

Tower Grove Heights Gazette

Volume 12, No. 4

Grand to Gustine

Arsenal to Utah Place

July 2001



President's Column

By Michael Renner
President, TGHNA

President@towergroveheights.com

If you follow this column regularly (and at a safe and legal distance), you've noticed that I haven't written here for the past couple of issues. That doesn't mean nothing has happened in the neighborhood; on the contrary, things are as busy as ever. It just means that I'm a procrastinator of sorts (I'll tell you about it some other time).

Tower Grove Heights continues to experience phenomenal growth. On my block alone (3600 Juniata) five new households have moved in within the past six months. Other blocks are experiencing similar changes. With this growth comes changes that affect the cohesion of neighborhood. It's human nature, I suppose, that we tend to know the people in our immediate vicinity (if we're that lucky). Few of us make the trek across the street and up a half block to introduce ourselves to a new resident, even though we sure watched intently as the movers unloaded the truck. Often, the only time we see those neighbors from far away is during National Night Out (August 7, 7-10 p.m., <http://www.natw.org/>).

So here's a challenge to all of us: Make an effort to know not only the new neighbors, but get to know some older ones (assuming there's not a reason you haven't done so in the first place, like, oh say, the 200lbs. Rottweiler they have chained to

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Jade Room Gets a Green Light

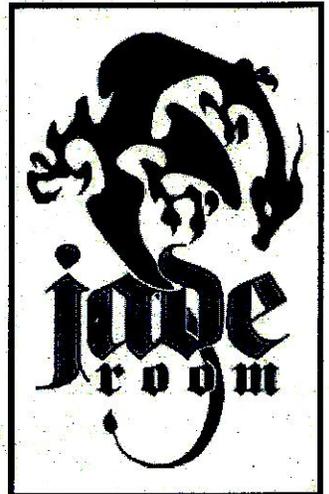
By Brian Marston
President-Elect, TGHNA

President-Elect@towergroveheights.com

The Jade Room, St. Louis' first (and only) cyber bar, is a unique new addition to the South Grand business district. Located in the back room of MeKong (3131 S. Grand), the Jade Room is open every day from 5 p.m. to 3 a.m.

Most of the half dozen partners who own the Jade Room are in their early twenties. Everything about their venture – from the décor to the music to the menu to the staff – resonates with a relaxed chic that comes from being cool without forcing it. Together with MeKong and the Upstairs Lounge, the Jade Room is part of an impressive entertainment and dining complex on the corner of Grand and Hartford. It's also the home base for Orange 351, an interactive design company co-owned by Mark Mercado and Johnathon Kiefer.

The "cyber" part of the "cyber bar" consists of a network of four fast computers with 1.1 GHz Athlon chips and 256 MBs of memory connected to the Internet via a high-speed synchronous DSL line. The machines are loaded up with lots of software, including the Microsoft Office suite (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Access) and Adobe's line of image editing and



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National Register Update

Landmarks Association's nomination to place Tower Grove Heights on the National Register of Historic Places was approved at the state level in May. The next step (which should be complete by the time this goes to press) is for the state to forward it to the National Register, a division of the National Park Service. Final approval is expected sometime this fall. In addition to the recognition the listing gives our neighborhood, it also opens up a possibility of 25% tax credit on approved large rehab projects. For more information on the tax credit, call the city's Cultural Resources Office at 622-3400.

Tower Grove Heights Gazette

www.towergroveheights.com

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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 GazetteEditor@towergroveheights.com.

TGHNA General Meetings are held at 7:15PM on the 4th Tuesday of each month (except December) at the First Church of Divine Science, 3617 Wyoming. Everyone is welcome to attend.

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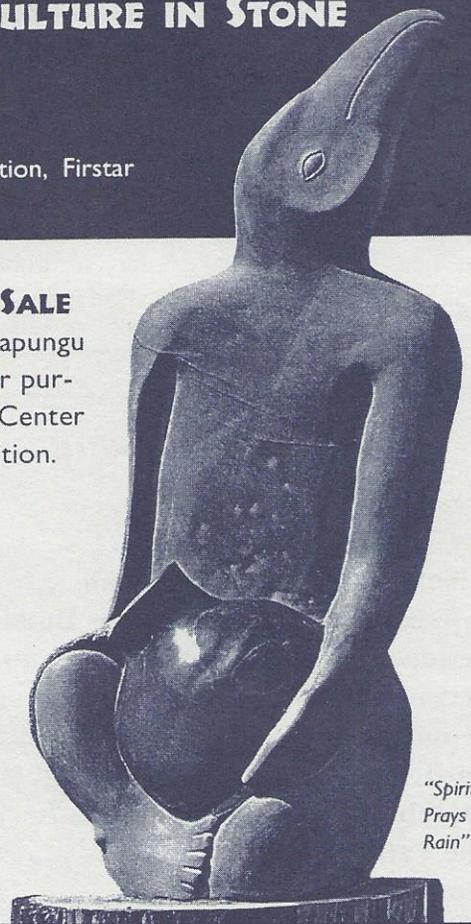
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The Age of Aquarius

The moon is in the seventh house again as New Line Theatre's tenth season of provocative, alternative musical theatre closes with the return of the American tribal love-rock musical HAIR, opening July 26 at the Art Loft Theatre, 1529 Washington, in downtown St. Louis.

One of the most exciting, most unconventional, and still most subversive musicals ever written, HAIR was the first Broadway musical to use rock and roll, changing the sound of Broadway forever, introducing great songs like "Let the Sun Shine In," "Aquarius," "Good Morning Sunshine," "Easy to be Hard," and so many others. Unfortunately, thirty years later, the issues in HAIR are still the issues of our times – drugs, guns, racism, political corruption, religion, morality, and freedom of speech – and they need to be addressed.

After a record-breaking, sold out run in June 2000, New Line decided to bring this mind-blowing, life-changing show back for another run. Most of the original New Line cast and band will return for this production.

And this year, American Theatre Magazine, the number one professional theatre magazine in the country, is flying a writer from New York to St. Louis in early August to interview the director and cast of HAIR and to review the show – an honor for both New Line and for the St. Louis metro area.

Director Scott Miller says, "Even after we closed the show last year, I kept researching HAIR for my upcoming book, 'Rebels with Applause.' I talked to members of the original Broadway cast, to the man who produced the show on Broadway, and to people who actually lived the hippie life in the 1960s. I was very proud of last year's production, but I feel we can go even deeper this time."

"Last spring, people I met on the internet kept telling me HAIR would change the lives of the people who worked on it. I didn't believe it, but I discovered those people were right. It did change my life and the lives of my actors. You can't do this show and not be changed by it. It's so emotional, so spiritual. Everybody focuses on the

drugs and the rock and roll, and those are both big parts of HAIR, but there's so much more there."

New Line Theatre is a professional company dedicated to involving the people of the St. Louis area in the exploration and creation of innovative, provocative, issue-oriented works of the musical theatre. New Line receives funding from the Regional Arts Commission, the Missouri Arts Council, a state agency, and the Arts & Education Council of Greater St. Louis. New Line's 2001-2002 season will include THE CRADLE WILL ROCK in October, the St. Louis premiere of A NEW BRAIN in March, and the Broadway mega-hit CHICAGO in June.

* * *

HAIR will open July 26, 2001, at the Art Loft Theatre, 1529 Washington at 16th Street, for an open-ended run, with performances on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday evenings at 8:00 p.m. Tickets are \$15 for adults and \$12 for students, and are available now through all Metrotix outlets. To charge tickets by phone, call 314-534-1111.

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What? Another Committee?

By Michael Renner
President, TGHNA

Most of us hate committees. Seldom, it seems, are great feats accomplished when a committee of more than one meets. But committees are important for several reasons. First, they are a good vehicle for broad neighborhood input from residents. Second, they help spread the work around so that one or two folks don't get burned out. Third, they allow people of varying skills and interests to plug into activities that best suit them.

Over the past few years, committee activity in the Tower Grove Heights Neighborhood Board has dwindled. Several, in fact, have only one lonely member. As new families move into the area, the time is right to generate renewed interest in the activities of our association. There are numerous and varied avenues for them to get involved in the neighborhood (one simple idea is to invite us all over, serve us free beer and let us fawn over your house).

Here's a run down of the committees and some changes to them. Our committees are as follows:

- ♦Membership: Margaret Prichard, chair
- ♦Neighborhood Improvement and Safety (formerly Physical Improvements): Joe Ogier and Andrew Haberern
- ♦Fun and Fundraising: VACANT

considered activating a Marketing committee, but would need many interested volunteers for this to be successful. Long-time residents of Tower Grove Heights – those folks who built our strong neighborhood association – tell us that many years ago there were such a committee and it was quite active. The members planned many successful events and were motivated by the input of others. It may

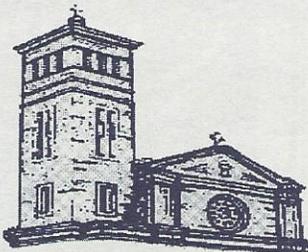
sound like the beginning of an old story (“Gee grandpa, tell us about the olden days when there were active committees”), but I think now is the time for residents, old and new, to become the spark plugs that gets things done.

Please let me know of your interests. Feel free to attend a Board meeting on the first Tuesday of each month at 3735 Connecticut (the office on the NE corner of Spring and Connecticut). And by all means attend our monthly neighborhood meetings on the fourth Tuesday of each month at First Church of Divine Science, 3617 Wyoming.



- ♦Publications: Tod Martin
 - ♦Block Captain Representative: Sara Langan
 - ♦Telephone Inquiry Service: Jean Iezzi
 - ♦Webmaster: LeAnne Lis
- The Physical Improvements and Neighborhood Safety committees were merged into one committee. The Board also con-

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(Continued from page 1)

the front stoop). In his short, humorous book, "Outwitting Neighbors," Bill Adler Jr. offers some common sense tips on how to be the Perfect Neighbor. I've added a few of my own:

- Welcome each new neighbor with a plate of cookies [and an invitation to the next TGHNA meeting.]

- Ban all leaf blowers from your property [also any power tool used before 8 a.m. and deck building that goes late into the night].

- Train your dog not to bark, and always leash your dog [incessant barking is the number one complaint in the neighborhood].

- Give your teenagers headphones for their stereos and enforce their use [or maybe welcome a new neighbor by giving them your teenager].

- Don't snoop [to be distinguished from keeping a watchful eye on your block]

- Smile each time you see your neighbor [remember the old adage "it's easier to catch flies with honey than with vinegar"? Although I never knew why flies would be attracted to vinegar in the first place.]

- Offer to take care of your neighbor's newspapers and mail while they're away.

- Don't put up a basketball hoop in your neighbors front yard, or beneath your neighbor's bedroom or family room [a more common issue is kids playing ball in the street, which, by the way, is a misdemeanor in the city].

- Talk to your neighbors before you start any construction projects [see above "power tool" use suggestion]

- Talk to your neighbors regularly. Know their names and use their names [most problems are prevented by just being civil to each other. It also helps to get the message across that they know you're paying attention to activities].

- Invite them to the neighborhood association meetings on the fourth Tuesday of the month, 7:15, First Church of Divine Science, 3617 Wyoming and offer to go with them [O.K., I added this one].

Are You Okay?

With near record high temperatures in St. Louis this summer, the risk of incapacitation is high for individuals who live independently but require extra assistance from time to time. Their loved ones want the answer to one important question

— "Are you okay?"

That is the question subscribers to a St. Louis Fire Department program will hear each day. The "Are You Okay"® Telephone Reassurance Program is for senior citizens or disabled individuals who are living independently in the City of St. Louis. This free of charge program is an automated system that calls your home seven days a week, three hundred sixty five days a year



to make sure that **You Are Okay**. If you don't respond after three attempts, an emergency vehicle will be dispatched to your home to again make sure that **You Are Okay**.

The St. Louis Fire Department/BEMS is concerned with the well being of the senior citizens and disabled in our communities. This valuable service encourages subscribers to feel more secure knowing that they can depend on a daily telephone call to confirm that all is well, and to avoid extended periods of helplessness if ill or injured. For more information, contact Captain Stevenson or Paramedic Supervisor Sharon Collier at (314) 289-1988.



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Softball Makes Hard Sense

By Michael Renner

I bought a new baseball glove this summer. While I was at it, there was a deal on shoes — buy one pair, get the next pair half off. I chose baseball cleats as my second pair. I bought a book on coaching and playing softball. Total monetary outlay: \$75. Like thousands of other St. Louisans, I'm playing on a softball league this summer. You should know that while I like baseball, I really have never cared for playing it. I'm not all that athletic or coordinated. In fact, I'm downright pitiful at any sport requiring the brain, eyes and hands to communicate effortlessly.

So it was with minor trepidation that I agreed to sign up for a neighborhood softball team. The Tower Grove South area seems like the epicenter of softball in St. Louis: people lugging half barrels and coolers of beer to the ball field, part-time jocks dressed in uniforms, duffers (like me) milling around waiting for instructions and lots of paunchy, out of shape men and women huffing around the bases in Tower Grove Park.

Dave Difani owns the Black Thorn Pub (corner of Spring and Wyoming) and is probably the main reason the ball fields in Tower Grove Park are filled two nights a week. Since 1987, Difani has sponsored a softball league mostly to increase his business and awareness of his popular neighborhood hangout.

"It was an interesting money-making venture and a good way to promote the bar," Difani says of the Black Thorn League. "You have to understand when a bar sponsors a softball team that they're taking a big chance on a losing venture. Generally speaking the first game will bring a lot of people back to the bar and after that you generally don't see them."

But years of nurturing his venture have paid off, resulting in a packed house after every game. "The first year I sponsored eight or ten teams and sent them out all over the city. I discovered that the teams that played closest to the bar came back the most and the teams I played for came back the most," Difani says. It didn't hurt that Difani

also provided the beer at the games. By suggestion of his insurance agent, Difani, 43, no longer provides beer, which makes one long for the good old days. But the league has grown tremendously despite the lack of free beer.

Each year the number of teams has grown; this year the Black Thorn sponsors 35 teams on Tuesday and Thursday. Difani says this year is the biggest market jump ever, which he can only attribute to the increased popularity of the bar. "The bar itself has doubled business two times in four years. We've gone up 400 percent," he says. Difani attributes a great part of the bar's growth to the introduction of pizza, which he started in 1996 and is the only food served at the pub. It's one of the few places you can get a pizza made from scratch: home made dough and sauce and baked in a brick oven.

Softball has grown so much that Difani now forms his league rather than teaming up with an existing league, meaning that he hires the umpires, rents the fields and provides and maintains the equipment. Each team pays a fee of \$350 to \$400. "Most of that goes directly toward league expenses, but there is 20 percent or so that I'm able to keep," Difani admits. "So instead of paying money and hoping people come back, I'm actually making money." Difani approached other bars to join the league, because, as he says, there's room to make a pretty handsome profit. Some were interested, others "didn't like the idea of 15 sweaty people coming to their bar after a game," he says. "But I guess most of them just don't believe that it would work."

Nonetheless, seven or eight other bars have signed on over the years, including Tower Grove hangouts CBGB, Mangia Italiano Restaurant, and the Upstairs Lounge (above the Mekong). Sometimes Difani sounds like a promoter of a pyramid business deal: "I want 10 or 20 bars each sponsoring 10 teams. Each bar collects \$3,500 to \$4,000 in league fees and runs it themselves and we're all interconnected and interplay so that I get a chance to introduce the Soulard Bar and Grill clientele to the Black Thorn and conversely, Soulard Bar and Grill gets a chance to meet and impress my clientele."

But Difani makes no money off that ven-

ture. Now sounding like a benevolent organizer with a socialist bent: "I either take it all or I take none," he says. "The other bars, I keep the entire league fees because they're not providing the service." The advantage, of course, for those bars not providing the softball service is that they get 10-12 people a week coming back after the game and make back their investment in a few weeks.

One hybrid, however, is the Shenandoah Bar and Grill on corner of Shenandoah and Nebraska in the Tower Grove East area. I know this because it's the team I play on. A large group of us neighbors and our friends hit the bar every Thursday night for its famous fried chicken. So enamored are we with the chicken that our team name is "The Drumsticks." Owner Djordje (George) Korac put up no money and we each paid \$30, but he gets a full house every Thursday. By next season he may even put up the league fee once he sees how much business has increased due to Difani's brainchild. By then my glove will be well broken in.

The Remarkable Drumstick Triumph

An Epic of celebration regarding July 5, 2001

by Suzanne Rhodenbaugh

Poet Laureate, Shenandoah Bar & Grill Drumsticks

LaFew was a guy from T.G. South.
Like his brethren, amply blessed with a mouth.
He cheered on his team
and furnished them bream
in the odd suppers after the games.

But the gals and guys showed outraged surprise
at the ill-starred choice of a meat,
and declared to the world
"You may all go to hell
if I don't get some chicken treat!"

Thusly they went to the outer limits
of the neighborhood known for its athletic (misfits?)
and its feisty tries on Chicken Night Day
and its way with politics and way with play
and got themselves chicken, yessir.

And to the end of this very day
people comment on the feat of July,
when The Drumsticks fielded and The Drumsticks hit
and The Drumsticks used their considerable wit
to survive the jive the opponents offered
and take the game just as it was proffered
and win! in Tower Grove Park.

What this all has to do with the post-game feast
is your guess as good as the next's,
just like a purple chicken perched on a Harley
— artfully done on a neon yellow —
is a teshirt that cries for a text.

Just take it from us, the Gals and The Guys
who mostly live Tower Grove-wise,
that a game went down in the books that night,
a feat of record not just in the Heights
when The Drumsticks, By God, won.

A Note from the Alderwoman

By Jennifer Florida,
D-15th Ward

The Tower Grove South Executive Committee is a new board made up of neighborhood association presidents, vice presidents and board representatives. We have been busy discussing how to create a community based housing initiative. "What is that?" you may ask. We receive housing money for the purpose of creating affordable housing or benefiting the housing of those who qualify for special programs such as the home repair program. At this time, \$100,000.00 has been allocated to the home repair program – it will meet the needs of those who qualify on a first come basis. One of our first challenges will be to begin looking at ways to make the program work more expediently. We are hoping to begin processing our applicants through our Grand Oak Hill Community Corporation eventually.

Mark Abbott, Brian Marston & Paul Stefanski will represent Tower Grove South on the South Grand Parking Study Committee. The committee is comprised of the Aldermen from Wards 9 & 15, Commercial District Manager Michelle Taylor, 3 representatives from the South Grand Business District, and 3 representatives each from Tower Grove East & Tower Grove South. Meetings are open to all. We will keep you posted.

If you have a problem/nuisance property, please contact me. I need documented calls for service (911) associated with the nuisance property. I will refer the property to the citywide nuisance committee. If you need a city service, you may call Citizen's Service Bureau at 622-4800. If you feel it requires my attention, please call me. Leave your name, address, phone number and request on my voice mail at the Board of Aldermen at 622-3763.

It is a pleasure serving you. Have patience with me. Together we can make a difference and build a better neighborhood ... and a better city.

(Continued from page 1)

desktop publishing software (Photoshop, Illustrator, and Pagemaker), as well as everything needed to browse the Web in style.

The real fun, though, is the games. The machines sport high-end video cards that make it a blast to play head-to-head games like Starcraft, Halflife (including the Team Fortress and Counter-Strike mods), and the nightmare-inducing Quake III Arena. Customers are also allowed to install their own games and can wear something called a Rumble Vest that vibrates based on the on-screen action.

The Jade Room charges \$6.60 an hour to use the computers. Mark Mercado, one of the bar's co-owners, is planning to install an 802.11b wireless access point that will allow customers with their own laptops and wireless network cards to tap into the Jade Room's high-speed Internet connection for free.

The most striking elements of the Jade Room are the monitors over the bar and embedded in the ceiling that display computer-generated graphics that mutate in time to the music pumped through the bar's sound system. Com-

bined with the low lighting and eerie X-Files green glow cast by the paper lamps and rotating food case, they create a high-tech lounge atmosphere.

One of the best things about the Jade Room is the menu cooked up by culinary impresario Scottie Pokres, a Tower Grove Heights resident. While I was there, Scottie whipped up an asparagus and mango bisque for me to try. The flavors perfectly complemented each other while remaining distinct.

The Jade Room serves an assortment of appetizers, salads, sandwiches, sushi rolls, desserts, smoothies, and coffee that appeals to a sophisticated, adventurous palate. It also has a full-service bar. Some of the more interesting items on the menu include soybean pods, seaweed salads, sardine and tomato sandwiches, yenta rolls (lox, cream cheese and chives topped with smelt and wasabi roe), and jack fruit smoothies. As far as I know, it's the only place in St. Louis where you can get sushi until 3 a.m.

The Jade Room is young and fun without being juvenile. It's poised to attract the digerati and other urban hipsters to South Grand with its sleek East-meets-'net vibe.

For more information, call the Jade Room at 771-4780.

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Mary's Building

By Rich Iezzi

For this rehabber article, I'd like to write about a building that I, your humble author, bought and renovated.

I've always loved buildings. When I walked my kids in the stroller, I'd come back with the addresses of buildings I had fallen in love with written all over the kid's spare plastic diapers. One of these addresses was 3888 Humphrey. There was something elegant, yet mysterious about it. It was almost always dark and I found out that an older woman, Mary, lived there alone. It had wonderful stonework and a HUGE footprint. I watched it for the next 10 years.

All of a sudden, I saw an estate sale sign and to my horror it was for 'my building'. At the sale, my sister Laura and I cooked up a scheme to see the upstairs by telling Elaine, who had power of attorney, that we were interested in the only item up there, an old Magic Chef stove. I suspected that Elaine was on to us but she



smiled sweetly as Laura fiddled with the stove while I dashed around the empty rooms. Now I WAS hooked. This building was a time machine, untouched since 1914 when it was built. Not only did it have original wallpaper and unpainted woodwork, it also had all the doors with their glass door-knobs and original keys still in the brass locks. And the smell – it was not of this time, but the sweet old fragrance of yesterday.

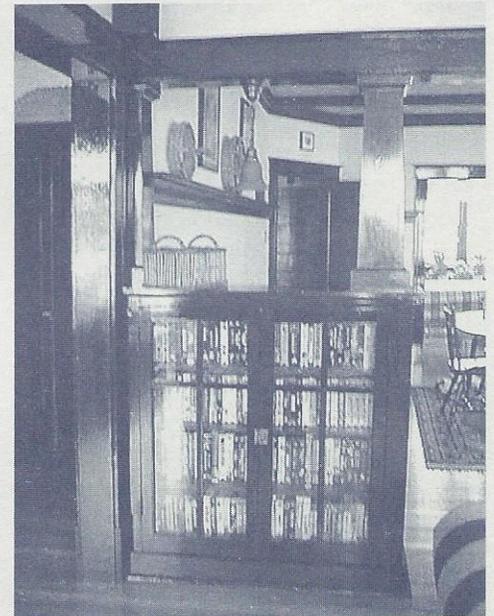
About two years later, I noticed Elaine's last name on my caller ID and my heart stopped. She was ready to sell. My understanding wife and I signed the papers on Elaine's dining room table where she and Bob lived (next to Mary's)



for over 40 years. I told her it was one of the happiest days of my life.

Right after we bought Mary's, we placed some friends of friends in the downstairs so we could insure the building. Then I was supposed to finish the upstairs. I couldn't touch it. Instead, I'd sit on the dining room window seat and read the diary we got at the estate sale written by Helen, Mary's sister from 1928 when she lived there. It was magic to be sitting in that same spot 70 years later. Or I'd sit on the spacious upstairs front porch and watch the sun set behind the mighty spire of Holy Family.

I did finally get started and removed all the wallpaper, scrubbed and re-polyed all the woodwork, drywalled bad ceilings and jived up the kitchen. We were lucky enough to be able to use the laundry chute to run the central air tubing upstairs. I Glidwalled (a gauzy fiberglass to prevent



cracks) the walls, had the floors sanded, cleaned all 170+ window surfaces and loved every second of it.

When I showed 'Mary's' for the first time, Amy and Brett also fell in love with it. I asked Amy if they would "love and honor the apartment as long as they both shall live" and she answered, "we will".

I continue to be humbled that I could control the fate of such a glorious structure. It remains one of the great thrills of my life.



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Resident Profile – Elizabeth Fathman

By Erin O'Reilly

Now I know you men are thinking that I am slighting you all because I've been doing the resident profiles on women for the past several *Gazette* issues, but I will profile a resident of the male gender next issue! For this issue, I interviewed Elizabeth Fathman, who so graciously met with me on short notice as I am always doing these at the last minute. Elizabeth is a St. Louis native originating from the University City area. Most of her family is still in the St. Louis area and she even has a cousin who lives nearby on Hartford street. Elizabeth moved into the TGH area in October, 1999, when she fell in love with a home on display at an open house. It especially attracted her interest since it was already rehabbed by the previous owners!! She was tired of the work involved with rehabbing, having experienced that with her previous house in the Shaw neighborhood.

Elizabeth's background and degree is in anthropology. She attended undergraduate school at Grinnell College in Iowa (a small liberal arts college where her father also attended and played in the band with Herbie Hancock). She has a Ph.D. in anthropology from the University of Virginia, where she specialized in educational multiculturalism.

For 8½ years she has worked at *Mosby Publishing* which is a company that publishes books for the health sciences. She started out as a copy editor, then developmental editor, and now is the acquisitions editor. Prior to that she taught grammar at Florissant Valley and worked for other publishing companies doing typesetting and copy editing before entering graduate school. I had to ask how she got from anthropology to publishing, and she answered that her father is a physician who familiarized her with the health field and her specialty in anthropology is in the area of education. In this case, health plus education equals health science books!

Her indoor rehabbing experience behind her, she is now interested in an outdoor rehabbing project. She has engaged a neighbor, Julie Scheu who is a furniture artist from Arsenal street, to landscape her

yard. They will be working on a Missouri wildflower plot in her front yard and a perennial garden in her back yard. Julie will be sculpting a stone wall out of 6 tons of Missouri river bed rock bordering the garden in the back. In addition, there will be a patio on the side of her house with a container garden and benches. She hopes it will all be finished in time for a centennial celebration of her house. Although she does not know the history of her house, her mother was past president of Landmarks Association and is an architectural/

art historian, so she has connections that can lead her to that history.

Elizabeth is a regular walker and takes advantage of living close to Tower Grove Park and the Botanical Garden for her walking adventures. She also likes multicultural food and cites Pho Grand as her favorite eating establishment. She shops on the Grand South Grand strip and enjoys city activities and living. Maybe, if my recruitment efforts work, she will lend her publishing expertise to our neighborhood *Gazette*!

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Arts in the 'Hood: Lisa Jokisch, Clay Artist and Painter

By Suzanne Rhodenbaugh

Lisa Jokisch has the proverbial "full plate": her own art; a full-time job at the St. Louis Art Museum; a husband and two children; involvement in our community through St. Pius V Catholic Church and School, school-related art projects, and the neighborhood association (for which she formerly served as a Connecticut Avenue block captain); a house partially in process; not to mention two ebullient puppies.

In her case a literal plate may be of her own design and rendering. If so, like her clay figures and pots and her paintings, its referents may range from the hilarious or absurd to the tragic or catastrophic. At either range of portrayal or allusion, there will likely be, as she puts it, a duality. One side of a painted clay sculpture may represent a human, for example, and the other an animal; or a man may be on one side, a woman on the other. Or, she may up the ante in layers of meaning, as in her figure which shows on one side a husband with a miniature wife in his pocket, and on the other side a wife with a husband at her center. These figures manage to be part whimsy, part ache. They wrench our vision. For inspiration she draws from "quirky things," including folk art (particularly that of the southwestern U.S., a region she loves), the lyrics of country music and blues, and slang words and expressions.

A native of Rock Island, Illinois, Lisa's a graduate of Augustana College, with an MFA in ceramics from Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville. She began clay work with plates and bowls, but literally kept adding dimensions, so that her work evolved to sculpture. Though "grog" sounds as if it should be the name of one of her kookier pieces, it actually refers to clay with a lot of sand and already-fired clay bits in it, one of her favorite materials.

An admirer of Mexican painter Frida Kahlo and Mexican muralist Diego Rivera,

Lisa in her own paintings strikes a more sobering note than in her other art. Some of her paintings are *retablos*, she explains, paintings commemorating an event which can be good or bad, but which is often devastating in its implications, and in which sometimes there has been an intercession by a saint or



Lisa Jokisch with some of her sculptures in clay.

by God. In Lisa's house, one *retablo* commemorates the major surgery performed in 1990 on her elder daughter Elizabeth, who is now 14 and attends Gateway Wheeler State School.

Elizabeth was born with cerebral palsy and a severe brain anomaly. Her handicaps, and the demands they would seem to make on her mother; her father Kevin (a community activist who until recently was director of C-4, Churches Committed to Community Concerns); and her 10 year old sister Aleta, a student at Pius V, to an observer would seem to dominate and limit the daily life of the family and the scope of its possibilities.

But a kind of quiet grace seems to prevail in the Jokisch household, one amply grounded in and bolstered by humor. (Lisa tells of a time when Elizabeth was a young child already in a wheelchair, and the family was waiting in line at a store's check-out counter. A woman looked at Elizabeth and exclaimed, "My God! What happened to her?!" Whereupon Kevin turned to the woman and said dryly, "skiing accident.")

Whatever strands of joy, faith, humor, tal-

ent and commitment enable Lisa and her family, she's an artist whose work is not only self-expressive, but outreaching as well. At the St. Louis Art Museum she works with children and teachers to make art part of the curriculum, relating art to geography, history, math and other studies. Prior to this

work, she was with the Craft Alliance in University City, a gallery of local and national artists which also offers art classes to children and adults. Out of this association she started the Delmar-Harvard Elementary School Mural Project, a two year undertaking from Lisa's design, through guiding each student, grades K-5, and each teacher, to making 350 individual ceramic stars, through installation of these stars, plus 800 ceramic hexagons also part of the design, on the school building.

At L'Ouverture Accelerated Middle School near Chouteau and Compton, she supervised a second mural project, this one with 7th graders. A photo of a popular young math teacher was first blown up and made into grids. Each square of the grid was then made into a ceramic tile and painted by students, using the photo as a guide. When the tiles were mounted on a school wall, the portrait of the young teacher emerged.

Closer yet to home, while Lisa was on the Pius V School Board she undertook a third mural for the south wall of the school. About 185 kids in grades K-8 were involved in developing this mural, with its flags of the students' nationalities and handprints of the kids, teachers, pastor and principal, this mural with its theme "We Bring the World Together."

Lisa Jokisch seems attuned to that large world, to the possibilities of individual and communal art, to her family's needs and delights, and very much more, including but not limited to the small town atmosphere of the Heights they've enjoyed their eight years in the neighborhood. And then of course there's that kitchen virtually full of puppies.

Report from the Capitol

By State Senator Patrick Dougherty

I am proud to report that access to quality health care for Missouri women greatly improved on June 21 when Governor Bob Holden signed into law House Bill 762, which guarantees that private insurance plans acknowledge and cover the health needs of women.

Some studies tell us that women pay almost 50 percent more than men do for their medical care. That is appalling. No woman should have to make the choice between good health care and paying the rent. Passage of this legislation was among my top priorities, and I joined Rep. Joan Bray, D-St. Louis, Sen. Betty Sims, R-Olivette, and others to fight for this important initiative. We shared the governor's commitment to increasing the access for Missouri women to high quality health care services.

This new law will save lives. Too often, when health care benefits are "gender neutral," women are forced to make the choice of going without care or paying steep out-of-pocket costs for advanced testing and treatment of illnesses common to women. This law helps create a more level playing field in health care by ensuring that private insurance plans acknowledge and cover the needs of women.

Under previous law, women enrolled in HMOs had the right to only one annual visit to their OB/GYN's without a referral from their doctor. Women who were covered by traditional insurers didn't even have this right. All covered visits required approval for those referrals.

Women should not have to jump through such bureaucratic hoops to get the services that may save their lives. Provisions in the bill include requiring health care plans to notify women every year about the covered services that are available to them such as Pap tests and mammograms. According to the American Cancer Society, 3,700 Missouri women will develop breast cancer this year and 800 will die; 300 will test positive for cervical cancer. This new law will provide enrollees with notice of available

cancer screenings like mammograms and Pap tests, as recommended by the American Cancer Society.

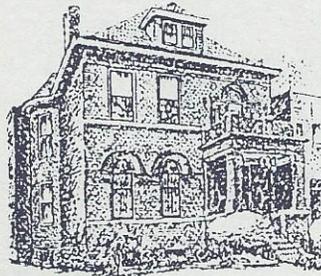
Early detection and treatment will not only save costs – it will save lives. In addition there is great news for low-income women. Under this new law uninsured women under the age of 65 can become eligible for Medicaid coverage of breast and cervical cancer treatment.

Another section of HB 762 requires health carriers to provide coverage for the diagnosis and treatment of osteoporosis when medically appropriate. More than 28 million Americans suffer from osteoporosis, a disease in which bone tissue deteriorates, making the sufferer prone to fractures. Women are four times more likely to develop the disease, and one out of every two women over the age of 65 will experience a broken bone from osteoporosis. The best way to diagnose osteoporosis and determine the future risk of bone fracture is through a bone mineral density test, or BMD. This test measures the density of bones and is necessary to determine whether medication is needed to help maintain bone mass, pre-

vent future bone loss, and reduce fracture risk. Now BMD testing will be covered for women.

However, probably the most remarkable win for women in this bill is the provision on contraceptives. In the past, many insurers and health plans that otherwise cover prescription drugs and devices have excluded prescription contraceptives from coverage. This is the most glaring gender bias in our health care industry because these contraceptives are a medical necessity for most women during their childbearing years. Now group health insurers that have drug benefits must extend the same coverage to contraceptives as any other drug unless the group's sponsor or the insurer has religious or moral objections. Women can still buy riders to cover contraceptives, and those decisions will remain confidential.

Most of these new benefits in this bill will go into new or renewed insurance policies issued after the first of January next year. If you would like a copy of this or any other piece of legislation please don't hesitate to call my office at (573) 751-3599.



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Gardening in Tower Grove Heights - The War Wages On

Editor's Note: Readers who have followed Rick Clinebell's column will be familiar with the trials and tribulations Rick has faced with the city while gardening in his and Don Hardin's yard.

These letters detail the latest battles in his war with city government.

Dear Mayor Slay,

I am writing to solicit your help in dealing with continuing citations from both the Department of Parks, Recreation and Forestry and the Department of Public Health regarding my backyard sanctuary of native prairie wildflowers and native grasses. I am enclosing the third citation from these (one came last year from both departments).

As a Research Associate at the Missouri Botanical Garden, I propagate native members of the plant family Onagraceae for use in my research in the pollination biology of this family, as well as a diversity of co-blooming species in other plant families.

As the Riverfront Trail Nurseryman of Grace Hill Settlement House, I am responsible for the propagation of native plant materials for the creation of natural wildflower areas along the City's Riverfront Trail. Over the past two years, Grace Hill has donated many thousands of dollars of native plant materials for establishment along the trail, which stretches about 11 miles along the Mississippi River from the Arch to the Chain of Rocks Bridge. Many of the plants we are using in this project are started here in the backyard at 3820 Hartford Street.

During 2000, I explained all of the above to both the Department of Parks, Recreation and Forestry, and to personnel in the Department of Public Health, but I am still receiving citations. The deed to the property at 3820 Hartford Street is in the name of Donald Hardin, but I am the person responsible for the prairie wildflowers.

I do not know what to do other than turn to you for help, since I have failed in my attempts to negotiate with the Departments under you who are responsible for regulation of Ordinance 59860. Surely this ordinance was not meant to apply adversely to my attempts to prevent the extinction of local ecotypes of native prairie wildflowers, to re-establish colonies on public land, using both my labor and the employment of the City's minority youth, and the execution of research into the relationships of native flora to endangered butterflies and other rare native insects.

Any efforts you might make on my behalf with regards to the safekeeping of this wildflower sanctuary and experimental garden will be deeply

appreciated. This garden is greatly appreciated by many of the residents of the neighborhood. In fact, when the city employee wrote the citation, he spoke with one of my neighbors who said he should not write the citation, citing much of the above information.

Finally, I am concerned that those citizens who do not have the support of major cultural and public service institutions in the City or the kind of educational credentials that I can display might be traumatically intimidated by the kind of continuing harassment that I have suffered at the hands of the government of the City of St. Louis. This is common and predictable, and has happened all across the country where concerned citizens have used native plants in landscaping rather than the weedy, non-native, invasive and aggressive species which are the norm.

There is even a national society, "The Wild Ones," which offers support to those many thousands of people, coast to coast, who are doing what I am doing, in terms of negotiating with the government to protect native plants. I am contacting this organization with the hope that they

will be able to send you relevant documents that explain our point of view and why we are doing what we do.

I am also enclosing a copy of Grace Hill's native wildflower catalog, with the hope that we might be able to work with the City's Department of Parks, Recreation and Forestry in expanding the wildflower and butterfly garden displays which have become an increasingly important component of the urban environments in many other midwestern cities, and that this information might stimulate awareness of what is at stake.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration. Because of the 2-day abatement period granted me, neither the Garden nor Grace Hill have approved this letter, whose contents are wholly my own.

Very truly yours,
Dr. Richard R. Clinebell II
Research Associate, Missouri Botanical Garden
Riverfront Trail Nurseryman, Grace Hill Community Services



FRANCIS G. SLAY
MAYOR

GARY D. BESS
ACTING DIRECTOR

City of St. Louis

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS, RECREATION & FORESTRY
FORESTRY DIVISION

1415 NORTH THIRTEENTH STREET
ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI 63106
PHONE: (314) 613-7200
FAX: (314) 613-7225



GREG HAYES
ACTING FORESTRY COMMISSIONER

July 5, 2001

Dr. Richard Clinebell II
3820 Hartford Street
St. Louis, MO 63116

Dear Dr. Clinebell II:

This is in reference to your letter regarding a notice of violation you had received for the property listed above. The letter was forwarded to my attention from Director Bess.

The Forestry Division re-inspected this entire property on July 3, 2001. Various wild flowers were noted and the individual also noted that these plants do not obstruct the sidewalk or alley. Therefore, please disregard this notice of violation. I apologize for any inconvenience.

As you know, the Forestry Division is responsible for responding to citizen complaints such as the one lodged in this case. We check for unwanted vegetation/debris and make certain that properties related to your efforts at 3820 Hartford are managed properly. In addition, I am familiar with the Wild Ones organization. A representative was brought in from the Shaw Nature Reserve to speak with some of our crews in the spring. The individual spoke about issues such as the perception of neighbors on wild flowers/gardens, managed efforts with barriers, and some basic ways of identifying differences between desirable and unwanted vegetation.

Thank you for your professionalism and for the details in your reply. Please feel free to contact me in the future if I can be of any assistance.

Sincerely,

Greg Hayes
Acting Commissioner of Forestry

cc: Honorable Francis Slay, Mayor
Mr. Gary Bess, Acting Director
Mr. Peter Hoch

Neighborhood Kids A Nuisance?

Our Guidance Could Help Them

By Ruth Brooks

Unsupervised children with fireworks – too loud? Kids trampling on flowerbeds – too careless? Skateboarders who don't care if you want to park where they are playing?

Some people balk about getting involved with other people's kids. You can put up with their behaviors or you can do something to encourage needed changes on your block.

Some ideas to consider:

- Get to know these kids – greet them by name. This shows your respect for an individual child.
- Children who feel adults care about them tend to make better choices.
- Encourage conversation whenever you can.
- Do small favors for a child – help repair his bike or offer her some flowers from your garden.
- Hire the child to do odd jobs if you feel he/she is capable – a big confidence booster.
- Share a craft or skill with the child.
- Volunteer as a tutor or mentor at a nearby school or community center.
- Seek out community programs for youths at local schools, YMCAs and hospitals. (Sometimes fees for these programs are waived for a needy child)
- Compliment and encourage children whenever you see them doing the right thing (i.e. helping their younger siblings; driving safely; picking up the trash from their front porch or sidewalk).

Our small efforts can make a difference to help the kids around our neighborhood. *Ideas taken from July issue of Columbia magazine..*

Calling All Artists!

Light Pole Banners.

The Tower Grove Heights Neighborhood Association is seeking design submissions for new Tower Grove Heights

light pole banners. The banners will hang at all entrances to the neighborhood, replacing the current banners which are falling apart. Designs should be simple enough to identify the neighborhood to passing pedestrians and

motorists and should include the words "Tower Grove Heights." Keep in mind that the final banners will be approximately 8 feet tall by 3 feet wide and can use two colors. Please make all submissions at least 11 inches tall and 4 inches wide.

Designs should be submitted by the end of August and will be judged by the executive board of TGHNA. Send your drawings to TGHNA Banner Contest/3735 Connecticut Ave./63116, or drop them off at a neighborhood association meeting. For more information, contact



TGHNA President Michael Renner at (314) 773-2527 or via email: President@towergroveheights.com or talk to one of the Executive Board members at a neighborhood association meeting.

Holiday Cards.

The Tower Grove Heights Neighborhood Association is also seeking designs for the 2001 Holiday cards. Submissions should be

photographs or artwork depicting Winter or the Holidays in Tower Grove Heights or Tower Grove Park. Look through your old photos and paintings (or create new ones) that show off our area. Artwork should be submitted to TGHNA Holiday Cards/3735 Connecticut Ave./63116 or dropped off at a neighborhood association meeting. For more information, contact Gazette Editor Tod Martin at (314) 771-6292 or: GazetteEditor@towergroveheights.com. We need to start making the cards by October 1st.

T.F.A.

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The Tattler

By Sara Langan

I've been keeping my ear to the ground and there is a lot of news! **Jennifer Florida** has been a whirlwind of activity and has pulled together some major redevelopment plans. Gravois Plaza will undergo a complete overhaul to be completed in Spring of 2002. **Shop 'N Save** will become the new anchor and **Walgreens** will depart.

Allegiant Bank is interested in working with the **Grand/Gravois Coalition** and pursuing placing the **South Side National Bank** on the Historic Register and donating it to a neighborhood group for redevelopment.

Joseph Mokwa, the new Police Chief, attended the June meeting of the Tower Grove Heights Neighborhood Association and said that we have two pluses in our neighborhood – **Jennifer Florida**, Alderwoman, who is in constant contact with

his office and **Trish Heliker** who is a personal friend of his wife's. Police reported that residential burglaries in the daytime seem to be the biggest problem in the Heights. Florida has been aggressively targeting nuisance violations and suggests residents call 911 for problems affecting quality of life such as noise. Our new Neighborhood Stabilization Officer is **James Rollins** who replaces **Barb Potts**.

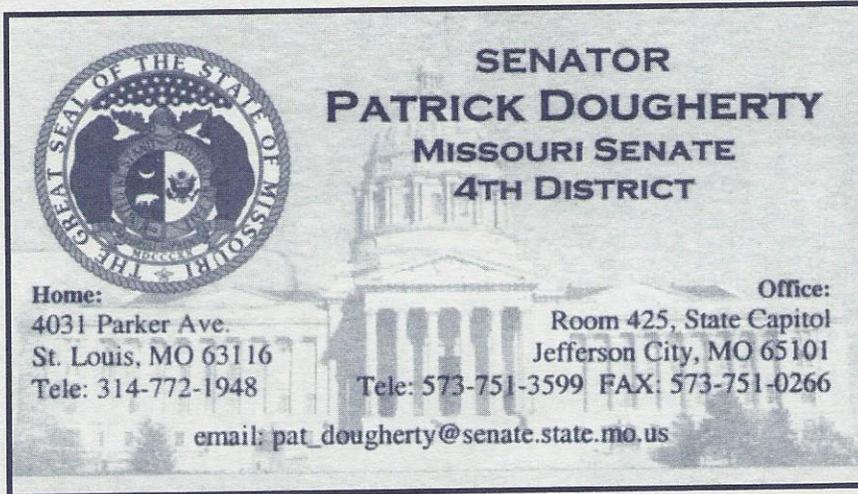
LeAnne Lis has the Tower Grove Heights web site up and running. You can find it at: www.towergroveheights.com. In fact, two new residents learned of the association on the web site and came to their first meeting and became members. Thank you LeAnne!

There is much happening in the Grand South Grand Business District where **Michelle Taylor** is the Commercial District Manager. Contact her if you are thinking about locating your business on Grand. The Parking Study group has met! Tower

Grove Heights representatives, **Mark Abbott, Brian Marston and Paul Stefanski**, will gather bi-monthly with representatives from Tower Grove East, The Grand Business District, Aldermen and a St. Louis Development Agency liaison.

Meanwhile, a very controversial issue is whether to tear down two houses on Hartford east of Grand. The **Bread Company** has plans to renovate and expand into the vacant space next door. It has been rumored that **South City Diner** would also like to expand into the empty bakery space next to it. **Commerce Bank** has unveiled plans to tear down their existing series of building and erect a new structure along Grand Avenue. The plan to create a public community improvement district levying a tax to pay for increased security patrols and clean sidewalks has passed the first hurdle.

This month featured the Grand Opening of the **Jade Room** (www.jaderoom.net), a cyber café featuring fresh-made Sushi, a full-service bar, and coffee drinks. There is no cover. It is located in the back room of the **Mekong Restaurant** on South Grand. For more information, call the Jade Room at (314) 771-4780.



SENATOR
PATRICK DOUGHERTY
MISSOURI SENATE
4TH DISTRICT

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4031 Parker Ave.
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Tele: 314-772-1948

Office:
Room 425, State Capitol
Jefferson City, MO 65101
Tele: 573-751-3599 FAX: 573-751-0266

email: pat_dougherty@senate.state.mo.us



There are two articles in the July issue of **TheCommonSpace.org** of particular interest to Tower Grove Heights residents:

Jennifer Florida wrote a piece about her experience as a new alderwoman. Check it out at: www.thecommonspace.org/2001/07/churchstate.php .

Brian Marston wrote about parking for this month's From the Editor article: [www.thecommonspace.org/2001/07/](http://www.thecommonspace.org/2001/07/editor.php)
[editor.php](http://www.thecommonspace.org/2001/07/editor.php) .



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Worthy Causes

Starlite Runabout

Bring your friends and family to a stellar evening of entertainment at the 3rd Annual Starlite Runabout, 8 p.m., August 18 at Tower Grove Park.

The 5K run/walk is presented by Forest ReLeaf of Missouri, a not-for-profit organization that supports community reforestation. Proceeds from the event will be used to purchase trees to enhance the attractiveness and vitality of Tower Grove Park.

The run begins at the Wading Pool Pavilion, off Tower Grove Avenue in the park. Refreshments and entertainment will be provided and all entrants receive a glow-in-the-dark necklace. The awards presentation will begin at approximately 9 p.m.

Early registration, through August 11, is being conducted by Fleet Feet Sports, 3899-F S. Service Road, St. Peters. Or register online at: www.fleetfeetsports.com/OnlineRegistration/onlineregistration.html.

Cost is \$15 for adults and \$7.50 for youth ages 12 and under. After August 11, adult registration is \$20 and youth registration \$10. For more information, contact Fleet Feet Sports at (636) 939-0161.

Designs for Dignity

On Saturday, August 4th at the Elliot Smith Contemporary Art gallery, experience a spectacular party showcasing today's high fashion – it's an evening of artists, music, dancing, and complimentary food and drinks!

Fashion items, restaurant gift certificates, and beauty baskets will be raffled off, and a silent auction (with items valued up to \$200) will benefit Women's Support and Community Services, St. Louis' oldest and largest locally-founded organization dedicated to helping women who have been victimized by violence. Tickets are \$25 in advance and \$35 at the door. Exclusive reserved tables (including table service) are \$200 for a table for 4. Tickets can be purchased at Noreen's Hair, Body & Soul (1218 Tamm Ave.), Makes Scents (316 Euclid Ave), and Leaping Lizards Performing Art Studio (6907 Lansdowne). For more information or tickets, please call (314) 229-2280 or visit their website at: www.stlbeautyworks.com/designsfordignity.

Trees of Tower Grove Park

By Don Hardin

K J M M C H P U G N R D A L B
 G N P D T G T I O W G O K A Q
 U H T R J M M M L I P G K F B
 C N D M M C M X N U J W B W H
 Y D H X L I I K C E T O M J Z
 R V F P S E G L N N I O A Z U
 R C A R H O E G E N R D Z F Y
 E H E U M M L S Y C A M O R E
 B P A E H I U J E W A P W A P
 K I T W S D O O W N O T T O C
 C Z H H T J H O G H I U O I I
 A K O E K H X P D C J H R N V
 H A X E Z C O O J E E I C Q V
 K V K Q T R D R P E M B S Z D
 T U R T F B F F N B W H I Y V

BEECH

CHINESE

ELM

COTTONWOOD

DOGWOOD

ENGLISH

HACKBERRY

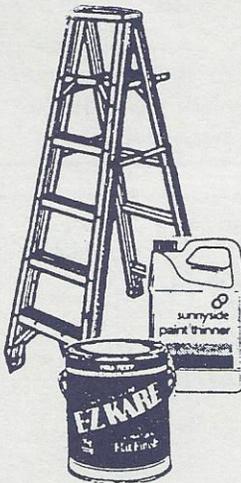
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ASSOCIATION**

Monthly meetings 7:15 PM on 4th
Tuesday, First Church of Divine Science,
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President: Michael Renner
President Elect: Brian Marston
Past President: Cheryl Jones
Secretary: Diane Hurwitz
Asst. Secretary: Margaret Prichard
Treasurer: Jodie Heliker

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Block Representatives: Sara Langan
Fun & Fundraising: Vacant
Gazette: Tod A. Martin
Membership: Margaret Prichard
Neighborhood Improvement & Safety:
Joe Ogier and Andrew Habernern
Telephone Inquiry Service: Jean Iezzi
Webmaster: LeAnne Lis

BLOCK REPRESENTATIVES

- 3600/3700 Arsenal**
Margaret Prichard
- 3800 Arsenal**
Elliott Blevins
Fredric Rissover
- 3600/3700 Hartford**
Bobbie Ohmer
Sue Stefanski
- 3800 Hartford**
Jennifer Florida
Joe Thele
- 3600/3700 Juniata**
Jane Cochran
Jill Nissen
Robin Vannoy
- 3800 Juniata**
Kim Cole
Lucinda McNary
- 3600/3700 Connecticut**
Linda Schweighofer
- 3800 Connecticut**
Chris & Diane Howard
David Nothmann
- 3600/3700 Wyoming**
vacant
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- 3800 Utah Place**
Veda Lynn
Susie Gudermuth

Mark your Calendar!

**Upcoming meetings:
Tuesday, August 28
Tuesday, September 25**

Both meetings will be at 7:15p.m. at the First Church of Divine Science at 3617 Wyoming Ave. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Thank you to our recent guest, Police Chief Joe Mokwa, who spoke at our June meeting on the state of the St. Louis Police Department. Since a previously scheduled engagement cut his time short with us, he promised to speak to us again at an upcoming neighborhood meeting.

Tower Grove Heights Needs You!

If you have not been mailed a copy of this Gazette, you are not a member. Join today and you will be mailed *all 6 issues* of the Gazette. Membership dues raise more funds for the neighborhood than any other activity. Please show your support for your association and your neighborhood by joining today!

Memberships are as follows, please check ONE:

- Individual (1 vote) \$7/yr
- Family (2 votes) \$12/yr
- Renaissance (1 vote) \$20/yr (Includes a set of TGH note cards)
- Business (1 vote) \$25/yr (Includes 10% discount on Gazette Ad for 6 issues)

Please PRINT.

Name _____

Address _____

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Email Address _____

**Return this form and your check
to your block representative or
mail to Tower Grove Heights
Neighborhood Association, 3735
Connecticut, St. Louis, MO 63116.**

Please check ONE:

- Yes, include me in the 2002 Neighborhood Buzz Book.
- No, do not include me in the 2002 Neighborhood Buzz Book.



**3735 Connecticut
St. Louis, MO 63116**

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*Non-member -- Join the Tower Grove
Heights Neighborhood Association today!*

