

Tower Grove Heights Gazette

GRAND TO GUSTINE

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Volume 26, No. 1

Spring 2015



THE HEIGHTS JOINS A ST. LOUIS TRADITION



Partygoers weren't the only ones who showed up. Nearly 20 Tower Grove Heights neighbors were in attendance for one mission: raise money for the neighborhood association.

Mardi Gras brings in millions of dollars to the local economy and Mardi Gras organizers partner with local non-profits to share some of the earnings. It's not easy to participate as many non-profits have been grandfathered in for years but they had an organization drop out at the last minute which meant TGH was in!

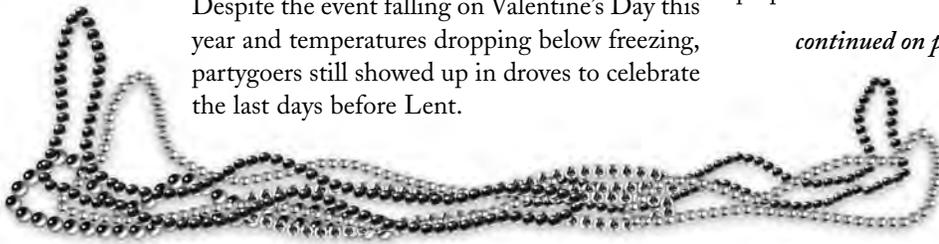
We quickly gathered a team of 10 neighbors to develop a plan to staff a beer booth. We had to recruit volunteers, get a propane permit and heater to keep the volunteers warm and many other supplies to successfully run a beer booth - all in a week's time.

The team blew all of our expectations and went the extra mile to prepare us for this new adventure. And that preparedness paid off.

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BY SUSAN NEWSHAM

Each year, thousands of revelers head to Soulard for one of St. Louis' favorite traditions: Mardi Gras Grand Parade. Despite the event falling on Valentine's Day this year and temperatures dropping below freezing, partygoers still showed up in droves to celebrate the last days before Lent.



The Oldest Buildings in the Park

MARILYN BROWNING

If you wander west of the tennis courts of Tower Grove Park toward Kingshighway, you'll eventually see two rustic-looking buildings on your right; one long and low, the other a two-story affair. These are the stable and park foreman's residence, and were the first buildings in the Park. Built of rough coursed rubble soon after park construction was begun in 1869, even these buildings have decorative elements -- the porch of the house has a fretwork frieze of Chinese Chippendale design, and the stone stable has a belfry.

The stable was especially necessary, since it stabled the horses and mules used to build the park. Remember that this was at a time when backhoes, bulldozers, and steamrollers were far in the future, and labor was accomplished primarily by men with shovels and draft animals to pull hoes, cutters, and grading bars. After the park was finished, the draft animals were still necessary to pull the lawn mowers, as well as the sprinkling wagons used to water and keep the dust down on the roads and paths of the park.

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THE HEIGHTS JOINS A ST. LOUIS TRADITION - CONTINUED

It was bitterly cold that day but that didn't stop our volunteers from showing up and giving their all. Everyone was cheerful and had a positive attitude, perfectly representative of our neighborhood. We connected with hundreds of people and had several engaging conversations about TGH.

In all, it was a great opportunity to not only raise money, but better connect with neighbors. We all had a lot of fun volunteering and are already looking forward to next year.



Mardi Gras Inc. is currently calculating the profits so we won't know for another few weeks the total raised. Rest assured that it'll be reported at the neighborhood meeting once we have the official count.

Mark your calendars for **February 7th, 2016** and consider joining in on the fun!

The Oldest Buildings in the Park - CONTINUED

An early artist's rendering of the stable shows it with storage sheds on either side, one of which was connected to the foreman's residence. It's hard to say whether this was the final version that was built, since a fire in 1891 damaged both the stable and foreman's residence. According to reports of the day, the fire started at 3:00 in the morning and was probably the work of an arsonist. Along with the damage to the buildings, four horses died in the fire.

Despite this catastrophe, most of the original features of the stable remain. The floor of the stable still has many of the cedar wood bricks that first paved it, and the south wall still has the small, double-hung windows that let in winter warmth from the sun. On the north wall of the stables are several slits, probably used for cross-ventilation in summer. However, Jeff Kingman, the stable master, has a more exciting theory-- that they might also have functioned as gun slits, a protected way to fire at marauders. This isn't as outlandish an idea as it may seem, considering that stable construction started only a couple of years after the end of the civil war, when plenty of confederate raiders like Jesse James still roamed the countryside.

In time, horses and carriages gave way to automobiles, and the machinery used to maintain the park traveled under its own power. The stables were used for storage, and at times to stable a horse or two, including those used by off-duty policemen to patrol the park on weekends.



Since 1998, with the help of Park donor Tim Hays, carriage rides are again available in the park, and the stable once again holds horses. Current residents of the stable include a beautiful Clydesdale gelding named Jimmy Joe who pulls the carriages, a Shetland pony named Sheffield (a big hit with children), and an assortment of chickens that wander the yard and stables during the day.

What was originally the foreman's residence is now home to the head park ranger, who lives there with his wife and son. He reports that, while not completely up-to-date, the house is well past the days when a stable yard well provided the water and home electricity was a pipe dream.

What seems certain is that these two sturdy buildings, which have overseen changes in the park for nearly 150 years, are destined to see even more exciting changes in the century ahead.





WRITTEN BY
MINDY ROUFF

Zee Bee Market, located at 3211 South Grand Blvd., resembles other eclectic boutiques, but it is a retail store with a noble mission: to lift artisans and farmers out of extreme poverty by ensuring they are

paid a fair wage for their goods. The merchandise at Zee Bee's—the beautiful silk skirts, the adorable stuffed llamas, the wood and bone inlaid salad bowls—is all Fair Trade (except for some items by St. Louis artists), and the store's owner/operator Julio Zegarra-Ballon recently educated me on the principles and inner workings of Fair Trade businesses.

Fair Trade is rooted in a call for economic justice, not in the idea of charity for the poor. In our conversation, Zegarra-Ballon echoed this principle: he's passionate about fair wages for producers, but he wants customers to buy his goods out of desire, not pity. To that end, he stocks the store with beautiful, eco-friendly handmade items with

something for most budgets. Fair Trade businesses, including Zee Bee Market, follow a producer-centered model, meaning the people who make the goods sold at Zee Bee are paid a wage that, according to the Fair Trade Federation (FTF), accounts for “the true costs of labor time, materials, and sustainable growth” (Fair Trade Principle #5). In conventional trade, the producers have the least power in the supply chain. According to Zegarra-Ballon, if a woman makes a scarf to be sold for \$20.00 at a large, discount retailer, she'll earn a fraction of what a Fair Trade producer would. Zegarra-Ballon ensures his merchandise is helping people escape poverty by buying it from Fair Trade Federation members.

The Fair Trade Federation also calls for social justice for artisans and farmers, and Fair Trade businesses seek to end everything from exploitative child labor to workplace discrimination. They work to help women receive equal pay for equal work and to cultivate environmental stewardship and much more. The goals of Fair Trade are outlined in the FTF's Nine Fair Trade Principles. I highly recommend reading them at zeebeemarket.com/pages/fair-trade.

The Fair Trade business model starts with artisans and farmers who want to escape poverty in the developing world. Sometimes aided by nonprofit members of the FTF, sometimes not, the producers form cooperatives. Fair Trade nonprofits then provide the co-op members with business knowledge and financial assistance with the end goal of developing “producers' independence” (FTF, Fair Trade Principle #3). One of the most important tasks of any Fair Trade nonprofit is to help farmers and artisans set a fair price for their goods. Lastly, business owners like Zegarra-Ballon buy merchandise online from Fair Trade nonprofits, such as SERRV and Partners for Just Trade, a St. Louis-based organization, and the consumer pays the prices determined by the producers.

Zegarra-Ballon started Zee Bee Market as a mobile business, attending Farmer's Markets and festivals. Then, in November 2012, he launched Zee Bee's online store (www.zeebeemarket.com), which he still maintains. In November 2014, he opened the South Grand store. He made Zee Bee Market a Fair Trade *for-profit* business so he can have a greater economic impact, abroad and at home. He explains that if his store is successful he'll be able to buy more goods and thereby help more artisans and farmers. He helps the local economy by having paid employees. Currently, he has three and he pays them above minimum wage with a raise after a year. Zegarra-Ballon is a passionate, intelligent man whose sharp business mind is surpassed only by his desire to make the world a better, more just place. In February, he started “Giving Days,” where one week a month, every month, he'll donate 15% of online and in store proceeds to a non-profit based in and working in St. Louis. I can think of no better place than Zee Bee Market for St. Louisians to shop! ###

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Unified

~ Ellen Wilson

If recent events have done anything, they have forced each of us to look deep inside ourselves and recognize our own personal beliefs. While those beliefs may vary in many ways, I am humbled by the unified belief our neighbors have in helping those who are in need. There was much need this year.

Businesses on Grand needed help to recoup damage costs, replace windows, and make up for lost sales. Gatherings of all sorts took people's time and energy. Worry about the neighborhood and safety concerns take an emotional toll. Even with all these pulls we, as a group, still managed to look through and remember that there are still people who need help with the basics of life and took the time and resources necessary to remember them. Thank you for being great people and showing the world what people can accomplish when they work together for a unified goal.

The first article about this project was written prior to the grand jury announcement and therefore before the outpouring of support shown through the amazing murals created for the businesses on South Grand. To see such support of this activity during that uncertain time was...emotional. I am awed by the response of my neighbors to the upheaval our city has experienced in the past months and feel an even greater sense of pride to live here. Sniff, sniff, you all are awesome!

For those unable to stop by the wrapping party, here is an overview of how we divided the gifts this year. Both families received household supplies along with air freshener and laundry soap as well as linens of all sorts including sheets, pillows, and towels. They were each provided with a beautiful basket filled to the brim with toiletry and household cleaning supplies. In family #1, the mother received nice casual clothing, a scarf and gloves, some vanity soap and powder, and a nice jacket. The father received work clothes and boots, a very nice warm jacket, gloves, and socks. The young girl received several outfits both practical and pretty, a fun make up set, toys, including several dolls, art supplies, craft kits, and a bicycle. The youngest received some good sturdy clothing, an awesome basketball, quite a few books, toys including puzzles, motorized cars, regular cars, and he also received a bicycle.

The grandmother in family #2 received several things to keep her warm – a robe, scarf, and pajamas as well as a beautiful tea set. The mother received a robe, scarf, and scented lotions and spray. The boy received cool-enough-for-school clothes, books, several board games, and toys along with a solar model and racetrack.

The cash donations were significant this year with each family getting over \$250 in retail and grocery gift cards as well as \$1,142.50 each to go toward utilities (which was paid directly through the 100 Neediest Cases program). The cash and gift card total of over \$2,750 plus hundreds of dollars of purchased gifts is by far the largest amount we have ever gathered for our families and will help them through the winter and allow them to get caught up or provide a break for a time.

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Holding Hope

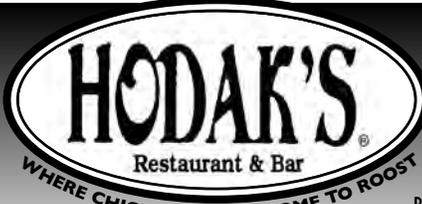
For A Complete Rehabilitation

By
Tricia
Heliker

Could this be the year we see the rescue of the damsel in distress on a prominent street corner in Tower Grove Heights? Many of us have held that desire for years as we watched her become more gaunt and unkempt. Maybe those hopes and dreams for the lovely, gracious beauty on the NW corner of Spring and Hartford are what has held her together until now. No one has wished, prayed, and begged for a savior for this long suffering, neglected beauty more than I have.

When I took possession of my home almost 38 years ago, one of the first people I met was Mr. Scott who lived directly across the street. Everyone called him Scotty and he called me "little mama." Our relationship was short. Scotty died not long after I moved onto Hartford but his wife, Audrey, stayed in the house for many years. When she became ill and needed help, her son Warren moved back into the home with her. Then Audrey passed away and the house became Warren's home. Warren was an adventuresome character but his activities did not include maintenance of the home. Very slowly the neglect became visible to the neighborhood. A curved glass window in the turret was broken by hunk of ice that slide off the roof and it was never repaired. Slates on the roof began to slip and slide to the gutter and eventually onto the ground. The mortar in the tall chimneys crumbled and seeped out from between the bricks making the chimneys an accident waiting to happen. The landscaping became overgrown, even crawling through the open window and squirming through cracks in the basement windows. Daylight could be seen through holes in the roof.





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From his perch on the front porch, Warren would visit with neighbors who walked past his corner. He often spoke of selling which garnered many respectable offers. But Warren just couldn't bring himself to sell even though he knew this house could not win against the elements without a little help. I visited with Warren over the years and we discussed the condition of the house and the possibility of him selling it to me, but like all the other offers, this one ended the same. He continued to live in the house, sometimes without heat, sometimes without electric, and eventually without water to the upper floors because of frozen pipes. My brother and I continued to talk to Warren about purchasing the property and he allowed my brother access to the house to examine the structure. We had a verbal agreement with Warren but he continued to stall. Then suddenly he was in the hospital and eventually a long term care facility. His multiple health issues were catching up to him.

While visiting Warren one day at Life Care, he divulged to my brother and to me that he had a son and he wanted his assets to go to this son. We advised him to prepare a will but that was not accomplished before Warren passed away on August 20, 2012 at the age of 63.

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RESIDENT PROFILE

article by
Sarah Truckey



NAME: **Ray Marklin**

PROFESSION: **Photographer**

ORIGINS: **Baden, North St. Louis. Oldest of 7 brothers “That’s why I’m so girl-shy” (he says slyly).**

HOBBIES: **Tending to his bees, playing the drums, hosting parties, traveling**

SIGN: **Gemini. “That’s why I can’t pick just one hobby.”**

YEARS IN TG HEIGHTS: **12**

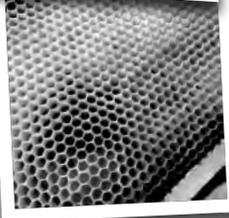
American Folk Art here, an autographed photo of Vanna White there, and Cambodian landmines over here. There’s an assigned place for everything in Ray’s house, and he has stories surrounding every item, becoming visibly excited when telling them. This storytelling prowess of his is how I managed to stay at his house for over an hour, when I intended only a quick visit. His collection is an eclectic mix of found, acquired, and cherished items that represents who he is at the core, which, in his words, is “enthusiastic, adventurous, and compassionate.”



In addition to being a collector, Ray is also a landlord, a photographer, a first-rate party host, and a phenomenal beekeeper, whose stacks of handmade hives are called “home” by enough bees to keep his neighbor’s gardens bountiful within a mile radius. He likes to think they journey to the Botanical Gardens every day, and that’s why their honey—which he extracts and bottles himself under the name “Ray-bees”—is so darn good.



He may keep things local in that sense, but one of the most fascinating things about Ray is his worldliness. He’s run from Asian karaoke ladies, talked to Haitians holding human skulls, eaten food in restaurants with dirt floors and pet rats, and never checks a bag when he travels. Thanks to his photography jobs and his mantra, “Doesn’t matter where you go—just go,” he’s been to 70 countries, and has artifacts and souvenirs from each of them. Tibet, Cambodia, India, Russia, Romania, Thailand, Cuba, Nicaragua, Myanmar, Philippines—you name it.



All of this aside, what really strikes you about Ray is his love for his house (it took him 51 weeks to close on his 2-family, so he’s put nothing but love into it since he bought it 12 years ago), his neighborhood, and, most of all, his neighbors. “We don’t really have much privacy, so why not let everyone come over?” is his approach. One of his excuses to set up a bar in the back yard is for the annual “Extractaganza,” when neighbors, friends, and friends of friends arrive with their bottles to fill with his bees’ honey.



His favorite thing about TG Heights? “You have to be a little

eclectic to live here. We live among such diversity here in Tower Grove,” he says.

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Backyard Fun

Luis Garcia

I have to admit, this article is as much a personal pep talk as it is to help inform. I've taught environmental science at the high school level, supervised school groups at Forest Park in outdoor education and spent the last summer in the Alaskan interior doing soil surveys but mostly hiking along the north edge of the Alaskan Range. I am no stranger to the outdoors and enjoy being out in every season. Still when it comes to getting my three-year-old son and one-year-old daughter outside in the winter, I automatically start looking at indoor options.

The St. Louis area has many great choices – the Science Center, the libraries' story times, and the Magic House are all very enticing – yet these constructed environments don't give me the same pleasure as witnessing my kids using their imagination and their muscles outdoors. The age-old barriers to taking my kids outside still prevail – the dreaded coat with its slippery nylon shell that makes giving a cat a bath seem easy by comparison. Then there's the hat and shoe dance that plays like an old slapstick comedy bit – you place the hat on the kid's head and move to put on their shoes and while occupied with their shoes they remove the hat, which you then dutifully reapply, at which point they start removing one and then the other shoe and the bit is an endless cycle. But this article is not so much about the daily challenges that I face as a stay-at-home dad to a three- and a one-year-old. I hope this article helps encourage going through the minor struggle of getting the kids suited up to take advantage of the excellent outdoor experiences that are available.

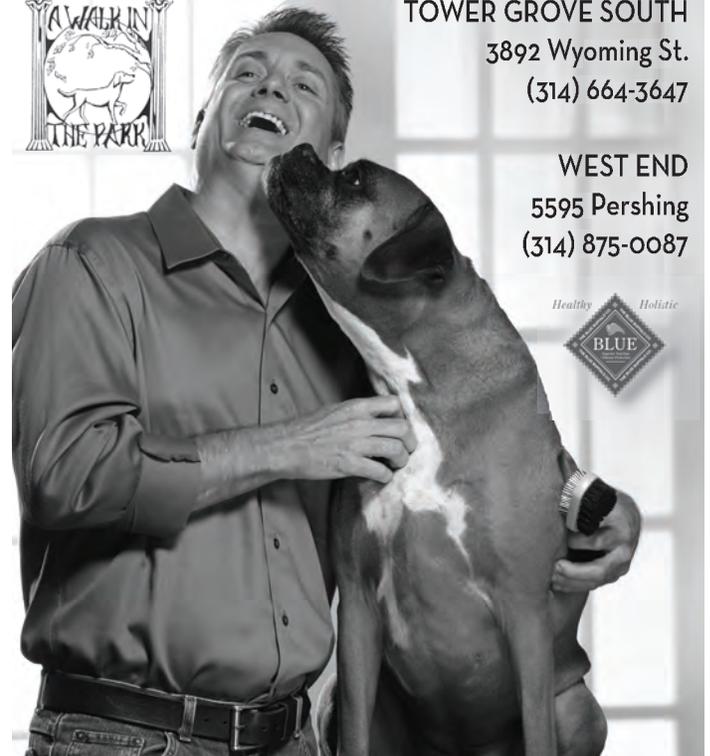
Tower Grove offers some great outdoor opportunities any time of year. In spring, Tower Grove Park is quite lovely with the striking magenta blooms of the redbuds and the increased animal activity. Last March, my son was fascinated to find a clutch of duck eggs in one of the garden beds bordering the ponds south of the greenhouse. In the summer my children enjoy weeding the garden and I have learned that losing a couple of tomato plants is a small price to pay for their "help." The fall brings a beautiful array of colors to the park as the leaves change. The winter is a meager time outdoors but there are still some very fun activities which my children enjoy and that bring a little conservation into our backyard.

A compost pile is great for many reasons. Many of you know the benefits that compost has for your garden beds. Less known is the benefit it has on the exploratory nature of children. There are few things that my children enjoy more in our backyard than exploring our compost pile. The older one enjoys helping mix the compost and looking at the various states of decomposition of our food scraps and the younger

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Backyard Fun

CONTINUED

one I think, likes the feel of squishy leaves under her feet. Deeper in the compost, the array of insect life that moves in is a source of deep captivation for my kids, as is my fascination at how willing they are to pick up almost any one of those insects in their bare hands. If you find the idea of keeping up with a compost pile daunting, let me say that there are many types of compost piles and the amount of attention that they require varies. Keeping it at the far end of your yard will ensure no unwanted guests. My compost pile is extremely passive, taking only the time that I can dedicate with my kids, but it can also be as easy as a pile of leaves that is left to decompose. For whatever type of compost pile your time allows, your kids and flowers will thank you.

This year we started a wood pile. I learned last winter that Forest Park offers free firewood, available at the lower Muni parking lot. My kids had a blast picking out the “best” logs and “helping” me carry them to the car. FYI, the wood is not seasoned or split and this turned out to be a great backyard activity. As I sawed and split the wood into usable size, my children occupied themselves with picking up the now-manageable-sized wood and helping me to stack it under our back porch. Not all of the wood was split. Three large logs were left intact, and this is partly because I was using my hatchet as a wedge to split the wood and had become tired but also because these larger pieces could serve a beneficial purpose in the garden, namely as habitat. Drilling a few holes into the wood makes it a good home for native pollinators that should help the production of my garden in the summer. The nest sites are sure to become an area of interest for the kiddos as well.

This last activity is not something I have done yet but is inspired by a snow storm on January 5, 2014 that saw a myriad of birds including two brilliant cardinals and a sharp-shinned hawk perched on the mulberry tree in our backyard. My then-two-year old was fascinated by all the different types and colors of birds on the tree. This year I will try to attract some more birds to our yard using a DIY birdfeeder. A quick search on Pinterest resulted in numerous ideas that I thought were doable from some household items. The key will be to make something that attracts birds but is not so inviting to other wildlife, namely, mice and squirrels.

There are many resources online that will give you more details about composting, native bee houses and bird feeders and if you prefer a hard-copy format, Natural Resources Conservation Service (www.nrcs.usda.gov) will also mail to you, for free, a backyard conservation pamphlet with many more projects that you can do. The key is getting outdoors! ###



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COLLECTING FOUNTAIN PENS

PREPARED FOR PUBLICATION
TIMOTHY BARKER

My children (which are all grown up now) have never let me forget about the time in 1996 when I dragged them out to Columbus, Ohio for my first collecting convention. While ascending in an elevator upon check in at the Hilton, a young bellhop mentioned to an elderly couple he was assisting, "oh, we get all kinds for conventions here." "Can you believe it," he continued, "this weekend we have the biggest group of oddballs imaginable, **pen collectors!**"

Yes, despite the embarrassment it has caused my kids and the occasional consternation it's caused my spouse, that is indeed what I've been since 1993, a card carrying member of the PCA, "Pen Collectors of America." Prior to that, I was just a user. As an architect, I've long admired the fountain pen as a tool for freehand sketching. I think my first purchase for that use was a Lamy "Safari" in the early 1980s. But at about the same time our youngest, Stephanie was born (1993), my wife's cousin offered us some of his mom's (Aunt Marie's) unwanted "junk," which included a cigar box of full and partial pens that had belonged to professor Jim Duffy since the 1940s. Some of these looked like props from a "Flash Gordon" comic strip, with odd shapes, clips, levers, and details I'd never seen before in a writing implement. And they had 14k gold points too. I was intrigued.

As is obvious if you've watched even one episode of "The Antiques Roadshow," almost anything is collectible. Pens are no different in this regard, and their size makes them a more convenient thing to hoard than, for example, pipe organs. Prior to the late 1970s, very little had been written about pens, and collecting them was more or less a solitary endeavor. At that time, a Floridian named Cliff Lawrence and his wife home-published rudimentary histories of fountain pens, illustrated buying guides, and collections of early magazine advertizing. They also started a club and subscription sales newsletter called "The Pen Fancier's Club," that established collector's values for all the great examples they found through antique dealers, auctions, and estate sales.



Once I started reading all the available Pen Fancier's literature, I was hooked. As an everyday, utilitarian example of industrial design, pens have a most intriguing history. The story of the fountain pen in particular (named such because it carries its own supply of ink and writes by virtue of "controlled leakage") is a narrative full of technical and mechanical innovation, aesthetic experimentation, and entrepreneurial intrigue. The entire city of Janesville, Wisconsin (to cite just one example) can essentially trace its fortunes to those of the Parker Pen Company, which was headquartered there between 1888 and 1987. Similarly, Fort Madison, Iowa is inexorably linked to Sheaffer's. The two other titans comprising "The Big Four" of the fountain pen's golden age are Watermans and Wahl-Eversharp. But pen manufacture is much like beer making: lots of smaller enterprises have played significant roles over time. In our own city, Lipic and Eisendadt were companies that made their mark.

Through my early years of collecting, I gradually built up my stock by scouring antique shops, estate sales, auctions and flea markets. Once the internet arrived, I did buying (but more selling) on eBay. For a few years, it was quite an adventure for me to walk the Belleville Flea Market every third Saturday each month in search of things most would dismiss as having little or no value. Some of my best finds came from relationships with estate buyers and "pickers," individuals who scour all venues for "treasures" that they then sell to collectors of every stripe on commission.

As satisfying for me as finding rare or special pens has been my slow process of self-education in pen history. I've done quite a bit of research, and I've also made some friends from around the world in pursuit of the hobby. I assisted on a Canadian collector's 2006 book on fountain pen patents and have published pieces contributing to the scholarly debate (yes, it exists!) on matters pertaining to technical and advertising history. The Parker "Duofold" is one of pen's most significant achievements, and my theory about how it was named (nobody knows for sure) was published in a large book covering that pen's history. (Did I mention that my hobby has been an embarrassment to my children?)

As a corollary to my collecting, for about ten years, I also repaired and restored vintage pens. In most cases, this involves replacement of the rubber sac / seals that hold or draw in ink. Several local vintage pen users more or less relied on my services for a time, and one particular client was so dependent on the use of his 1940s Parker "51," that I met him on a Sunday night at the BP on Kingshighway and Southwest for an emergency patch up! I ceased pen repair shortly after that experience.

Actually, I've slowed down very much in my pen pursuits, probably in order to make more time for equally arcane hobbies. But I still enjoy handling and studying some of the treasures I've been lucky enough to find. Even more, I love journaling and sketching with some of these old beauties. It's fascinating to ponder what thoughts flowed from these pens in the past. In the end, isn't nostalgia at the root of all collecting? If you haven't tried writing with a good, free-flowing, flexible-nibbed pen such as was common from ca. 1900 through the 1920s, I highly recommend it. It will make you miss the pre-digital / pre-keyboard era. And who knows, it might also make you want to start your own collection.

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A Spring Planting Guide

by Marilyn Browning



When things warm up in the spring, it's easy to get crazy and embark on an ambitious planting program—shrubs, roses, lots of flower beds, and maybe even a vegetable garden in the back. However, now might be a good time to remember that spring is closely followed by summer, and with summer in Saint Louis we get some stinking hot and humid days. Imagine yourself outside on those days weeding and watering. Okay, now that you've got that image in mind, scale back to something a little more realistic.

For those of you who want to get a jumpstart on the growing season, you're usually safe with pansies, which despite the name, are anything but wimps when it comes to the cold. Those can go in the ground sometime around March 20th. For gardeners ready for something more productive than pretty this is also a good date to start planting seeds and transplants of hardy vegetables. This includes: lettuce, radishes, peas, spinach, mustard greens, collards, beets, carrots, potatoes, onions, early cabbage and broccoli. Remember to fence that garden in with rabbit fencing or chicken wire to keep the rabbits out. Those adorable bunnies love to nibble tender greens to the soil line (picture of the enemy above).

If your plans include trees, shrubs and perennials, plant them as early in the spring as you can. Generally, you can start planting in February, and should wind up any such plantings by June. Trees, shrubs, and perennials planted early will have more time to develop a good root system before the hot St. Louis summer arrives. This isn't a hard-and-fast rule, but if you plant later count on doing a lot more watering to get your trees and shrubs off to a good start.

Around May 1st is a good target date to start setting out bedding plants such as marigolds, salvia and impatiens. You can also set out tomato plants, and plant seeds of beans and corn. When the weather and soil is warm, around May 10th, plant heat-loving plants like eggplants, tomatoes, and peppers.

We have a few favorites we plant in our vegetable garden every year. Cherry tomatoes are great in summer salads, and immune to the squirrels that steal all the larger varieties. Butternut squash is a great addition to the menu and stores well over the winter. To avoid damage from squash vine borers, delay plantings of zucchini and butternut squash until July 1st. Keep in mind that squash is usually a space hog, and consider planting a bush or semi-bush variety if space is at a premium.

Our eggplants are nearly always prolific producers. Resist the urge to blast them with an insecticide when the spider mites invade in hot dry weather. That just kills off the bugs that normally eat them. Instead, use a hose sprayer to wash off those pests, paying special attention to the undersides of leaves.

Remember, every setback is a learning experience, and an opportunity to plant something new or outwit another wily foe, so have fun with your garden!

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Unified

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Each year this project is supported by the Tower Grove Heights Neighborhood Association which has an ever-changing leadership. This year we had several members and leaders who took on a larger role in helping to get the word out and collecting gifts. Past-President, Mike Newsham, and the Board helped to select our families, provided financial support for the flyers, and provided space in the Gazette. In addition, Mike and Susie Newsham collected gifts from neighbors with the now-famous Beer Wagon. Beth Phillips got the word out through social media and is working on a way to get the program more organized. Treasurer Rick Stein again kept the money straight and Rich Iezzi helped to meet the Gazette's deadline and provided space for the articles.

2015 Donors – Again, I did my best to get everyone's name who participated in any way this year and again, I am sure I missed a few. Please know I value and appreciate everyone who helped in any way.

Anonymous
Jill Anderson
Pauline and Robert Ashton
Andrea Beckman
Ruth and Bruce Brooks
Tim Brookes
Wesley and Marilyn Browning
Blythe Burkhard
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Lisa Carpenter and Duncan McArthur
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Thomas Sehr
Susan and Gary
Stayce and Alison
Rick Stein
Jean and Joseph Trossauer
Rebecca and Stuart Voboril

Flier-ers...Flier-ettes...She who Fliered...Those who shall be named for delivering Fliers...
Pauline Ashton, Kim Cole, Anne Orcutt, Kelly Schober

We had a fun time wrapping this year (as usual) with some new faces. Pauline Ashton, Denise Missall, Anne Orcutt, and Sandy Pritt organized everything and made the gifts look amazing. With the bikes we had quite a bit to take to the Center this year. We had four full car loads to get everything there. Mike and Susie Newsham and Pauline Ashton donated the use of their cars to get everything in one trip.

As always, thank you to everyone in the neighborhood who contributed in any way! Have a great year.



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Holding Hope

continued from page 6



With a little detective work we were able to make contact with his son and present our offer to him. Then hurdles began to pop onto the horizon. Each of these was met and mastered. The son even came to look at his inheritance when he was back on the mainland visiting relatives. But, because his legal counsel advised him not to accept ownership, he ended all communication with us. After working on the acquisition of 3801 Hartford for several years, we finally had to accept the fact that we had run out of options.

The house was condemned while Warren was in the hospital. Both the city and my brother made efforts to secure the property as it sat vacant and exposed. Neighbors pitched in to keep the grass trimmed and the vegetation from overtaking the sidewalk. But little else can be done to an abandoned house. It sits and waits as the legal wheels turn.

So what happens now? According to Assistant City Counselor, Matt Moak, 3801 Hartford will be put up for public auction in October of this year. Based on the inquiries I have had from rehabbers, speculators, and interested homebuyers, I am confident this neglected but still sturdy structure will soon receive the help it needs to once again reign over the prominent intersection of Spring and Hartford.

REAL ESTATE NEWS

for Tower Grove Heights

Sold Properties (singles) in 2014

Sold Date	Address	Price	Beds/Baths	Days
10-20	3841 Humphrey	\$84,000	5 / 3	1
11-12	3814 Connecticut	\$125,000	4 / 2	0
4-14	3728 Humphrey	\$142,000	6 / 2	4
7-7	3724 Wyoming	\$161,229	3 / 3	8
4-11	3822 Hartford	\$162,500	5 / 2	9
8-26	3826 Hartford	\$162,500	4 / 2	77
4-24	3838 Humphrey	\$168,000	4 / 2	199
12-17	3879 Wyoming	\$186,500	4 / 2	0
9-12	3875 Wyoming	\$193,000	3 / 2	21
5-23	3726 Hartford	\$200,800	4 / 2	0
8-15	3727 Hartford	\$206,500	3 / 1	12
12-15	3833 Connecticut	\$215,000	2 / 3	139
4-17	3722 Juniata	\$215,000	4 / 2	140
5-9	3822 Wyoming	\$216,500	4 / 2	86
2-17	3736 Connecticut	\$225,000	3 / 3	16
2-14	3860 Wyoming	\$233,400	3 / 3	103
5-23	3631 Connecticut	\$251,615	3 / 3	0
11-3	3852 Hartford	\$252,500	4 / 3	50
10-2	3654 Juniata	\$260,000	4 / 4	11
2-2-15	3636 S. Utah Place	\$260,000	5 / 3	7
10-2	3833 Hartford	\$275,000	5 / 3	27
8-28	3646 Hartford	\$280,000	5 / 3	32
6-4	3810 Wyoming	\$285,000	3 / 3	36
9-24	3641 Juniata	\$289,000	3 / 3	47
6-3	3824 Juniata	\$299,900	4 / 3	248
11-4	3802 Utah Place	\$300,150	4 / 4	22
3-14	3715 Humphrey	\$322,500	4 / 3	105
3-25	3626 Juniata	\$330,000	4 / 3	24
4-15	3708 Juniata	\$340,000	4 / 4	37
8-13	3652 Hartford	\$345,000	3 / 4	12
11-13	3642 Wyoming	\$350,000	3 / 3	4
8-29	3893 Utah	\$357,000	3 / 3	6
7-24	3802 Juniata	\$370,000	5 / 4	26
4-9	3828 S. Utah Place	\$379,900	3 / 4	14
11-17	3804 Humphrey	\$392,000	3 / 3	6
7-3	3814 Utah	\$429,900	4 / 3	71

This spring could be the best time to sell your home. Inventory of homes for sale is very low and mortgage rates are still low too. If your home is priced right and in good condition, your home could sell quickly for list price or more and get multiple offers. It is definitely a seller market right now.

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

Tower Grove Heights 2 Families Sold in 2014

Sold Date	Address	Price	Days
12-19	3865 Humphrey	\$57,000	0
4-30	3705 Wyoming	\$150,000	5
10-30	3612 Humphrey	\$158,000	0
10-17	3634 Wyoming	\$182,000	6
10-8	3841 N. Utah Place	\$211,000	4
6-16	3655 Wyoming	\$237,500	13
10-23	3633-35 Connecticut	\$251,000	20
8-1	3634 Arsenal	\$268,000	72
7-9	3618 Juniata	\$349,000	0

Even if the litter isn't yours, this neighborhood is.

by Sarah
Truckey

I spent 45 minutes walking up and down blocks of Connecticut, Hartford and Juniata collecting trash from front yards, gutters, curbs and sidewalks. It's trash that had been there for weeks, going either unnoticed and/or discarded by residents. Of course we'll never be able to wrap our heads around why people litter in the first place, but I wanted to know why the homeowners and renters weren't doing anything about the litter that dotted their lawns, stuck to their car tires and sullied their whole neighborhood aesthetic.

So I chose a particularly mild Saturday in January to initiate the "Enjoy the Weather and Pick Up Trash Day in TG East, West, North, South" on Facebook using the description: "Let everyone know that we love a clean neighborhood. Grab a trash bag, step outside and pick up your block and your alley. And this sort of thing is pretty contagious—if people see you and your neighbors outside picking up, they might think twice about tossing that paper, soda can or couch, and they might join you in the effort. Maybe you'll meet someone new who cares just as much as you!"

Facebook says about 20 people participated, which is fantastic. And here are a couple responses that documented their findings.

- "I did a quick sweep of 4100 Potomac and find a lot of soaked, forgotten newspapers, cigarette cartons, and white castle. I might go back through the alleys tomorrow though. This is easy enough to do every couple weeks!"
- "Hit our corner of TGS. [Posts picture of her two kids holding multiple bags of trash.] If only these two were as willing to help clean up the house."
- "Just finished doing the 3600, 3700, and 3800 blocks of Arsenal. In 90 minutes, I collected about 40 pounds of trash working both sides of the street. My observations: Swisher Sweets and Newports are the favorite smokes of those that traverse Arsenal; cigarette butts are the most prevalent form of trash, followed by Taco Bell paper products; and Milwaukee's Best is our preferred libation. A few surprises: 11 CO2 cartridges found in the 3800 block of Arsenal—what's up with that; a tampon applicator and an unopened condom found together—perhaps a disappointing rendezvous. A couple of pedestrians and a motorist thanked me, but no one else seemed to notice or join in the effort. Some things never change."
- "I picked up some trash on my walk today, but I didn't gather anywhere close to 40 lb. Thank you!"

Whether you're a believer in the "broken windows" theory or not, trash DOES encourage more trash. And I'd like to believe that picking up trash encourages picking up more trash.

Next time you're in your alley or in your front yard, please feel free to grab that smashed QT soda cup, collect that newspaper from November you haven't read, and pick up the Cheetos bag filled with rain water. Because even if the litter isn't yours, this neighborhood is.



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