



The Porch Review

Benton Park West

Treasure the Past

Vol 3, No. 5

May 2005

Livable communities don't just happen. They are created by the people who live in them

Garden business growing on Cherokee

By Eric Winters

Don't ask Joe Waeltermann why he picked Cherokee Street for the location of his business, Southside Garden Stop, a nursery on the corner of Cherokee and Compton.

For Joe, the answer is pretty simple — it's his home. "This is not 'the hood,' it's a 'neighborhood.' This has been my family's home for 150 years. It's part of the German heritage of St. Louis," he says with conviction.

Now in its fifth year, Southside Garden Stop is seeing its best year yet. Joe credits much of this year's success to an expanding space, efforts to grow more of his own plants from seeds and the improving area. Joe is a long-time resident of Gravois Park and avid supporter of city living.

"You've got to have the faith that something will come back," Joe speaks proudly of his business and his community.

Joe's faith in the area and his own business sense is evident in his ever-widening business plan. By the end of the month, Joe hopes to have his BBQ



and ice cream business up and running again; it takes up the southeast corner of the nursery. If his plans come through, Joe will also have a pet shop in the back by springtime.

He comes to the business via a long-track of gardening and landscaping jobs. After completing his agriculture degree at University of Missouri-Columbia in 1975, Joe managed greenhouses before spending 10 years managing the grounds at Florissant Valley. Following that job, Joe worked with the City Parks

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Kick-off the Growing Season with a BBQ in the Garden



By Eric Winters

Life is growing in the community garden at Ohio & Crittenden! If you haven't stopped by recently, you'll have a chance on Saturday, May 21 to join other neighborhood residents for a BBQ at Noon! Free food and drinks will be provided and non-gardeners are welcome to come and enjoy the growing season!

The community garden at Ohio & Crittenden contains 11 raised beds (one

still available to some lucky gardener) filled with vegetables, flowers and herbs. In addition, the garden will soon contain a fenced area for Southside Day Nursery to use as a learning area with plots of their own. The first Saturday of each month is officially designated as a Garden Work Day, and anyone interested in helping with communal areas or working in a raised bed is welcome to attend.

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The Presidents Corner

I want to congratulate Bill Byrd and Tim Stehl, for receiving the Chancellors Certificate from the University of Missouri-St Louis. During the class we worked on Pub-



lic Speaking, Grant writing, and Board Development. I want to publicly say thanks to Bill and Tom for all their hard work and dedication to the neighborhood and the Academy. Bill and I have been elected by our classmates to represent our class in the Alumni Group for the Leadership Academy. This class was a great experience for myself, and I think Bill and Tom would agree. The leadership team that conducted the class was of the best in the land when it comes to their knowledge of Non-Profit "street smarts". I am so glad that I had the chance attend this class. Maybe you should think about attending this class. You can have the same experience that I have had this past four months. Tonight you will get to meet someone that I admire, Holly Ingraham. Holly has taught us so much in the Leadership Academy. Not only has she coached me over the past 4 months to be a better leader for the Benton Park West Neighborhood, but I am sure that Holly will continue to be a mentor as I continue to grow my leadership skills.

Next month this time I will be at the DEFY (Drug Education for Youth) camp at Babler State Park. While I will miss not being at the June meeting, but I am very excited about becoming a mentor at the DEFY camp and continue as a mentor in the Weed & Seed program. This is one way I will help pay back Weed and Seed for all the hard work that they have done for us in our neighborhood. Just as I am paying back to a supporting organization, you to can payback for the benefit of having a Neighborhood Association work for you. You can help the Neighborhood Association, by volunteering to help on a committee. Next month at the pot luck we will be having a "Committee Fair". Come and ask questions and get the answers about what BPWNA is doing. You will also have a chance to think about what committee you would like to join. The committees are Youth Outreach, Communications, Beautification, Facilities, Garden, and Block Link. Other committees are just waiting for people to join and start working.

Remember I will not be here, next month, so I will see you all in July.

Board Officers

Chad Johnson, President
776-4447

BPWNAPres@yahoo.com

Bill Byrd, Vice-President
776-4447

BPWNAVp@yahoo.com

Linda Hennigh, Treasurer
771-2161

Linda_hennigh@yahoo.com

Eric Winters, Secretary
776-6022

Wintere@mac.com

Committee Chairs

Deanna Davis, Co-Chair
Youth Outreach

Bryan Herring, Co-Chair Communi-
cations

Derrick Morris, Co-Chair Beautifica-
tion

Contact Numbers

Alderpersons:

Ken Ortmann 622-3287 (w)
776-0161 (h)

Craig Schmid 589-6816 (w)

Jennifer Florida 776-2890(w)

Neighborhood Stabiliza- tion Officer:

Barb Potts, NSO 314-773-
0532 (w) 314-397-1091 ©

Crime Prevention/Police:

Emergency/Drug Activity
911

Non-Emergency
231-1212

Weed & Seed 241-COPS

Third District Captain
444-0125

Housing Concerns:

Problem Property Officer
622-3600

HOTLINE 444-0185

Citizen Service Bureau
622-4800

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Jeanette's District



I am thankful to have been offered the opportunity to share a regular column in the Benton Park West Neighborhood Association newsletter. I applaud your many efforts to improve the quality of life and the value of the housing in Benton Park West, and I want to partner with you in your efforts through my role as State Representative for the 59th Missouri House District.

I have been a resident of the 59th District since 1991 when my partner Dorothy and I moved from Oleatha near Kingshighway to Hartford in Tower Grove East. In 1996 we purchased a rehabbed home in Benton Park because we wanted to live in the neighborhood of the church we attend, Epiphany United Church of Christ on McNair.

My desire to run for office was created by my experience as an advocate for social/economic justice and public health during the past twenty years. I have done this work as a volunteer, but also as a paid employee. From 1991 to 2000, I was executive director of a statewide anti-poverty organization, and I was grassroots coordinator for the American Lung Association of Missouri from 2001-2004.

There are two common responses to the topic of politics: Some folks won't discuss it (or religion) because it's too controversial. Other people consider politics to be a dishonorable profession and consider elected officials fair game for jokes. I think it's important to develop new ways to think about politics, and I like this definition

from writer Richard G. Watts:

"Political processes are simply the way that communities of people organize their common life,

allocate their resources, and tackle their shared problems. Politics is about the rules we make, the values we honor, the processes we follow so that large groups of people can live together with some measure of fairness, order and peace."

I have sponsored and co-sponsored bills this year that respond to issues brought to me by district residents and that reflect public policy that supports the common good. Interested residents can see a list of these bill at the following web address:

<http://www.house.state.mo.us/bills051/spon/spn059.htm>

I welcome your questions about these bills or other matters that relate to the well-being of the neighborhoods we love and share. My district phone number is 772-0301, and my e-mail address is jeanette.oxford@house.mo.gov.

Jeanette Mott Oxford
State Representative, 59th Missouri House District
Room 116-2, State Capitol
Jefferson City, MO 65101
Office Phone: 573-751-4567; District Phone: 314-772-0301

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Children today doing better than when parents were Kids: engaging in less risky behavior, but still eating too much

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WASHINGTON - In many ways, children today are doing better than their parents did. They take fewer drugs, commit fewer crimes and have fewer babies.

If they would just lay off the chips and soda. A huge increase in obesity and increases in young people living in poverty and in single-parent homes have held back even greater progress in children's overall well-being during the past three decades, according to the Foundation for Child Development.

The Child-Well Being Index, which tracks 28 separate measures, shows that since 1993 children have been engaging in less risky behavior. And while all is not rosy, the report says the overall well being of children is improving.

Among the findings:

The adolescent and teen birth rate has dropped from 20 births per 1,000 girls in 1992 to an estimated 10.9 births per 1,000 girls in 2004.

Binge drinking among high school seniors has fallen from 36.9 percent in 1975 to about 29.2 percent in 2004. Binge drinking is the consumption of five or more alcoholic drinks in one setting, and respondents were asked whether they had consumed such amounts within the past two weeks.

The number of youth offenders — and victims — has fallen dramatically since 1993. The number of youths age 12-17 who were victims of

crime in 1994 stood at 120 per 1,000 children. The number of crime victims in that same age group is projected at about 45 per 1,000 in 2004.

Jeffrey Butts, director of the youth justice program at the Urban Institute, said the report speaks well of today's teens.

"Maybe we have the next 'greatest generation' coming along here," Butts said.

Kenneth Land, a professor at Duke University and author of the report, said a number of factors contributed to the improvement.

For example, the declining crime rate could be attributed to a better economy, the waning of the crack cocaine epidemic and an expansion of community policing, including more officers in schools.

Parents, too, have played a role in the gains.

Parents who grew up in the 1970s and early '80s saw or experienced the effect of drug use and have been more assertive about controlling their own children's behavior, he said.

But Butts cautioned against linking trends to specific policy changes without further study. For example, he said that linking lower juvenile crime rates to funding police officers during the Clinton years sounded more like political speculation to him.

Butts also said improvements in such diverse categories as drug use, teen pregnancy and crime are hard to

explain through government initiatives.

"I think it's not so much a sign of policy-making as it is a fundamental cultural shift," Butts said.

'We can do better'

In some categories, particularly health, America's children aren't doing so well. The obesity rate among children 6 to 17 has tripled since 1975 — from about 5 percent to nearly 16 percent.

Test scores measuring academic achievement have remained stagnant during the three decades studied — despite increases in per-pupil spending.

Also, the number of children 18 and under in single-parent households has increased over the past three decades. In 1975, about 17 percent of children lived in single-parent households. By 2003, that number had increased to 27.5 percent, with most of the increase occurring in the 1980s.

"We can do better and we are doing better, but not better enough," said Fasaha Traylor, senior program officer at the foundation.

The Foundation for Child Development is a national philanthropy dedicated to helping children, particularly the disadvantaged. It is funded through an endowment provided in 1944 from the estate of Milo Belding, who was a silk merchant.

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Benton Park West Housing Corporation Makes Plans for 2005

by Jo Ann Vatcha, Housing Analyst, City of St. Louis

One of the dedicated volunteer groups who are working hard to transform the neighborhood is the Benton Park West Housing Corporation. Members from all parts of the neighborhood meet monthly to improve and increase quality housing alternatives. Led by Fr. Joseph Roelke, the housing corporation advises Alderman Ken Ortmann, Alderman Craig Schmid and the city's Community Development Administration on the use of public funding for the neighborhood's housing development priorities.



This summer, work will begin on several buildings on the 2800 block of Texas, a "wedge" of the neighborhood which has not previously seen concentrated development. Several CDA rehab projects will begin, utilizing St. Louis Design Alli-

ance, an architecture and development company that has recently completed rehab of six single-family homes on the 3500 block of Illinois and new construction of six others on the 3400 blocks of Missouri and Indiana, all in the Marine Villa Neighborhood. The Benton Park West Housing Corporation encouraged the firm to submit proposals for the same kind of homeownership projects with the city-owned buildings at 2800-2802-2806-2837-2868 Texas. CDA gap financing, including some affordability assistance, supplemented by Missouri historic tax credits and private financing, will produce eight single-family units, including four homes affordable to low/moderate income families. This mixed-income homeownership production will no doubt spur private development and have a beneficial impact on the northern edge of the newly designated "Gravois-Jefferson Streetcar Suburb Historic District".

Benton Park West Housing Corporation works with the City's Community Development Administration to make the neighborhood a model success story like its nearby neighbor Benton Park. Already, 18 renovated homes and 7 new homes, for a total of 25 single-family homes, have all been sold to owner-occupants. Well over half of those were priced and subsidized for

affordable homeownership. An additional 7 rental units have been renovated, as well as assisting Booth Manor, 74 units of quality housing for senior citizens. The six units on Texas for 2005 will be "mixed-income" as well, with three designated for affordability and the other three to be sold at market-rate to anyone who wants to live in quality housing in a great neighborhood.

Working with Alderman Ortmann and Alderman Schmid, as well as CDA's Housing Analyst Jo Ann Vatcha, the hard-working volunteers of the housing corporation have contributed over 27,000 hours and continue to target buildings and areas in need of attention, advise city officials and staff, and work to turn around the remaining aging and abandoned buildings. Current members of the housing corporation include: Rev. Jim Wuerth of St. Wenceslas, Charles Vestal, Jackie Robinson, Frank Brettle, Joe Moskus, and Maggie Carfield. Meetings are held on the third Wednesday at least every other month, at St. Wenceslas' meeting room. For more information, contact any of the members, aldermen, or Jo Ann Vatcha at CDA, by e-mail at vatchaj@stlouiscity.com or phone at 622-3400, Ext. 369.

Police Botter

Two men were arrested April 19 for possession of a controlled substance in the 2700 block of Utah Street.

A person was arrested April 20 for street demonstration in the 3000 block of Cherokee Street.

A man was arrested April 20 for exposing person (urinating in a public place) in the 3300 block of Texas Avenue.

Two women were arrested April 22 for prostitution in the 3400 block of

Compton Avenue.

A person was arrested April 20 for first-degree property damage in the 2600 block of Pestalozzi Street.

A man was arrested April 26 for third-degree assault in the 3300 block of Michigan Avenue

A man was arrested April 26 for second-degree drug trafficking in the 3600 block of Virginia Avenue.

A woman was arrested April 27 for possession of no more than 35

grams of marijuana in the 2900 block of Cherokee Street.

A woman was arrested April 28 for forgery in the 2800 block of Gravois Avenue. At the same address April 28, a man was arrested for second-degree drug trafficking

A man was arrested April 27 for individual peace disturbance in the 3300 block of Nebraska Avenue.

A man was arrested April 27 for stealing under \$150 (petty larceny) in the 3000 block of Juniata Street

A person was arrested April 28 for second-degree drug trafficking in the 2800 block of Texas Avenue.

A man was arrested April 29 for possession of a controlled substance by a persistent offender in the 2800 block of Texas Avenue.

A man was arrested May 3 for third-degree domestic assault in the 3400 block of Oregon Avenue. A man was arrested May 4 for possession of a controlled substance in the 3200 block of Minnesota Avenue.

Things to Remember

May 22— Join us at the Open House for the new BPWNA offices, 12pm (noon) - 4pm. 2715 Cherokee Street, Suite # 9, lower level.

June 4 - Monthly Garden Workday

June 9 - Weed & Seed monthly meeting - 6p. FIVE STAR SENIOR CENTER

Third District Police monthly meeting has been cancelled for June

June 16 — BPWNA Monthly meeting - 7pm - Salvation Army. Joe from the Garden Shop will be presenting.

May 21 - Garden Kickoff Party

July 2 — Monthly Garden Workday

BPW is now part of Gravois-Jefferson Streetcar Suburb Historic District

Bulk Pickup is always the week of the SECOND Monday of the month

E-list is available to all BPW residents. Contact Eric Winters, Wintorse@mac.com

No Air Conditioning in the HOT Saint Louis Summer?

Use this tried and true method...

The Victorian method of air conditioning requires functioning double hung windows. Crack the upper sash to allow heat to escape and open the house up WIDE during the night. Before the heat of the day sets in, shut it up tight, but leave the upper sash cracked on the shady side. Be sure to take advantage of the evening breeze before it goes stagnant after sunset. With enough good screens, you can generally make it into mid-July.

Garden business growing on Cherokee



Department, Kirkwood School District and Frank's Nursery. All the while, Joe spent his weekends working at an area greenhouse to stay up on his greenhouse skills. Despite having some of the best soccer fields and football fields in the region while at Florissant Valley and Kirkwood School District, Joe ironically hates working with grass.

On the site of a former greenhouse, Joe's business has adapted and grown to cut costs while expanding inventory. As the weather cools, a new layer of plastic sheeting will be attached and Joe's infamous wood-burning stove will come alive — keeping the nursery as warm (and humid) as a tropical paradise. Add to that, the stove saves Joe tons of money, as his biggest gas bill this past winter was a whopping \$100.

While Joe hesitates to name a favored plant, he says his more popular items have been elephant ears, hanging baskets and the hardy banana trees. Yes, banana trees. In front of the nursery, two banana trees have been brought back outside for the summer. Joe says they should bear fruit by next year. The smaller hardy banana trees he sells inside may not bear fruit, but they give a tropical feel to Midwest St. Louis, and have been a big seller.

For fans of the Garden Stop, more is coming. Joe's next phase of expansion will be increasing the greenhouse out another 12 feet and adding a pond in the front. "Next year, I want to sell water plants, but if I can't grow them, then I won't sell them," he says.

Don't ask Joe for an "easy plant." That's another one of those question-such thing as an easy plant."

And that piece of honesty — even if it's a bit in your face — is exactly what keeps the green thumbs and novices gardeners coming back.



Business Members -

Auto Bargain Center
 Beach Front Properties
 International Union of Operating Engineers, Locals No. 2
 SSDN
 The Salvation Army
 Three Nosey Broads -Edna Gravenhorst
 Weed & Seed—Saint Louis Site

Resident Members -

Andy Vachurch and Rebecca Durst
 Henry and Ida Moorehead
 Jerry and Ana Pierce
 Charles Vestel
 Connie Petty
 Craig Schmid
 Dr. Darrel and Shirley Carroll
 Eric Winters and Amanda Rainey
 Donna Dorsey
 Jean Durel
 Linda Hennigh
 Bruce and Marlene Levine
 Christian and Amanda Oncken
 Chad Johnson
 Bill Byrd
 Galen Gondalfi
 Monte Hurd
 Clinton Jackson
 Michael Noll and Anna Hancock
 Melba Arnold

Out and Around

Saturday, May 21 join other neighborhood residents for a BBQ at Noon! Free food and drinks will be provided and non-gardeners are welcome to come and enjoy the growing season! Garden at the corner of Ohio & Crittenden.

WHAT: BandTogether's "Toon Time" Pops Concert
WHEN: Saturday, May 21, 2005, at 8 pm
COST: FREE, but donations and applause graciously accepted.
WHERE: E. Desmond Lee Concert Hall The Community Music School of Webster University 560 Trinity Ave. (in the Delmar Loop by the stone lions)

African American History Series

9/18/2004 - 5/31/2005

Location: The History Museum in Forest Park

Time: 9:00 a.m.

Cost: Free

For more information call: (314) 361-7229 Registration required

www.mohistory.org

A monthly series of presentations exploring current research related to the experiences of African Americans in the St. Louis region.

Update on City of St. Louis' Revitalization Efforts

Saturday, May 21, 2005

Location: Trinity Episcopal Church

Hours: 10:30 AM

Hear an Update on City of St. Louis' Revitalization Efforts at LWV Event Rollin Stanley, St. Louis City Development Agencies Director of Planning & Urban Design, will give an update of the city's development efforts.

Benton Park West Neighborhood Association Celebrates Grand Opening of New Offices

St. Louis, MO---Benton Park West Neighborhood Association, located at 2715 Cherokee Street, Cherokee Place # 9, will host its Grand Opening on Sunday, May 22, 2005 from 12:00 p.m. (noon) to 4:00 p.m.

For additional Calendar information see <http://stlcin.missouri.org/calendar/>

YOU are needed to help prevent the West Nile Virus

Volunteers are needed to help with chemical drop in the City Storm drains to kill the larva in the prevention of the West Nile Virus. The two drops for BPW are scheduled for May 20th and July 22 (Fridays) in the afternoons. If you can help, please contact Bill Byrd at 771-0803 and leave a message or e-mail at bpwnavp@yahoo.com.

BBQ Kicks Off Growing Season



On Saturday, March 7, the community garden received more than 50 plants and shrubs from Gateway Greening's Annual Great Perennial Divide. Master gardeners and nurseries from across the metro region donated thousands of plants to more than a hundred community gardens, ours being one of them. Those plants are serving as the landscaping for the corners of the garden.

Volunteers are needed to help with fence construction, so please contact Eric at winterse@mac.com or (314) 776-6022 to sign up.

We look forward to seeing you at Noon on Saturday, May 21!

* Reminders

- * BPWNA Board Meeting: 1st Tuesday of every month at 2715 Cherokee - Cherokee Place, lower level
- * BPWNA Community Meeting: 3rd Thursday of every month 2740 Arsenal, Salvation Army. 7:00pm
- * Bulk Trash Pick-up: 2nd full week of each month
- * Membership dues are:
 - * \$12 a year per household
 - * \$ 6 a year per household for Seniors
 - * \$15 a year as business owner
- * Weed & Seed Mtg: 2nd Thursday of each month at 2832 Arsenal - Five Star Senior Center. 6:00 pm
- * 3rd District Public Affairs Meeting conducted by 3rd District Capt. Thomas Magnan: 2nd Thursday of each month at 2832 Arsenal - Five Star Senior Center. 7:30 pm (*Following the Weed & Seed Meeting*)

Benton Park West

Neighborhood Association
P.O. 18671
Saint Louis, MO 63118

On the Web

<http://stlouis.missouri.org/bentonparkwest/>

