after states, defunct insurance companies, or politicians from the 20's. Back, within a bike ride of Ted Drewe's (the real one on South Grand). The Melba, The Ritz, The

Virginia, and Shenandoah theaters may have disappeared in my absence, but that was OK. By this time, VCR's had been invented and I could rent "The African Queen", which I saw in first run release at the Ritz, and watch it in my home in the City.

When Richard (a.k.a. Chief Many Maters) asked me to help him with his dissertation, I said yes. It would involve studying the pollination biology of *Cobaea Penstemons* (huh?). I figured a *Penstemon* was like a hollyhock, an iris or maybe a rose (the extent of my botanical exposure in south St. Louis).

WRONG!!! This plant, I was told, is a very rare prairie plant which is only found in a few places in the United

*...I expected to see
a covered wagon
coming over the top
of the hill.*

States. One of these places is in the Konza Prairie *just* east of Kansas City, Kansas. I still wasn't nervous ("Everything's Up To Date in Kansas City"). Kansas City has tall buildings, interstate highways intersecting it, electric traffic signals, and I had heard that cows no longer roam the streets at will.

Well, Konza Prairie is *just* 100 miles west of Kansas City, Kansas. It's in the middle of Kansas (now there's a horrifying thought).

So, with an adventurous spirit, I helped packed the car and headed off to a place where I was sure I would be killed in a cattle stampede, kidnaped by rustlers, or blown by a twister all the way to the Emerald City.

We stayed at a 150 year old stone farm house (complete with creaking windmill) that served as a research center. There was no air conditioning, no TV, nothing but hills and valleys - and stars. I had never seen so many stars in my life. When you look up in the city, you don't see stars - you see

Levilors. Needless to say, the whole time we were at this wonderful old farm house, I was planning it's renovation (you have to do something when there's no TV).

For two weeks we wandered the prairie. "It was the best of times. It was the worst of times." We collected pollinators of *Penstemons* (mostly very irate bees). Because of my naivete, I was eaten alive by chiggers, chewed on by ticks, looked at menacingly by a large herd of buffalo, knelt on some plant that stung me (it was like kneeling on molten lava), and was nearly run over by a crazed deer. It was wonderful!!

One of our study sites was five miles out into the prairie, on the top of a hill. To stand there and see the countryside as the original settlers must have seen it was beyond words. Any minute I expected to see a covered wagon coming over the top of the hill. I had trouble sleeping at first. It was too quiet, the starlight keep me awake (not to mention the creaking windmill), but I adjusted.

All too soon, it was time to come home. On the way back, we decided to spend one night in Kansas City (to avoid the dangers of cultural shock). We were awakened in the morning by the sound of breaking glass. I opened the motel room door in time to see a one-legged man, in his underwear, covered in blood, hopping along and shouting to "stop those guys". We found out later that he and his friends, all high on heroin, had thrown a cooler through the window of their motel room. His friends then tried to throw him through the window. (Ah, the pulse of the city).

After what seemed like an unending journey through time and space, the Arch was in view (not the one in France). I was home. Ah, the hum of air conditioning units, the Levilors in the sky, the glow of Kinkos to the east, the glow of Schnucks South City Market to the south, the hum of city crickets to the north from Tower Grove Park, and to the west, the comforting glow from Schnucks on the Hill.

We are returning to the Konza in the fall. I'm fairly sure that I will survive. I want to climb to the top to that hill again and watch for the covered wagons.



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MEET YOUR BLOCK CAPTAIN



CAROL HOFFMEISTER

By Marilyn Abbott

Carol Hoffmeister and her husband Jon both grew up in St. Louis county but they have been at home in the city for 18 years. During the first ten of those years they lived on MacDonal in a bungalow they purchased from Carol's grandfather. Jon and Carol really liked the convenience and the bustling atmosphere of city living, so as their family grew from two to five, they began looking around Tower Grove Heights for a larger house. They took many long walks around the neighborhood and settled on the 36-3700 block of Hartford as their favorite.

The Hoffmeisters moved into their new home on Hartford 8 years ago and promptly began filling it up with their eclectic collection of inherited and "homeless" furniture. Carol never "says no to someone else's junk". As she puts it: "It might be cool and if I decide I don't like it, I can always put it in the alley where it will disappear like magic!" (However, this reporter has not observed Carol consigning many of her finds to the alley!)

When she is not haunting garage and estate sales, Carol keeps busy working part-time as a nurse in the Psychiatric and Chemical Dependency Unit of Alexian Brothers Hospital and serving as a school board member at Holy Family School. Her hobbies include flower gardening, soap making and knitting sweaters for her family using wool that her sister produces on her Franklin county sheep farm.

Jon Hoffmeister is a Tool and Die Maker at the Tempset company which is located on Bent St. at Miami in the Grand Oakhill neighborhood. Jon is an avid urban farmer. His quest for more space for his vegetables has driven almost all of the grass from their backyard. Jon specializes in peppers, onions and all types of garlic. Not surprisingly, his indoor hobby is Cajun cooking. A bland meal is never served at the Hoffmeister house!

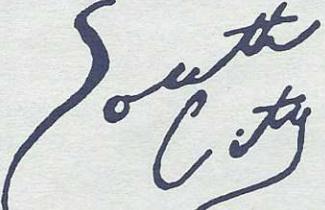
Carol and Jon have two children - Marta, age 14, is a freshman at St. Elizabeth's, and Kurt, age 11 is in the 6th grade at Holy Family School. The fifth member of the family is their

yellow lab, Beau, who loves to steal the not-quite-ripe peaches from the tree in the back yard.

Since they have lived in their Hartford Street home, Jon and Carol have done a lot of work on it including a complete exterior stripping and repainting job on the house and the two story brick garage in the back. (The color scheme accents the house beautifully, but if you have occasion to comment on it to Carol, just remember, it's Desert Dawn not pink!) On the inside, they have redecorated all of the 2nd floor bedrooms as well as completely remodeled the bathroom. Currently they are remodeling the kitchen and the adjacent half-bath. Like all of us with old houses, Jon and Carol's "To Do" list never grows any shorter but they still love living in their version of "This Old House".

Carol has been a block captain for three years and she enjoys doing it mainly because it keeps her in touch with all of the neighborhood activities and news. She enjoys meeting people from around the neighborhood, plus all of our porch steps make passing out fliers a great form of exercise!





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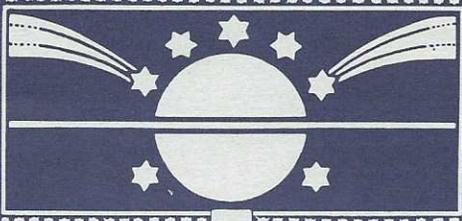
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Benjamin N. Chu Earns Professional Certification

Press Release from the *International Society of Arboriculture*

Submitted by Victoria Cusumano Miles

Savoy, IL - Benjamin N. Chu, neighbor and Horticulture Supervisor of the Japanese Garden at the Missouri Botanical Garden, and two colleagues, Alan C. Boefer of High Ridge and William Reininger, Jr. of St. Louis, recently demonstrated professional competency by successfully completing the CERTIFIED ARBORIST examinations administered through the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) and the Mid-Western Chapter of the ISA.

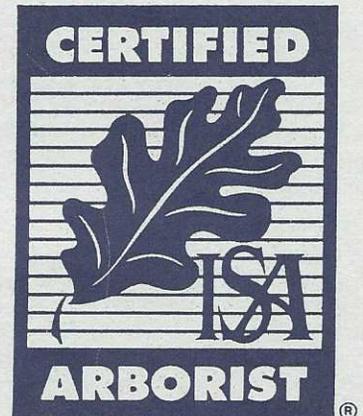
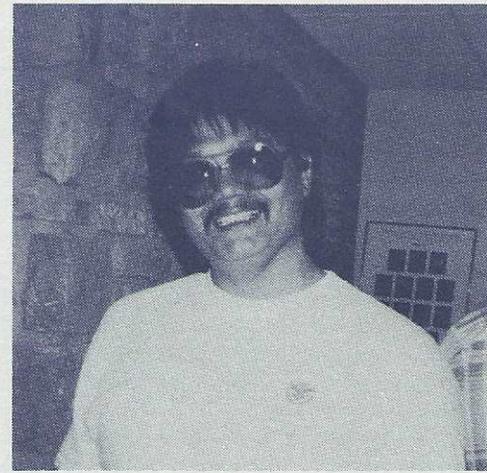
The purpose of the ISA Certification program is to improve the level of knowledge and standard of practice within the tree care profession. It is designed to assist the public in identifying those professionals in arboriculture who have demonstrated, through

a professionally developed examination and education program, a thorough knowledge of tree care practice. The ISA program tests and certifies an individual's knowledge in the field of arboriculture.

Missouri Botanical Garden strives to keep its employees abreast of all the latest technical improvements in the tree care profession and encourages individual professional tree care development.

The International Society of Arboriculture is a scientific and educational organization devoted to the dissemination of information in the care and preservation of shade and ornamental trees.

ISA's Certification program is designed to promote the professional development of those involved in the field of arboriculture or tree care. When contracting for your tree care needs, contact individuals who are certified through this voluntary program; like Ben Chu, Alan Boefer and Bill Reininger.



In this last session, the legislature passed a measure which has the goal of giving citizens more help in forcing owners of derelict property to fix up their properties.

We all know how some of these owners never seem to fix up their properties even after repeated violation notices from the city or even after having been to Housing Court. They ignore the law and bring down the beauty and the property values of our neighborhood.

With the measure I sponsored we are giving you, the person living near the derelict property, the authority to take such an owner to small claims court and claim damages because your property is being devalued. As many people on a block who feel their property is being devalued can take someone to small claims court.

NEWS FROM THE CAPITOL from Representative Pat Dougherty

Since this is brand new and never been tried in Missouri, we do not know yet what types of evidence the courts will be looking for as proof, but we will be letting you know in a future article.

The law itself is small and went into effect on August 28, 1994. Below is a copy of what the law says.

"Section 1. In the city of St. Louis and in any city with at least three hundred fifty thousand inhabitants which is located in more than one county, a parcel of property is a nuisance, if such property adversely affects the property values of a neighborhood because the owner of such property allows the property to be in a deteriorated condition, not consistent with the general neighborhood, because of neglect, abandonment, failure to repair after a fire, flood or

some other damage to the property or because the resident of the pro-

perty allows clutter on the property such as abandoned automobiles, appliances or similar objects. Any property owner, who owns property within a reasonable distance to a parcel of property which is alleged to be a nuisance may bring a nuisance action against the offending property owner for the amount of damage created by such property to the value of the petitioner's property, within the jurisdictional limits, in small claims court in the city of St. Louis, provided that the owner of the property which is alleged to be a nuisance has received notification of the alleged nuisance and has had a reasonable opportunity not to exceed forty-five days, to correct the alleged nuisance."

Pat Dougherty, 4031 Parker Av.,
63116, 772-1948

FINANCIAL FOCUS - Goals and Objectives

It's important to consider our current position is life when making investment decisions.

Age is one of the factors which strongly influences investment decisions. Have you ever noticed, the older we get the more conservative we become? We like to think of it as just being smarter. Is it smarter, or has our position in life changed?

As we grow older, we become aware that a serious investment error could jeopardize the savings we've worked years to accumulate. The closer we get to retirement, the fewer years we have to rebuild our reserves. Thus, we become more conservative in our investment approach. Our position is a safe one aimed at preserving what we have.

In our youth, many of us might have said, "shoot the works," because we realized if we lost, we'd have more years ahead to rebuild. Certainly, this

is not to be criticized. In our free enterprise economy, we must have those who are willing to take a calculated risk in hope of growth. Without this pioneer spirit, advanced thinking could never be a reality. The point is, our age bears strongly on how much risk we're willing to accept.

A strong consideration in our investment approach would be family responsibilities. A young person starting out in life with the responsibility of one or more children must consider that responsibility. Maximum necessary protection for the fewest dollars should supersede any forced saving whereby family protection is reduced.

It's wise to set funds aside for emergency use. These funds should be ones that can be easily reached without penalty or loss.

Article provided by Tom Borich, Investment Representative, for Edward D. Jones & Co.

LEAD POISONING PREVENTION CHECK LIST

Things you should do:

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- Use wet cloth to clean all walls, sill, surfaces, where paint has fallen or is clinging to surfaces.
- Be sure children are not present when scraping or cleaning up paint chips.
- Patch or board up holes in plaster.
- Cover area with wallpaper, paneling or wall board at least four feet from the floor.
- Watch your child and keep him or her busy with safe activities.
- Have children checked at a lead evaluation center twice a year.

Things you should watch for:

- Chipping or flaking paint
- Crumbling plaster
- Indoor dust and outdoor dirt which may have lead in it.
- Watch for lead dangers in the places where your child most often plays.
- Do not burn painted wood for heating.

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by Edward Schroeder

POLICE BEAT

Chuck Poe introduced the Guest Speaker for the evening,

The Third District

Police Public Affairs Meeting was held September 8 at the Grand-Oak Hill Community Center, 4168 Juniata. The Grand-Oak Hill Neighborhood Association hosted.

Chairman Chuck Poe brought the meeting to order at 7:20 PM. The Pledge of Allegiance opened the session.

There was neither treasurer's nor secretary's report.

Officer John Ruzicka had copies of the minutes of the August meeting and Public Affairs newsletter available to all attendees.

Chuck spoke of next month's (October) election of board members. To be eligible to vote or run for office, you must have attended at least two meetings during the past 11 months (not counting the Oct. meeting.) Bring your stamped attendance card to receive your ballot. Chuck stated again that new people would help vitalize the board.

Attendance at our meetings is low. To get more people to attend, we were asked if we would like to have the meetings at one location throughout the year. That way, everyone would know where the meetings would be held, even if someone did not receive a newsletter. If anyone has any ideas on where to have meetings or how to increase attendance, please let the Board know. Next month there will be a place on the ballot to vote on this issue.

Grand Oak Hill Community Center offered to host the police meetings, but some people complained about parking facilities. Gerry Osborn offered the Fanning Community School. John Ruzicka stated that we have 450 people on our mailing list. It's time we start trimming the list to a more accurate size. So make sure your sign in.

The Safety Fair will be held on October 2nd in Tower Grove Park. We still need volunteers. It's easy work.

Sgt. Ralph Toenjes (pronounced Tenjes), who is from the communications division. He has 23 years of service in the division. Sgt. Toenjes spoke about what happens when you dial 911.

With Sgt. Toenjes was Harriet Flauauf, the day watch supervisor of 911 operations, she has been in the communications division for 25 years. (Her husband has been in the division 40 years)

Sgt. Toenjes first showed us a video that portrayed the working of the communication division. The 20 minute video gave an idea of what does happen when someone calls 911. After the video there was a question and answer session. We were told to always call 911 anytime you need police assistance. Even when you are on vacation, check that area to see if they have a 911 system for use. Some areas in the United States don't have it. Sgt. Toenjes then played an audio taped call to 911. This tape has won several awards. It shows how the 911 operator talks to a caller and keeps her or him on the line until the police arrive. There is a lot of action in 5 minutes.

Chuck Poe thanked Sergeant Toenjes and Harriet Flauauf. We will be getting a group together to tour the 911 facilities.

Captain Zambo then held a question and answer session.

Gerry Osborn spoke about the Grand Oak Hill Landlord's Association and invited everyone to attend their next meeting. It's held the last Wednesday of every month at 5:30 PM at the Grand Oak Hill Community Center.

The meeting ended at 9:15 PM. Next month's meeting will be held on Oct. 13, 1994 at 7 PM at Area One Command Center, 3157 Sublette.

It's going to be a big night.

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CONCERT SERIES

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Different groups will perform a variety of musical selections every Sunday through December 18. The concerts are FREE, though due to seating capacity, you must pick up tickets at a sponsor location. Tickets will be collected as you exit the auditorium for free admission to the Garden grounds following each concert.

Sponsor-ticket locations vary with each performance.

October 30: Paola Semprini, Italian mezzo-soprano singing great arias from Grand and comic opera and a few show tunes for great fun. Call 577-9144 for sponsor info.

November 6: Erik Harris and Melissa Brooks, sponsored by Avis and Straubs. Erik Harris, the newly appointed principal double bassist, and Melissa Brooks, newest cellist of the St. Louis Symphony, play romantic works for this unusual but virtuosic combination.

November 20: Four Hands/ One Piano, sponsored by Glendale Chrysler Plymouth. Mary Mottl and Yona Weinberg play original music written by great composers for piano - four hands.

December 4: St. Louis Children's Choirs, sponsored by Plow-sharing Crafts, CC Camera & Video, and BMW. The world renowned childrens' choirs in their first Garden appearance. Singing festive, seasonal music.

December 11: St. Louis Brass Ensemble, sponsored by Canine Center, International Diamonds Inc., and Marc Floor. By popular demand, they're back with Christmas brass music, conducted by Jim Martin.

December 18: The Bach Society of St. Louis, sponsored by Bradburn's, Glenn Betz Jewelers, and Bethesda. Back again for their popular annual Christmas show, conducted by A. Dennis Sparger.

Victoria Cusumano Miles, Administrative Assistant to the Director of Horticulture at the Garden, says "the Missouri Botanical Garden is America's oldest, most beautiful botanical garden", and

suggests that people consider giving gifts of membership to the Garden for the holidays, birthdays, and other special occasions. "In the spirit of giving remember, Henry Shaw made a gift of the Garden to mankind for all time... and memberships help the Garden continue to grow."

A year's membership to the Garden is \$45; \$40 for Seniors age 65 +, and offers benefits throughout the year; like these free Sunday concerts, the Japanese festival, and recently, the Best of Missouri Market.

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MOBILE PATROL NEWS

The Mobile Patrol of the Grand Oak Hill neighborhood is making another start. We need your help. First, we need volunteers from your block to ride Mobile Patrol. We ride Thursday and Friday nights from 8pm to 10pm or 10pm to 12am every weekend. As we get more volunteers, more evenings and times will be available. Volunteers will be trained and will receive an ID badge. Volunteers will use their own vehicle but a mobile phone is provided. Volunteers must ride two to a car and we prefer that you find your own partner however if that is impossible, we will try to match you with someone. Or your block can volunteer to ride one night a month and then you will make sure that someone is available to ride. For more information, call Jim Matthews at 773-4334.

Second, we need to know what and where we should be watching. If there is a problem on your block that you would like us to watch, let us know. If you have information call Teresa Willis at 773-8074.

We hope that you will help to further the efforts of our neighborhood in keeping it safe.

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"BEST OF MISSOURI MARKET" at the Missouri Botanical Garden

By Victoria Cusumano Miles

The 3rd Annual "Best of Missouri Market" at the Missouri Botanical Garden, held on Sunday, October 9, proved to be a unique opportunity for those attending to bring home their favorite selections from the famous "Signature Collection" of the Missouri Botanical Garden plants: more than 400 plants propagated from the Garden grounds, greenhouses, and Shaw Arboretum - including many native Missouri species.

Also featured at the Best of Missouri Market was Missouri Specialty Growers, **Bowood Farms** of Clarksville; **Missouri Wildflowers Nursery** in Jefferson City, the **Nicholson Bonsai Studio** in St. Louis and **S&S Aqua Farm!**

Country and Bluegrass Music filled the air on Spoehrer Plaza, setting the mood for a stroll through America's oldest and most beautiful botanical garden, while browsing through an array of crafts and fresh produce.

Missouri crafts, too many to list,

included willow furniture, hand-thrown pottery, home-made soaps, wood carvings and boxes, candles, hand-spun and woven fabrics, decorative ironwork, dried flowers and wreaths. A few of the food products featured this year were fish and meats, preserves, honey, cider, baked goods, wines, gourds and a wonderful selection of gift baskets.

For good eating on site the Garden offered brats, barbecued pork loin, deep fried Missouri catfish, slaw, potato salad, sandwiches, pastries, soft drinks and beer! There was even something for the kids at the petting farm and the "Milk a Cow" booth!

Continued on page 14

MY FAVORITE MECHANIC

By Terry Mayes

Being a mechanic isn't the easiest job in the world. I guess it has its ups and downs like every other job, but I'd like to talk about some ways you can avoid getting ripped off.

To begin with, I would first like to say that most of the mechanics you will encounter are probably honest people, although there are going to be a few that will burn you for a buck. So don't be fooled by these folks. The best way to avoid rip offs is to get educated. In other words get a second opinion.

Although this would help in most situations, what happens when you're not near home and find yourself with a flat tire? Well the easiest thing to do is to buy a mobile air compressor and a good plug kit for \$5, and you can fix it in about ten minutes without removing the tire from the car.

For those of you who may need to change your tire, remember the following:

- Don't go anywhere in your vehicle without a flashlight and work-type gloves.

- Have a portable air compressor which plugs into your cigarette lighter. Most have a flashing light on them to alert passing drivers that you are working on your vehicle.

- Get your vehicle as far to the side of the road as possible.

- Read the instructions on your particular vehicle.

- Remove the tire and jack from your car.

- Before jacking up the vehicle, remember to loosen the lug nuts with your lug wrench. The lug wrench is usually a 2 or 3-in-1 tool. On many cars that have hub caps the lug wrench end has a tip to pry off the hub cap. The tool is then used to loosen the lug nuts. Then, to jack up the car, you'll have either a ratchet type jack or a screw type jack.

- Jack up the car. Buy a cheap jack stand to put under the axle while changing the tire. They can be purchased for from \$3 to \$10, and are good enough to get the job done.

Check local discount and auto parts stores.

- The car is up now, the tire off the ground and lug nuts have already been loosened. Loosen them a bit more with the lug wrench, then remove the lug nuts the rest of the way with your fingers. Remove the tire, replace with the spare.

- After the spare has been replaced, lug nuts replaced and tightened as much as possible, remove the jack stand and let the car down. Immediately tighten the lug nuts as much as you possibly can in the opposite sequence from how you removed them. Replace hub cap if possible. If not, don't worry about it. If you have a space saver tire, don't try to replace the hub cap.



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HOUSING CORPORATION TO DEVELOP CORNER PROPERTY

By Elizabeth Braznell

The house on the northeast corner of Juniata and Spring is what you might call a problem property. A couple of years ago, a hole appeared in the roof. The owner wasn't able to take care of it, and the house deteriorated.

Actually, the interior disintegrated. All the floors buckled, the plaster sheeted off the walls, the wooden windows rotted. The systems - plumbing, heating and cooling, electrical - decayed. The house was purchased by people with the best of intentions, but they didn't realize the extent of the damage. The project was more costly than they anticipated. The vacant building was put up for sale.

People would look, but the magnitude of the problem put them off. Estimates to make it habitable were far beyond the market value of the finished home, making it all but impossible to find a buyer.

Enter the Tower Grove South Housing Corporation. "It's a tough project," says Susie Gudermuth, president of the corporation, "but we're the develo-

per of choice for tough projects."

Indeed. Remember the Hartford Arms two years ago? That's the building on Spring at Juniata. It was six dark, cramped, nasty, foul-smelling apartments inhabited by tenants who didn't always pay their rent or their bills. Now it's three huge, clean, spectacular townhomes, inhabited by wonderful neighbors. Each home sold for well over \$100,000. Who'd have thought it possible?

Susie Gudermuth. And she thinks it's possible for 3735 Juniata. So does 15th Ward Alderman Geraldine

Osborn. "Geraldine deserves lots of credit for this," says Gudermuth. "She worked hard to help the Housing Corporation purchase the building and get the funds to develop it."

Earlier in the Summer, Alderman Osborn had the property blighted. While the term "blighted" evokes images of bombed-out buildings, blighting a property actually is an incentive to developers. It makes it possible for the City to acquire the property by eminent domain if the owner is unwilling to sell at fair market value.

And the taxes on the property are abated (held at the current appraisal rate) for ten years. The abatement allows the developer to make improvements, thereby increasing the value of the house, without incurring penalties in the form of increased taxes.

Architect Tim Barker, of the 3800 block of Juniata, received the commission to develop the restoration plans. Barker is most interested in making the best possible use of the living space while preserving the character of the structure.

"It's a neat building," he said during National Night Out. "It has a lot of great features, like the bay in the dining room. I'm really excited about it," he adds.

So are we all. "These corner properties are really important," says Gudermuth. "The Housing Corporation hopes that by taking care of the Hartford Arms and 3735 Juniata, we'll start the initiative to bring in private investment to fix up other properties in the neighborhood."

Gudermuth says the Housing Corporation hopes to finish the project within nine months from the fall starting date. "Hopefully, it will be on the market next spring," she remarked. "It takes time to put the package together."

The Housing Corporation is known for the superb quality of its work. This time next year, 3735 Juniata, resurrected from dead building hell, will be a living home. It will be nice to see lights in the windows again, a sprinkler going on the front lawn, and flowers blooming next to the walk. I can't wait to meet my new neighbors!



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HELP KEEP YOUR CHILD SAFE

The following is a list of suggestions that can help children avoid dangerous situations and teach them how to react if a situation does occur.

- **CHILDREN SHOULD TRY TO STAY IN GROUPS.** There is strength in numbers. In each of the cases that have occurred in our area, the children have been alone. Individuals who prey on children wait for an opportunity when the child is alone. Children should not be outside their home by themselves, even for short periods of time. They should walk to and from school and bus stops in groups. A good idea is to work together with other families in your neighborhood to develop a formal plan for kids to walk together.

- **TAKE TIME TO KNOW YOUR SURROUNDINGS.** Be aware that the most dangerous times can be just before and after school.

- **STRANGERS DON'T ALWAYS LOOK EVIL.** A child should **never** talk to people they don't know. Child molesters and abductors usually look like everyday people. Tell your kids not to talk to adults they do not know. Anytime they are approached by an adult, they should check with a parent or trusted adult immediately.

Often a stranger will try to befriend a child by asking for help. Some examples are: asking to help find a lost pet; asking directions to someone's house; offering reward money for assistance; saying Mom or Dad have been hurt or need their help; acting like an undercover police officer (children should only approach uniformed police officers, and/or marked police cars).

They may also gain your child's trust by very minor contacts over several days, such as saying hello to them repeatedly. Make sure your children know to tell you if a stranger is trying to make friends with them.

- **WALK AWAY FROM STREETS.** Children should stay on sidewalks or at least six feet from the street.

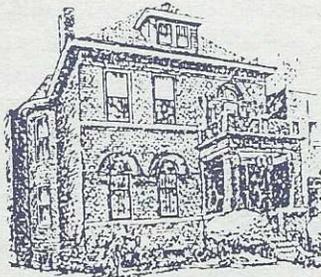
- **STAY AWAY FROM CARS.** Children should **never** approach a car or truck no matter what the occupants say. A car or other vehicle is often the means by which the abductor removes the child from the neighborhood. Children should never approach a vehicle unless they are **absolutely sure** they know the occupants. Abductors entice children to walk near their vehicles and then pull them inside.

If children routinely see the same car parked (or following them) on their normal walking routes (to and from

school, etc.) they should report it to authorities immediately.

- **YELL AND TELL.** If someone grabs a child, the child should **scream** and yell out "HELP ME - CALL THE POLICE". - **RECOGNIZE, REACT, AND REPORT.** When children think they see danger, they should run and tell an adult immediately. Talk to your children about safety practices on a daily basis. Children do not put the same emphasis on suspicious activity as adults. Asking them direct questions ("did you talk to anyone new today", etc.) may bring suspicious acts to light. If they report anything suspicious, call 911 immediately.

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HORTICULTURAL CORNER

By Ben Chu

Hey, How about some grass!

The word grass normally conjures up an image of that short green stuff that must be religiously and painstakingly mowed once a week. This stuff that most think of as lawn is just a minuscule part of the third largest family in the plant kingdom. Some of the other under-rated and under-utilized species in this family is the topic of this column.

Covering half the area of the United States, grasses surround us everywhere we go. Ten of the fifteen major food crops are grasses. Grain from wheat, corn, rice and oats supply a concentrated source of protein, carbohydrates and minerals. Sugarcane and bamboo are both very important food items in many countries.

Grasses are multi-dimensional and may assume various roles in the landscape. Big and little blue stem, bottle brush grass, cord grass, side oats grama, dropseed and sea oats are native grasses that may be planted together to establish a 'natural' landscape and to recreate the tall grass prairie that once so commonly

covered Tower Grove Heights.

Ranging in height from 3-12 feet grasses add the dimension of depth to the landscape and far surpass shrubs in terms of screening. In combination with trees and shrubs grasses may be used to create a year round screen and lend a sense of privacy to the garden. Giant reed performs wonderfully as a screen growing up to twelve feet in a growing season. Giant miscanthus and eulalia grass are also exceptional for developing a tall screen. Ravenna grass, feather reed grass, fountain grass and switch grass all work well as intermediate screens and are useful for background plantings.

Grasses are far from just green plants. Many species exist that exhibit beautiful variegations and colorful foliage. Porcupine grass is a compact five foot miscanthus with yellow banded foliage and is excellent as a specimen grass, ravenna grass will send up 14 foot blue-beige flower plumes. A personal favorite is Japanese blood grass. Small at only 18 inches its red and green foliage is stunning and deserves a place in the garden as a specimen plant. Many

grasses develop very nice fall foliage and their flowers will change in color

as the season progresses.

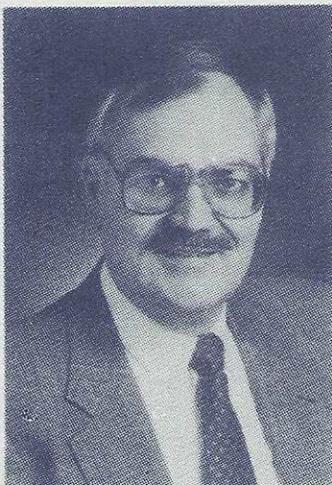
Ornamental grasses are care free and require minimal maintenance. Little, if any, supplemental fertilization is necessary. Adapted to dry conditions with a very extensive root system many grasses can survive without water for long periods. Two requirements that grasses do need are annual cutting back of old stems to the ground; and dividing the clumps about every three years to prevent them from becoming too dense.

As ornamental plants in the landscape, grasses are a relatively new occurrence but are quickly gaining prominence. Graceful and fluid, ornamental grasses add a sense of movement and soft, soothing sound. Though a wide selection is not readily available at most local nurseries it is well worth the effort to search out specialty nurseries and catalogs to include these marvelous members of the grass family.

Benjamin N. Chu is a Horticulture Supervisor and the Curator of the Japanese Garden at the Missouri Botanical Garden.



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While Moms & Dads could enjoy the agricultural displays and canning demonstrations.

Attendance prizes were really special this year; Bed & Breakfast weekends, an original painting by artist Hans Droog, a day of free fishing for up to 25 lbs. of fish, a \$150.00 gift certificate to Malmaison, wine and food baskets, unusual flowering bulbs and more.

Organizers anticipated the event to be the BEST "Best of Missouri Market", and arranged for special entrances to the Garden for the day.

For recorded information about future Garden events, hours, admission and directions, call the Garden-line 24 hours a day at 577-9400 or at 1-800-642-8842.

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It's a good idea to roleplay with your kids. Act like a stranger and see how your children react. Teach them the proper way to respond. Kids should:

- Yell loudly.
- Say exactly what is happening, for example,
"Help, this is not my Dad"
"Help, this is not my Mom"
"Help, I'm being kidnapped"
"Help, call the Police"

(If children just scream, people may think they are only throwing a temper tantrum) The more you practice, the better your children will be at responding to difficult situations.

- REMEMBER, IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY, DIAL 911.



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