

Tower Grove Heights Gazette

Volume 18, No. 3

Grand to Gustine

Arsenal to Utah Place

Fall 2007

AUTUMN FEST IN THE HEIGHTS

BY **Mark Froese** **T**he fall season brings with it a series of holidays and celebrations.

Celebrations are an important essential to the many cultures that define neighborhoods. Many groups host festivals, either lamenting the end of summer or welcoming this unique season of change. All our senses come alive as we witness the autumn season. The color transition is *seen* in our changing agronomy: The end of hot tepid weather is *felt* in particularly cool evenings or fresh crisp mornings. The opportunistic *sounds* of migration or the rustle of fallen leaves peak our association. Most every one also associates *flavors* and *tastes* reserved specifically for fall celebrations and gatherings.

TOWER GROVE HEIGHTS has celebrated the momentum of this season for several years now. The uniqueness and focus of each annual event has been to highlight our geographic urban culture. Life in our city carries with it enormous rewards that have been passed along through generations of residents, who have

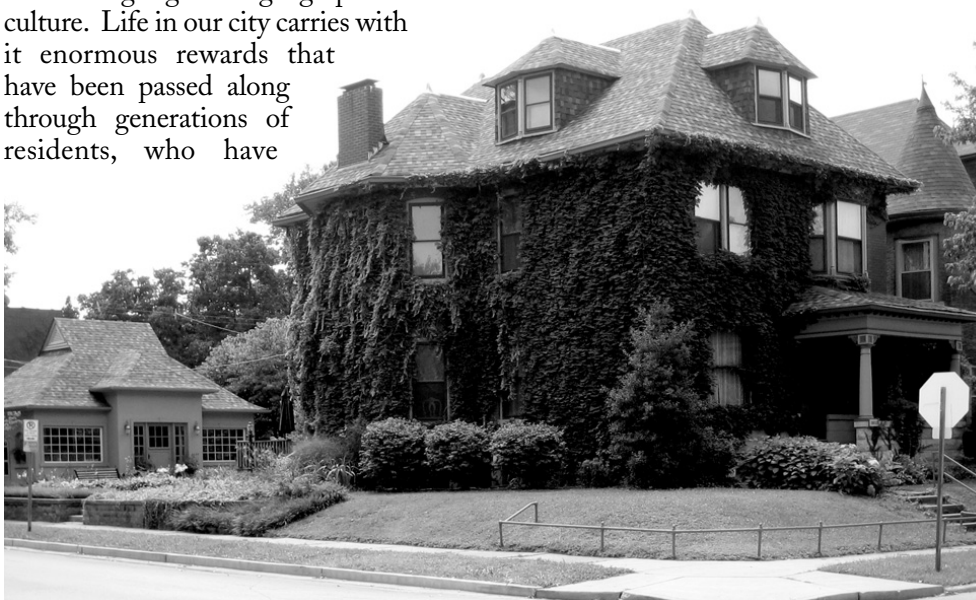
uniquely chosen to share their interests and create the eclectic values we've come to know and love.

The Tower Grove Heights Neighborhood Association is once again sponsoring the event we've entitled Autumn Fest in the Heights. A similar fall festival has been held annually for several years now. It originally donned the title "The Art of City Living" and featured wine and art in one of the neighborhood homes. As years passed it became an event that showcased many of the newly renovated homes in the neighborhood. Scheduling always became a challenge, so as not to interfere with other neighborhood's art fair venues.

More recently, along with the evolving characteristic of new residents, it has become increasingly important to reintroduce the idea of "neighborhood".

For the last couple of years, the event has been effectively promoted as a FRIENDRAISER. The goal is to create an opportunity to spend time with neighbors and create new friendships.

This year's Autumn Fest begins at 5PM on Saturday, October 13th. For more information, please see the flyer and reservation details on page 3.



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NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION



Holiday Card PHOTO CONTEST

Submit the best photo you have taken of the neighborhood for consideration as the cover of the 2007 TGHNA Holiday Card!

(Photos can be either Color or Black & White.)

**All photos must be received by
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Please include your name and phone number with your photo and send it to:

**Tower Grove Heights Neighborhood Association
3735 Connecticut Street
Saint Louis, MO 63116**

At the September TGHNA Meeting, all members present will vote to select this year's winner. The holiday cards will then be printed and available for purchase beginning in October.

**For questions or additional information,
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Your letters and comments are always welcome at the Gazette. Mail them to:

**The Gazette/TGHNA
3735 Connecticut • St. Louis, MO 63116**
or email

gazette-editor@towergroveheights.com.

TGHNA General Meetings are held at 7:15 PM on the 4th Tuesday of each month (except December) at the

First Church of Divine Science, 3617 Wyoming. Everyone is welcome to attend.

www.towergroveheights.com

St. Louis Pride Festival through the eyes of visitors from Florida

By Rick Ewald

Having two friends visit from Florida, (Paul from Tampa and Sheila from Palm Coast, who have been here before) was a satisfying feeling as they watched the parade and toured the grounds of the festival in Tower Grove Park. The excitement mounted as we packed our cooler and folded our chairs to head out to Grand from my apartment a block away. The spectators began parking along Juniata and heading to the parade route soon after 11a.m. My Florida friends had no idea what to expect.

The parade began, and I shouted to the mayor's sister and partner in the lead convertible about the whereabouts of Francis (Slay). They let me know that he was disappointed for not being there, but couldn't make it because of a prior out of town engagement.

The "Band Together" marching ensemble could soon be heard and the crowd responded. The parade and music had grabbed the crowd and didn't let go for over an hour.

It may sound corny but... oh... what a parade it was. With Macy's style helium-inflated overhead balloons, to the Roberts brothers owned TV46 float, my friends couldn't get over the community involvement and slick corporate presence throughout the parade route. The floats were nonstop and the enthusiasm of the crowd grew with each passing organization.

Our collection of goodies by the end of the parade included a mound of beads, Pfizer's band-aids, XM bags, drink coolers, TV46 t-shirts. (Paul from Tampa had to use an extra bag to carry the booty back on the plane!)

The most endearing memory was that South City and the City of St Louis had a remarkable parade that is nationally recognized and deserves the accolades of locals and visitors alike. Sometimes, it takes the eyes of visitors to jog our perspective of how truly blessed we are with community spirit and a unique sense of self.

continued on page 4

The Annual Celebration of Neighborhood AUTUMN FEST in the Heights FRIENDS, FOOD, WINE, ART & MUSIC

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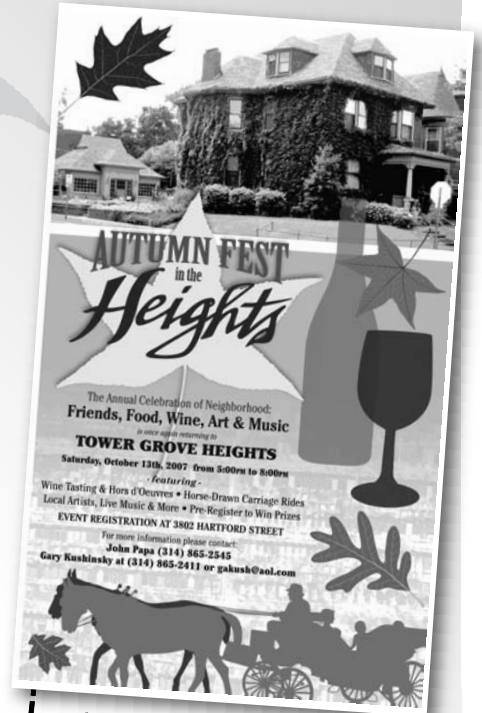
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Pride Festival was held June 23-24 in Tower Grove Park.

It is an annual event, occurring usually in June,
and celebrated by members and friends of the
Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender community.
It is one of several multi-cultural events held in
Tower Grove Park throughout the year.

St. Louis Pride Festival

~ continued ~

And, then the Festival

With a high from the rousing parade, we headed to the festival grounds at Tower Grove Park, Henry Shaw's dream and urban masterpiece. A steady stream of people came from across the city, and across the region, and across the nation to enjoy one of the largest diversity festivals in the nation.

And oh, what a booth extravaganza it was. There were booths from religious perspectives to wonders with all kinds of trinkets. Double hung windows to on-line banking; political action to sports across the region!

And the food: We stood in the center of the outdoor food court and mused over which way to go: Authentic St. Louis specialties to the old favorites. Of course, we queued up to a few beer booths on occasion (all Miller booths- where was Budweiser?)

How did we ever find time for the entertainment? I must be very honest and say that though we occasionally ventured near the entertainment stage and enjoyed the sights and sounds, I will leave the musical critique to a more attuned ear. What I do know from the publicity, is that the crowd was well entertained by a host of talented, national acts.

We left exhausted, exhilarated, and wide-eyed. My friends from Florida had an unforgettable St Louis extravaganza. I left, truly impressed and proud of my neighborhood and my city of St Louis. †

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by Patrick Bost

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The expansion was a direct result of the appeal for this period in design. Denis discovered this niche market while operating an antiques store in the famous Lemp Antique District on Cherokee Street 13 years ago. The store, also named T.F.A. (for "Things From the Attic") carried the usual selections of antiques but what Denis discovered at the end of the day was that his mid-century pieces are what sold. The store evolved from that first year in business and for just over two years into the "Retro Plex", specializing in this niche market.

When you visit the store, be sure to get on the mailing list. If you are missing a piece in a collection, or searching for a particular item, this is the best way for Denis to notify you when he finds it.

The store on Grand Blvd features kitchen, bar and home accessories

plus their entire collections of clothing, jewelry and wardrobe accessories. Hours are Mon & Wed 12-8; Fri & Sat 10-8; Sun 12-5; Closed Tuesdays. Telephone 314-865-1552.

The warehouse/showroom on Morgan Ford features 8 showrooms of furniture, lighting, artwork and draperies plus a warehouse of furniture for your perusal. Hours are Thurs & Fri 12-8, Sat 10-8, Sun 12-5. Telephone 314-865-3072.



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RESIDENT PROFILE:



Angie & Tom Reitenbach

By Georgiana Grant

Angie and Tom Reitenbach have only lived in Tower Grove Heights four and one half years. Both are native to St. Louis. When asked why they chose this neighborhood they agreed there were three main reasons: the Park, the Park, and the Park. They loved the idea of living near Tower Grove Park. Having a space nearby to walk, run and be active is even now a more important factor. Tom and Angie are the proud parents of five-month-old triplets. Already parents of a two year old, they were aware of how great it was to have a resource like Tower Grove Park. Now, it is more central to their lives than ever.

Tom and Angie started dating in high school. Tom attended St.

Louis University High School and Angie, Incarnate Word. They met at a high school dance. Tom graduated a year before Angie and headed for college at Marquette University in Milwaukee. Angie also attended Marquette. They both majored in engineering. After graduation their lives took separate paths for a period of time. Tom was employed in the Detroit area for a few years before earning an MBA. Currently he is employed in computer and business fields relating to financial operations. His position allows him to work from home. Angie holds a Masters Degree in



Physical Therapy from Washington University. She has worked as a therapist and researcher for Wash U., and only recently left when even a part-time position became clearly impractical with a toddler and a set of triplets.

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REHABBING WITH RICH

By RICH IEZZI

BIG AND BEAUTIFUL

Quick! What's the largest building in Tower Grove Heights? My guess is the monolithic 6-family condo conversion at 3633 Humphrey. It's extremely wide and also seems to be built a bit higher out of the ground than its neighbors.

I went through this property last winter while the demo guys were earning their money, and sure didn't see much magic in the project at that time. When I recently saw some of the finished product with Wayne Arling, of First Reality Group, I was amazed to see the transformations that can take place when time and money are thrown at these buildings.

The first thing I noticed was the excellent tuck pointing done on the interior front stairway walls. The bricks are solid and attractive instead of crumbly, as so many exposed



brick walls appear. The interior staircase is gracious and original, reminding you that the building is 100 years old, yet the bottom west unit we entered was definitely 2007. It was spacious, using the width of the unit to accentuate a flowing openness, removed tiny dark hallways and small rooms. The kitchen, with granite countertops, high end appliances and a new wood floor, dominates the view when you enter the unit. However, as you turn toward the front of the condo, you see a staircase leading down to---what? Wayne told me he had the front portion of flooring

continued on page 17

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RESIDENT PROFILE:
...continued

Angie & Tom Reitenbach

Tom and Angie were married in 1997. Their first apartment was on Connecticut at Gustine. While living in the neighborhood they attended an open house for their current home. It had been newly rehabbed, and they thought to themselves – this place is fantastic, but completely out of our league, right now. So, they moved into a deceased relative's home on the Hill for a few years. When their dream home on Juniata went up for sale again in 2003, they purchased it.

In addition to the great location, they both discovered how the active Tower Grove Neighborhood Association was one of the neighborhood's strengths. Tom became a block captain for the 3800 block of Juniata, and also TGH block captain representative – in charge of recruiting other block captains.

Their daughter Greta was born in 2005. Being new parents opened their eyes to what a wonderful area this was for children. They came to appreciate library story hours, weekly summer children's concerts at Piper Palm House, and of course, the wading pool and Farmers Market in Tower Grove Park.

continued on page 12

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RESIDENT PROFILE:

...continued

Angie & Tom Reitenbach

Their triplets were born this past February. Expecting triplets would be quite a surprise for anyone, but Tom and Angie were surprised twice. The doctor told them early in the pregnancy to expect twins. Having two new babies was a lot to wrap their minds around, but at a 20-week prenatal appointment they were quite shocked to learn Angie was actually carrying triplets. The three babies were born prematurely, as is typical for triplets. But after a few extra weeks of hospital care, Tom and Angie brought two sons, Rudy and Otto, and daughter, Naida home. All three children were named for their grandparents.

Life was indescribably crazy for the first month and a half. Tom and Angie were only sleeping in one-hour increments. They changed 30-40 diapers a day and were spending a small fortune on formula. Things have calmed down a bit since then. In fact, for the past few weeks, the babies have been sleeping through the night.

With 3 infants and a toddler at home life is extremely challenging. Tom and Angie are amazed at the helpfulness and generosity of their family, friends and neighbors, who have brought in loads of diapers, clothes and meals. One neighborhood friend visits every evening to help with the last feeding of the day. And while it goes without saying, that expanding a family is quite a bit of work, this experience has given them a new appreciation for living in this community.



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yoga at my desk

By Kathryn Heitzenroeder



For years I have tried to find ways to bring my yoga practice into my professional life. I have been in a corporate environment for over 20 years and have struggled with the anxiety of long meetings and presentations. I often felt stiff after sitting at my desk for hours and began to notice that my posture would droop throughout the day. As my yoga practice has developed, it somehow became a part of my daily work life. First came awareness of my body, mind and breath; then came the revelation, that I actually can do some yoga in my office!!!!!! My office practice began with just a few stretches at my desk that helped me through the day.

First, I started integrating yoga poses at my keyboard to help with my tired fingers and stiff wrists. If your fingers, wrists and arms get tired from working on the computer, try these stretches and give them a break.

1. Placing your hands in prayer position, press the fingers of your right hand into the left, flexing the wrists and stretching the fingers at the base of the hand. Reverse the stretch by pressing the left fingers into the right. Repeat 3 times.

2. Place the tops of the hands on your desk with the fingers pointing toward the body. Gently press the top of the hand down while the arm extends. This will open up the wrists and stretch the forearm. Repeat 2 times.

3. Make fists with the hands and rotate them loosening up any tightness in the wrist and arms. Repeat 3 times in each direction.

4. Interlace the fingers and press the palms of the hands up toward the ceiling as you straighten the arms. Hold and take 3 slow breaths. This will stretch the arms and open up the chest. Repeat 2 times.

Once I got comfortable with stretching and loosening up my hands, I began to focus on my head and neck. Try these when you notice your posture is beginning to slump at your keyboard.

1. Release your chin toward your chest. Interlace your fingers and bring the palms of the hand to the back of the head. Gently press the hands into the head as you keep the torso straight and the back long. Begin to move the head slightly to one side. If you find a spot that feels tight, pause and breathe into it. Slowly change directions. Repeat 2 times.

2. Sitting tall with the shoulder blades on the back, inhale as you lift the chin toward the ceiling, exhale as you lower it toward the chest. Repeat 3 times and then turn the chin from right to left. Repeat 3 times.

3. Sitting tall with the shoulder blades on the back, release the right ear toward the right shoulder. Place the right arm over the head and gently stretch the left side of the neck. Repeat to the left.

4. Take a moment to focus on the eyes... Slowly bring your gaze up toward the forehead and then slowly lower the gaze toward the nose. Repeat 3 times. Change gaze by looking left and right. Repeat 3 times. Make circles with the eyes, 3 times in each direction.

These are just a few things that have helped me stay focused and more productive at work. Since many of us spend hours at a computer, these may help you find peace at your desk too.

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La Crèche

BACK TO SCHOOL ALREADY?

Bonjour, les amis, Bonjour! As families prepare their older children for the new school year, a new resource for parents with infants, toddlers and pre-schoolers is establishing itself in Tower Grove Heights. **La Crèche** is a family learning community that offers high quality, interactive *Maman/Papa et moi* (Mommy/Daddy and me) French immersion classes at St. John's Episcopal Church on Arsenal.

If you've dreamt of relocating to France, if part of your family speaks French, if you're considering bilingualism or if you're looking for a different way to engage your young child, **La Crèche** may be for you. During each 45-minute session young learners and their parents/caregivers learn to sing traditional French children's songs, read children's books, and play fun discovery games *all in French*. For each meeting

continued on next page

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families receive the lyrics of featured *comptines* (nursery rhyme-like songs) in French and English and key vocabulary words that help them to participate and reinforce the vocabulary at home. Classes are open to families who may or may not already have exposure to French.

What makes **La Crèche** innovative is their policy of bringing these playgroups to local neighborhoods. "The city of St. Louis is full of families who want the best for their children," says Rhonda Broussard, the founder of **La Crèche**. "As a mother I understand how challenging it can be to pack up your toddler for a cross-town adventure. We want to make family learning time as convenient as possible for city families. An added bonus of our model is that neighborhood playgroups may help young families form parenting communities." In addition to the Saturday classes at St. John's, **La Crèche** also organizes monthly playgroups for franco-bilingual families. These informal park get-togethers provide bilingual families a much needed opportunity to socialize in French outside of the home and allow children to make friends in their minority language.

La Crèche founder Broussard and her family relocated to St. Louis from Brooklyn, NY, a year ago. A bilingual Louisiana native and National Board Certified French language teacher, Broussard was inspired by the International Baccalaureate curriculum and interactive programs like Parents as Teachers to create a space where parents/caregivers of pre-school age children learn French together.

Families are invited to attend a free preview lesson the first Saturday of every month. This fall **La Crèche** will offer Saturday classes for infants/ toddlers (6-24 months), terrific twos (24-36 months), and a pre-school class (3-5 years). Contact **La Crèche** to reserve your space for the next preview.

* * *

If you'd like more information about **La Crèche**, (including local families to interview or photos of the classes) or to schedule an interview with Rhonda Broussard please contact her at 771-3694 x2 or via e-mail at lacrechestl@gmail.com. <http://lacrechestl.googlepages.com>



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Tower Grove South DOGS

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/tgsdogs/>

A new Yahoo Group link for dog lovers living around Tower Grove Park. This group is for people who are lucky enough to live in the Tower Grove Park area and share a home with their canine friends. Those not currently a dog owner, but share a love and appreciation for them, are also welcome.

The group can be used for giving/requesting advice and expanding your dog's social network/calendar. We'd love people to share ideas or stories about dog care; behavioral issues; great locations for running or walking; play dates & dog parties; dog sitting opportunities; dog friendly establishments/events; veterinarian recommendations; walking together & just celebrating all things canine. Since they lack opposable thumbs, someone has to type for them. Woof!



by Diane Hurwitz

With this issue, we are starting a new column featuring all our fine furry, feathered, finned and scaled creatures with whom we choose to share our homes. I have been asked to write first about a not-for-profit organization that I started over ten years ago, which we affectionately refer to as a retirement home for cats, or Clowder House Foundation.

Clowder House Foundation was designed to provide a permanent home or sanctuary for those cats whose owners had passed away or had moved into nursing homes and had no one else to care for their feline companions. That is still our primary focus, but as most cat owners know, once you have a cat, the word is out, and somehow others mysteriously arrive at your doorstep. So, approximately 60% of our resident population consists of rescue cats that our board members and volunteers have brought to our doors or the neighborhood cats who actually have checked themselves in – yes, we really have had cats show up on their own, pawing at the door to be let in off the harsh streets. We try to make our space (the first floor of a three story warehouse formerly part of a brewery) as inviting as we can, first for the cats (we have been called the kitty spa or kitty heaven) and then the volunteers who spend countless hours cleaning up after and taking care of our charges. Once a cat comes to Clowder House, it is provided with all the amenities plus

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continued on page 18

REHABBING WITH RICH *BIG AND BEAUTIFUL* *continued*

removed, then liked the view peering down into the basement. This idea changed 300 square feet of the former basement into living space featuring new walls, wood floors and an attractive staircase.

I was surprised to see an original seven foot mantle in one of the units and also amazed to see newly installed pocket doors dividing the front rooms in one of the units. I also loved the fanned out stained glass windows that graced the front stairway. Wayne revealed that the stained glass windows had been removed, but were found in the stairway where they were recovered and reinstalled.

Price and location (of course!) were motivators for this conversion along with a desire to stay near the 'Grand Corridor' with its numerous construction and conversion projects. Wayne said he enjoyed working in our neighborhood and told me, "A resident who has lived across the street for 60 years came over to thank us for doing the project, and that was nice to hear".

Throughout the tour, 'flexibility' and 'options' kept coming up. While the units are a blend of old and new, Wayne's team allowed for walls to be moved or removed, further customizing the condos. The work has come a long way from Wayne's first tour of the property. "The previous owner was a real Halloween fan----heads and skeletons were displayed throughout the building. It was pretty scary", Wayne said.

When I asked what the favorite part of the project was, I could almost hear Wayne grinding away at an answer. Finally he said "Standing on the front porch, knowing we've helped make the neighborhood more beautiful". Thanks, Wayne.

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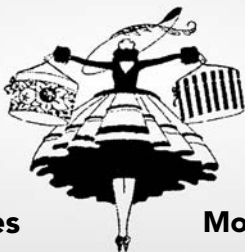
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Clowder House

FOUNDATION



continued

quality food and regular medical care. We have cats of all ages and medical needs including paralyzed cats and cats with various diseases such as diabetes, hyperthyroidism, cardiomyopathy, renal failure, and the like. Cats are placed in the various rooms according to personalities and/or medical conditions, and we try to have as few cats as possible caged. Yes, that means lots of cats running around everywhere – now you know why we spend lots of time cleaning.

So, how do we pay for all of this? Besides the generosity of donors, we charge a one-time placement fee for those cats that are brought us by their former owners or family. The fee depends on the age of the cat (\$1,000 to \$3,000 per cat), and while it may seem large at first, it barely covers the average \$10,000 cost for the lifetime care of a cat. We also offer sponsorships of cats and allow adoptions of those rescue cats that are suitable for placement into loving homes. We recognize Clowder House is not the option for everyone, but for those cats who do come to live with us, we strive to provide the best care we can and give our residents tons of love and affection for the remainder of their days.

If you are interested in visiting our sanctuary and the residents, we have visiting hours on Sundays from 2 to 4 p.m. (we strongly encourage advance notice) or by special appointment. And, if you are interested in volunteering or donating money or supplies, please call 314-776-PURR (7877) or write to The Clowder House 3134 Wyoming, St. Louis, Mo. 63118.



TOWER GROVE HEIGHTS NEEDS YOU!

The Tower Grove Heights Neighborhood Association can only be YOUR association if you join. With your participation, TGHNA will be a reflection of what YOU want the Heights to become. So please don't delay in joining or rejoining.

- To find out what is happening in the neighborhood
- To make the Heights a cleaner and safer place
- To have a liaison with City Hall and other agencies
- To better protect our property values
- To make the neighborhood a more interesting and fun place to live

Please indicate your membership level choice:

PLEASE PRINT:

<input type="checkbox"/> Individual (1 vote) \$10/year	NAME(S) _____
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Area Events & Activities

April 1 – September 30: Muckerman Fountain and Pop Jets at TG Park Wading Pool; Sunday – Friday 10 AM – 7 PM; Saturdays 8 AM – 7 PM

June 9 – September 3 TG Park Wading Pool Open; Tuesday – Sunday 11 AM – 4 PM; Pool portion closed on Mondays. For more information call: 771-4484

May 12 – October 27 Tower Grove Farmer's Market; Saturdays only – just west of the Pool Pavilion in the center of the Park. Market times are 8:30 AM – 12:30 PM. For info call: 772-3899

September 14 Alexander Von Humboldt's Birthday Ceremony; Wreath laying at the statue in TG Park. For info call: 771-4484

September 14 Friends of Tower Grove Park Annual Fundraiser; Martinis at the Mansion – 2007; Join us for cocktails and hors d'oeuvres at this beautiful Compton Heights mansion, built in 1895. This fourth annual event to benefit the Friends of Tower Grove Park will feature an evening of fun, food, and friends. \$50 for members/\$60 for non-members. For more information call: 771-4424

September 22 Tower Grove Movie Nights; To Kill a Mockingbird; Grab a blanket, pack a picnic, and bring the kids for a fun movie with the family in Tower Grove Park. Whitaker Theater at the Pool Pavilion. Movie starts at dusk – around 8:30 PM. FREE

October 6 Tower Grove Park Gala 2007: Marking the 140th anniversary of the authorization of Tower Grove Park, the Gala 2007 fundraiser will provide support for the reforestation and operations of this landmark urban forest. The Gala will celebrate the commitments made by Emerson and Anheuser-Busch Foundation to support the restoration of the park's historic Lily Ponds. Join the celebration at the Piper Palm House overlooking the beautiful Lily Ponds. The evening will include dinner, music, and dancing. Tickets start at \$250 per person. For more information call: 771-4454.

October 12 Christopher Columbus Day Ceremony; Wreath laying at the Statue in TG Park.

Mothers' Night Out: Last Thursday of the month at Erato Wine Bar 7:30 p.m.; Informal get-together for any moms in the South City area. Call Carrie Samsel at 662-2982 for more information.

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