

Tower Grove Heights Gazette

GRAND TO GUSTINE

ARSENAL TO UTAH PLACE

Volume 30, No. 1

Fall 2018

Get Ready for Autumn Fest in the Heights

BY CAREY
UXA MORGAN

After a year's hiatus, Autumn Fest in the Heights will return on Saturday, October 13th. Mark your calendars for an enjoyable evening event with neighbors, delicious food, cooler temperatures and, of course, the chance to peek inside some of our neighborhood's most beautiful homes – including the brand-new second floor residence of Dave and Sally Difani, owners of Black Thorn Pub & Pizza.

Perhaps I'm being self-indulgent in calling the homes "beautiful," because my husband, Jeff, and I will be welcoming neighbors at the first stop of the evening at our home, 3810 Wyoming. Guests who have bought tickets in advance (\$16) can check in here. Tickets will also be available at the door (\$20). We'll kick off the event with appetizers generously donated by many of the best restaurants on South Grand and beyond. Count on plenty of wine, beer, and soft drinks, too, as you converse with new and longtime neighbors. You'll also have the opportunity to check out how we've tried to restore some of our home's historic elements after a not-so-hot rehab. Speaking of remodeling, the second stop is just a quick jump across the street to Wyoming & Spring. I'm sure you've all watched the



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OUR GAZETTE HAS A BIRTHDAY

By Rich
Iezzi

Our Tower Grove Heights *Gazette* turns 30 this August! A lot of things had to happen to create the *Gazette* and keep it going all this time.

First, it's amazing that the *Gazette* was started in 1988, only one year after the Tower Grove Heights Neighborhood Association was formed. Just setting up the neighborhood association was a lot of work that included obtaining 501(c)(3) status, lining up block captains and holding monthly meetings.

The *Gazette* started out in similar fashion, needing volunteers and an editor. The very first *Gazette* describes a group of 20 volunteers working to produce six issues a year compared to the four we have now. At times, the *Gazette* would grow to 20 pages from the normal 16. More copy was needed to cover all the news happening in the early days.

Co-founding editor Tom Booth said, "During that time, we came up with a theory on how to find block captains – go to the nicest house on the block and knock, smile and ask. We found Jan Nessor and Ben Chu that way and Jan became the founding editor of

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Interestingly, there were a few pages where the written columns didn't quite line up with the page format. That's because 30 years ago, "layout" meant exactly that. Gazette articles were typed (on typewriters!), then literally cut and arranged on paper to form pages before being hand delivered to a printer.

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OUR GAZETTE HAS A BIRTHDAY

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the *Gazette* and served for many years.”

Thirty years ago, our neighborhood was like a neglected old house. So many things needed to be done and the *Gazette* communicated the ongoing activities with our residents. Remember, it was BC – before computers.

The first *Gazette* consisted of only eight pages that discussed porch light safety, volunteering, neighborhood block parties, favorite recipes and a report of loose pit bulls.

Interestingly, there were a few pages where the written columns didn't quite line up with the page format. That's because 30 years ago, "layout" meant exactly that. *Gazette* articles were typed

(on typewriters!), then literally cut and arranged on paper to form pages before being hand delivered to a printer.

Today, they're emailed to Inkspot for digital layout then zipped over to Murray Print Shop.

Longtime *Gazette* contributor Tricia Heliker mentioned the early "folding parties." "It was fun—we had snacks and beer. We had to do the folding because we had no money for collating and stapling," she reported. The new neighborhood association had a heartbeat but no funds yet.

The idea behind the *Gazette* has always been to be nonpartisan and non-political. Instead, it would be informative and neighborhood friendly.

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THE GREAT WALL

By Rich Iezzi **W**hen you drive north or south on Tower Grove Avenue, the Missouri Botanical Garden is represented by an imposing stone wall that stretches from Magnolia to Shaw. A section of the wall is being rebuilt the Martin-Heck Company and I spoke with some of their workers about the project.

The wall they're working on is the original one that Henry Shaw commissioned 156 years ago. To do the project, the stone workers had to attend several weeks of classes involving Historical Restoration. "After that, we went back for a re-fresher," said Jeff Snelling of Martin-Heck.

Jeff told me, "The lime we use is imported from France and we learned a lot about working with it. There's no cement in the lime mortar and extra steps have to be taken to ensure the drying process. The lime is naturally hydrated and contains clay. We have to cover it for three days to keep it from drying too quickly." When I asked if

it would be dry in a month, I was told it would take 20 years to completely dry (!)

The wall is a bit of an optical illusion. While it slants toward the back as

it rises, the back of the wall is perfectly straight and plumb. The bottom of the wall is 23" thick and tapers to 17" at the top. Unfortunately, some of the stone mason's best work is hidden.

According to Jeff, "The wall is 12 feet high but that includes the two feet below ground level. The wall used to sit on enormous stones three feet wide and two feet high. They were removed and replaced with a concrete foundation."

Stone work hasn't changed much in the last 150 years. When I asked how they could take the old wall down and reconstruct it without knowing where the stones originally went, I got a look that said, "this is what we do." They follow

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LYNN LEGACY LIVES ON UTAH

By Dave
Campbell

Anyone who has lived in Tower Grove Heights for more than 15 years must certainly remember Jim and Veda Lynn. So would anyone who lived on the block 25 years ago or even 50 years ago.

Jim and his widowed mother, Anna West Lynn, purchased the two-family flat at 3855-3857 Utah in April of 1938, and it has been the family home ever since. A few years after the purchase, Jim enlisted in the Army Air Corps, and was sent overseas during World War II. Just prior to his deployment, he married Veda



Loverne Cox, and when he returned from the war, Jim and Veda moved into the first floor and began to raise their family. Meanwhile, Anna and her sister and husband lived on the second floor.

Jim and Veda's oldest child, Mary Ann, was born in 1944 while Jim was overseas. In 1949, their son Jim was born, and in November 1953, their youngest child, Veronica, was born. "Those were the days

when all of us kids just went out to play and the only rule was to be home when the street lights come on," remembers Veronica.

By 1974, when youngest daughter, Veronica, married her high school sweetheart, Dave Campbell, it seemed all of the children of the baby boom generation had moved out. Jim would frequently muse how quiet the neighborhood had become compared to when there were young children in every house.

Jim and Veda were active in the neighborhood association, with Jim holding office, and Veda, a regular as block captain. While some of the neighbors began moving out of the city, Jim and Veda fought back when the neighborhood was deteriorating. "There was a property a few houses down with drug activity," Veronica recalls. "My mother would call the police and then go stand in front of the house and point it out when the police arrived (OMG!)." Those of you who knew her will recall that she was 4'9" and 80 pounds soaking wet. She would play the part of a Christmas elf for the TGH holiday parties.

With a few stalwarts like Jim and Veda, and the incredible rehabilitation commitment of Susie Gudermuth, the neighborhood was revitalized. But time marches on and by the early 2000s Jim and Veda were both in their late 80s. The family faced a difficult decision because everyone knew Jim and Veda wanted to be in

their home, but they were having difficulty living alone.

Dave and Veronica had moved back to the St Louis area in 1987 after 11 years away. Dave had completed medical school and Veronica had completed her physical therapy degree, both graduating from Saint Louis University in the early 1970s. Dave had a scholarship commitment to the United States Navy,

and so he and Veronica spent years in Pensacola, Florida and Charleston, South Carolina. After the military, they moved for three years to Birmingham, Alabama as Dave had accepted a position as residency program director at UAB. In 1987 they returned, with their three children (one each born in Pensacola, Charleston,

"There was a property a few houses down with drug activity," Veronica recalls. "My mother would call the police and then go stand in front of the house and point it out when the police arrived (OMG!)." Those of you who knew her will recall that she was 4'9" and 80 pounds soaking wet.

In 2000, Dave formed a health care not-for-profit providing health care to disadvantaged populations through the St. Louis region. At the same time, Veronica was finding herself making many trips into the city, sometimes middle-of-the-night emergencies, as Jim and Veda needed more and more assistance with living alone.

"Dave had always said that when our youngest graduated from high school, he either wanted to move out to where he could have about five acres of trees around our house, or . . . move back into the city and renovate the house on Utah" Veronica shared. When the time came that their youngest graduated, family circumstances helped make the decision, so Dave and Veronica moved into the second floor of the house in which Veronica had grown up, to be there for Jim and Veda so they could continue to live in their family home.

"It made their last six years very special I believe, with many precious moments for all of us," Veronica remembers. "The family gatherings for birthdays, Thanksgiving and Christmas



and Birmingham) to the St Louis area, as Dave had been recruited to develop a new residency in family medicine at Deaconess Hospital. They settled in Chesterfield, attracted by the Parkway School District for their young family.

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HAMPTON SHOE REPAIR

By Marilyn Browning

It's easy to look around the world these days and see items that are shoddily made, designed for quick obsolescence, or in general so costly or inconvenient to repair that the rubbish heap is their certain destination. Meet Tricia and Robert Egan, owners of Hampton Shoe Repair and American Made Work Boots, who are only too happy to buck this trend.



Rob Egan bought Hampton Shoe Repair in 1989. He was in the middle of a college business course, the opportunity cropped up, and he decided that owning and running his own business might be at least as interesting as learning about business. Even then shoe repair was seen by some as a dying trade, with most shoe repair shops owned by people at least twice or even three times his age. Mass production of shoes was moving overseas, and shoes were increasingly seen as items to be replaced rather than repaired.

Despite any dire predictions, Rob did just fine in the shoe repair business. As other shoe repair shops closed their doors, he gained their customers as well as others who learned that he did quality shoe repair.

The move to selling only American-made shoes began with Eli Fishman, who bought the old Florsheim shoe factory in Cape Girardeau, Missouri, and started producing Cape Shoes, built by American union workers using only American-made materials. Tricia had already come on board to become both business partner and life partner, and she and Rob often loaded Cape work shoes on the back of their truck on days when the store was closed. They marketed directly to workers at factories, putting in 16 hour days to coincide with the shifts of the factory workers.

Sadly, Cape Shoes eventually closed its doors, but Tricia and Rob continued to seek

out and stock American-made products. Today their store sells Belleville, Carolina, Double H, Corcoran, and Matterhorn work boots and shoes which are completely made in the USA. Other brands are handcrafted or assembled in the USA using domestic and imported parts. There are also Wigwam socks from Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin and plenty of American-made belts. This year marks their 29th in business, and the end of their first year in their very own building, the search for which had begun years ago. They knew that any space they found needed enough room for their substantial inventory, room for the repair shop, a decent amount of space for display, office space, and, oh yes, they definitely wanted to stay on Hampton Avenue if possible. Their new store was a gut job, and like so many things in Tricia and Rob's lives, a real hands-on effort involving themselves, family, and friends in the building trades.

Their hands-on, keeping-it-local approach extends to the charities Tricia and Rob are involved in, like Saint Louis area-based Feed My People, Ride on STL with its emphasis on equine therapy, and the Saint Louis council of Girls on the Run, a youth development program for girls in grades 3 through 8.

As a sign of the times, a good portion of their business is online sales through the website Tricia designed, but the bricks and mortar store is there for all of us who like to try on and walk around in a shoe before buying it. The shoe repair business end is still going strong as well, with both loyal customers like me and new customers who are finding out that their favorite shoes can be given new life rather than going to a landfill.

If you like supporting local businesses, are looking for well-made shoes that last, or are just interested in reuse and repair of the things you own, stop by and see what Hampton Shoe Repair and American Made Work Boots can offer. Check out their ad in this issue of the Gazette for more information!

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THE GREAT WALL

continued from page 2

string lines to produce the correct angle on the front while keeping their horizontal work level, just like Roman builders did 2,000 years ago.

The pride in their work shows. "So far, we've re-used every stone that came out of the old wall," Jeff beamed. There are two rows of stone, one forming the back of the wall and the other, the slanted front. The middle 4-6" void is filled with pieces of broken rock and mortar, just like it was 156 years ago. A ten foot section of wall weighs an estimated 10,000 pounds.

One of the more vexing questions I had concerned the seven courses of stone that make up the wall. A course is designated by a perfectly straight horizontal line in the stonework.



You might not see the straight stone lines unless you drive along the wall. While I thought that the courses added a lot of extra work, I was told that they controlled the drying of the mortar and made it easier to ensure the final wall height.

While having to work all day with some stones weighing almost 100 pounds, the guys were proud of what they were doing. When I asked if the new wall would last another 156 years, I was told, "at least."

I don't regret a Shingle Thing

By Paul **W**hen I purchased my Utah Place home
Harris in 2012, I was aware that the roof
soon would require replacement. The

home's previous owner had done a first-rate job preserving the integrity of the home, but she expressed some degree of regret that the home's original, slate tile roof had not been saved. I considered replacement of the worn-out, asphalt-shingle roof with slate or red clay tile, materials that often were used when my home was built in 1907, but the cost of slate or clay tile appeared prohibitive. So, I explored other roof material options that would meet my principal goal: this would have to be the last roof that I place on my home. A family member alerted me to

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Get Ready for Autumn Fest in the Heights

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transformation of our beloved neighborhood pizza place, known simply as Black Thorn. Owners Dave and Sally Difani not only renovated the pub, they've created a one-of-a-kind owner's living quarters on the second floor. The Difanis will host the second stop of the evening in their new home, featuring coffee and delicious desserts created by some of our neighborhood's outstanding bakers. And of course, you'll get the chance to see the inside of the project you've watched from the street for the past few months.

In what has become a grand hosting tradition, Nick Taylor and Metra Mitchell Taylor at 3883 Hartford St., will host the final stop of the evening. Over the years Nick and Metra have organized the festive "after party" portion of Autumn Fest. From libations to autumnal décor, be ready to celebrate the season with neighbors and friends alike. If you're looking to continue the fun, the third stop is not to be missed!

EVENT DETAILS:

- * Date: Saturday, October 13th
- * Time: 5:00 – 8:30
- * Price: \$16 in advance or \$20 at the door
- * Start location: 3810 Wyoming

Autumn Fest in the Heights is open to all – residents, friends, relatives, and anyone interested in enjoying an evening in one of the most beautiful neighborhoods in the city.

If you're ready to meet and socialize with the most fabulous neighbors around (and, admit it, are curious about the interiors of these gorgeous homes), get your tickets today at www.towergroveheights.com. Details for paper registration can be found on the back of this issue of the Gazette. Advance ticket purchases recommended and appreciated. We look forward to seeing you all!



I don't regret a Shingle Thing

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Midwest Lifetime Roof Systems, Inc., a company that produces and installs stone-coated steel roofs. I researched this company and found that the life span of its metal roofing is 50 years or more. While a stone-coated metal roof is lighter in weight than an asphalt shingle roof, a stone-coated metal roof is far more durable through hot / cold and wet / dry weather cycles and is guaranteed against wind and hail damage. These substantial benefits more than offset the somewhat higher cost compared to that of asphalt shingles that I would likely need to replace again in 15-20 years.

After completing this research, I met with a local representative



of Midwest Lifetime Roof Systems. He walked me through features and benefits of this roofing system and provided me with a list of St. Louis homes, commercial buildings and churches - a number of them in historic districts similar to ours - with stone-coated steel roofs that had replaced original slate or clay tile roofs. Each of the owners with whom I spoke was very pleased with the quality and durability of the roof. Next, I examined various roof tile styles and colors that were offered and was pleased to find a terra cotta color that was a spot-on match to the red clay tile caps that had adorned the original roof of my home. I selected this terra cotta color that, in my view, complements well the variegated tan, "iron spot" brick of my home that has spots of black throughout produced when iron present in the clay was fired. The crew from Midwest Lifetime Roof Systems completed their installation of a stone-coated steel roof on both my home and garage in just three days, all with complete professionalism. These guys really knew their stuff. Now, five years later and after a number of high winds and hail storms, the roof has suffered no damage or fading - it looks exactly as it did the day the roof was installed.

I am very satisfied with my roof and have recommended this company to many friends and neighbors. A stone-coated steel roof is worthy of consideration.

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Our New Matt-the-Cat Award Winner

The *Gazette* will begin featuring the winners of the prestigious Matt-the-Cat Award. The MTC award is presented every few months to neighbors who go out of their way to help other neighbors. Previous MTC award winners include: Rich and Jean Iezzi, Ann Stanley, Saras Chung, The Alley Kats and Erin O'Reilly.



The next MTC recipient will be Dave Difani who has been an integral part of our neighborhood for over 30 years. Way back when many of us could still run the bases, we probably played on one of Dave's Black Thorn softball leagues. Somehow the team always seemed to end up at the Black Thorn Pub after the games and many new renters and owners were introduced to our area.

The next MTC recipient will be Dave Difani who has been an integral part of our neighborhood for over 30 years. Way back when many of us could still run the bases, we probably played on one of Dave's Black Thorn softball leagues. Somehow the team always seemed to end up at the Black Thorn Pub after the

Lately, Dave and Sally have turned a lot of heads as they're completing the final phase of their building addition and are anchoring the Spring and Wyoming corner with patio lights and wrought iron railings. With the addition being completed, Dave and Sally have moved into their new space over the bar as owner occupants.

Recently, one of the Black Thorn's cameras captured a crime being committed and Dave attended a Tower Grove Heights Neighborhood Association meeting to share his footage and also urge other owners to purchase cameras.

In the past, the Black Thorn has been a *Gazette* advertiser and contributor to the TGHNA 30th anniversary block party and now will open their new addition for the upcoming Autumn Fest and be a Heights Nights event destination.

Dave and Sally are quiet about their contributions but they and their Black Thorn Pub have been valuable assets to our neighborhood bar for a long, long time.

MAKING LEMONADE OUT OF FUNDRAISING

By Greta Reitenbach
of the Alley Kats

Remember the Alley Kats? If you have been reading the Tower Grove Heights *Gazette* over the past year or so, you probably know about us. We have appeared in the *Gazette* for everything from donating money to painting a fire hydrant!

This time, we have made a lemonade stand to raise money for the theater camp that some of us do. We wanted to do the production at the St. Louis University High School theater, which meant we had to raise money to pay for the venue. On a hot Saturday morning in July,

the Alley Kats pulled out the "Sale!" sign and raised a grand total of \$81 in 4 hours, from 8:30-11:30 a.m.

To make \$81 without any tips, we would have had to sell 162 cups of lemonade! In all we sold about 30 cups, with the rest of the money being from tips. The largest tip we received was \$15. Crazy, but that

The largest tip we received was \$15. Crazy, but that is not unusual. Almost nobody actually pays the original price.



The Alley Kats and their Lemonade Stand

is not unusual. Almost nobody actually pays the original price. Another interesting thing about our sales is that a little over half of our customers are passing by in a vehicle. We intentionally place our stand so there is a lot of open curb space nearby, kind of like a lemonade drive-thru.

As with all our sales, everyone passing by is very supportive and kind. Sometimes, we even get someone who posts our sale on Nextdoor or Facebook! That certainly gets some people to go by, whether walking or driving. Our original goal was to make \$30, but we rocketed past that goal in the first 1½ hours. To everybody who contributed, a big thank you from the Alley Kats!

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In a bitter yearlong battle to claim the coveted "Most Members" sign, Hartford St. has once again emerged on top with 79 members. Not bad considering there's only 120 addresses on both blocks.

Utah was a close contender and came in a close second with 66 members.

The winner of the "most members" award will be announced in every Fall *Gazette* so plenty of time for other blocks to get their strategy together.

Thanks to all our members for supporting the Tower Grove Heights Neighborhood Association.



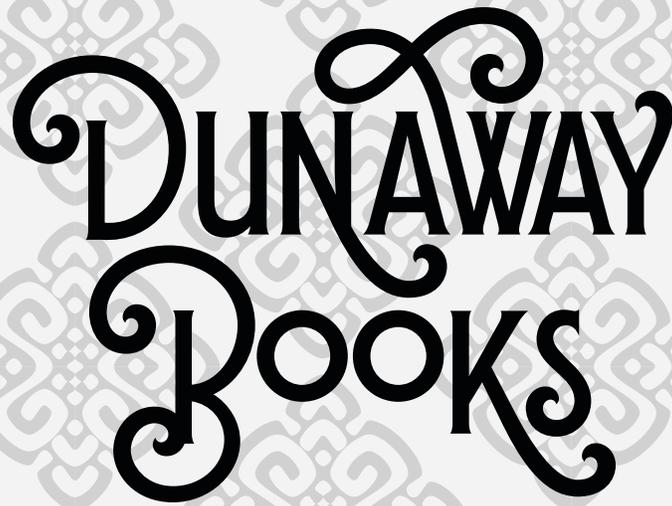
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The annual Utah median planting party with volunteers Elaine Hayes and Paul Harris

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For the latest neighborhood news and events; receive a Welcome Packet; contact your Block Captain; join TGHNA; nominate a neighbor for the Matt-the-Cat Award; read our bylaws, meeting minutes or past issues of the *Gazette*; and much more, please visit: www.towergroveheights.com

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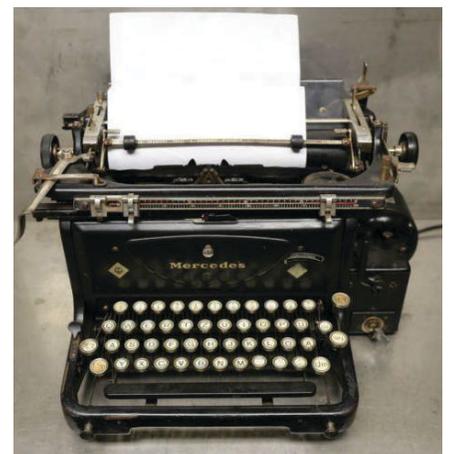


OUR GAZETTE HAS A BIRTHDAY

continued from page 2

A couple of years ago, someone offered the *Gazette* “whatever it would take” to buy one half page so the purchaser could vent his opinion on a controversial topic. I turned him down. Too bad – I happened to agree with his diatribe.

The idea that a 14-square block neighborhood could start its own newspaper and continue publishing it for 30 years is incredible. Past editors include Jan Nesser, Tom Booth, Elizabeth Braznell, Don Hardin, Sara Langan, Tod Martin, Doug and Carrie Samsel, Mark Froese and currently, Rich Iezzi. Past issues can be viewed on towergroveheights.com.



Heartfelt thanks to all the writers and contributors who have made our *Gazette* a great neighborhood newspaper for 30 years.



Our idea of paperwork.

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REAL ESTATE NEWS

Email me your real estate questions at: DeborahErvin@att.net

Homes Sold in Tower Grove Heights this quarter

Type	Address	Sold Price	Year Built
Res	3644 Hartford	\$224,000	1904
Res	3804 Wyoming	\$235,000	1908
Res	3845 Connecticut	\$259,000	unk
Res	3704 Hartford	\$299,900	1901
Res	3650 Juniata	\$305,000	1905
Res	3829 Humphrey	\$315,000	1908
Res	3869 Hartford	\$322,000	1902
Res	3670 Wyoming	\$385,900	1905
Res	3892 S. Utah Pl.	\$393,000	1908
Res	3837 Connecticut	\$460,000	1906
Res	3809 N. Utah Pl.	\$490,000	1908



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 TGH a more interesting, fun place to live

Indicate your membership level choice: _____

- _____ INDIVIDUAL (1 vote) \$10/year Include my name, address and contact information in the TGHNA Buzz Book. . .
- _____ HOUSEHOLD (2 votes) \$15/year _____ Yes _____ No
- _____ ASSOCIATE (non-voting) \$10/year
- _____ LIFETIME (1 vote) \$100 single payment Please add my email address to the Neighborhood Forum Email notification list. . .
- _____ BUSINESS (1 vote) \$25 /year (entitles member to a 10% discount on TGHNA Gazette Ads for one year) _____ Yes _____ No

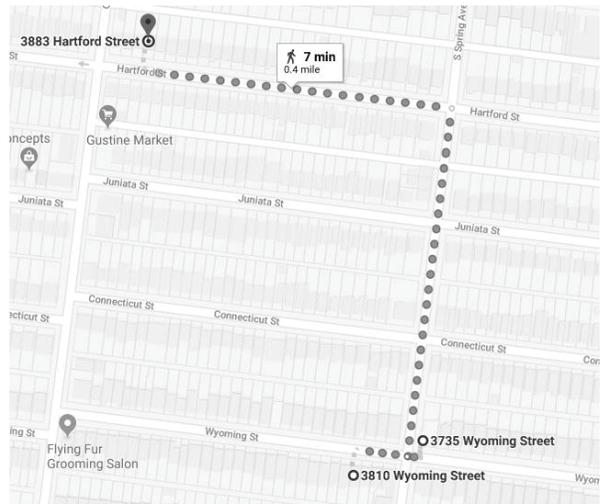
NAME(S) _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____

EMAIL _____

Join online at towergroveheights.com or mail this form to:
 TGHNA • P.O. Box 160069 • St. Louis, MO 63116
(TGHNA is a tax exempt 501c3 organization)



HOST SITES

**Saturday, October 13, 2018
5-8:30pm**

**Event begins at:
3810 Wyoming Street**

ADVANCE REGISTRATION BY MAIL

\$16

ONLINE REGISTRATION

\$16

AT THE DOOR

\$20

- **Appetizers**
- **Desserts & Coffee**
- **Wine & Beer**
- **Tour Three Spectacular TGH Homes – including The Black Thorn owners’ residence**
- **Best neighbors around!**

1. **3810 Wyoming Street - Registration, wine, beer, soft drinks & appetizers from 5-8:00pm. Meet the Morgan family and see how they’ve transformed and personalized a once not-so-great rehab.**
2. **3735 Wyoming Street - Desserts & coffee from 6-8:30pm. It’s your chance to see inside the Black Thorn owners’ – The Difani family – recently overhauled home.**
3. **3883 Hartford Street - Party to continue with Metra, Nick and new & old friends from 8:00-10:00p.m. (and beyond).**

IN ADVANCE- \$16.00 if using the form below, \$16.00 if registering online at www.towergroveheights.com. (Pick up your pre-registered nametags the night of the event at 3810 Wyoming Street)

AT THE DOOR- \$20.00 (Registration closes at 7:30pm.)

Autumn Fest in the Heights 2018

ADVANCE REGISTRATION FORM

Names in your party:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Please make your check payable to:

Tower Grove Heights Neighborhood Association

Total amount enclosed _____

Mail advance registration form and check to:

Carey Morgan, 3810 Wyoming St., Saint Louis, MO 63116

