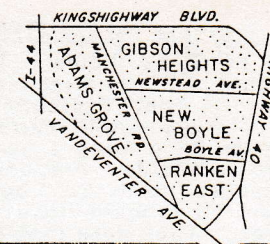


FPSE NEWS & VIEWS

THE FOREST PARK SOUTHEAST NEIGHBORHOOD NEWSPAPER

"EMPOWERING PEOPLE BY INFORMING THEM"



JUNE - JULY, 1991

SUMMER ISSUE

Vol 3/No. 6 COPYRIGHT 1991

LUTHERAN FAMILY SERVICES

By Karl Chautie

Lutheran Family and Children Services (LFCS) began addressing the problem of homelessness in the 1980s. They now provide transitional and permanent housing at scattered sites across the city.

In addition to housing, LFCS provides a multitude of services to help stabilize families and aid in their transition back from being homeless. LFCS claims an 80-85% success rate.

Leroy Zimmerman of LFCS addressed the June meeting of the FPSE Housing Corp. He explained that LFCS has operated in FPSE for four years and has assisted 13 families. Originally LFCS rented apartments for the families. Now they are renovating FPSE buildings. Currently, LFCS is working on 1300 and 1304 S. Boyle.

LFCS screens for families that are willing to live in an area like FPSE. The families sign an agreement promising to maintain the property, not to allow additional people to live with them, meet weekly goals, save 30% of their income and work to re-stabilize their lives. If the family violates the agreement, they are asked to leave. Because participants in the program

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CHOUTEAU OVERPASS HOW SAFE IS IT?

By Mark Jefferies

The Chouteau Overpass is in a moderate state of decay. Although safe for light traffic, the maximum weight for heavy vehicles has been reduced. The overpass is scheduled to be replaced soon after the new Kingshighway Viaduct is completed.

Built in 1918, the Chouteau Overpass extends across a railroad and connects Spring and Grand avenues to Vandeventer and Manchester avenues. Even an untrained eye can see signs of decay. Numerous cracks cross the roadbed, pedestrian walks and railings. In some areas the walks have subsided and parts of the railings are missing.

From below the overpass, a more alarming picture emerges. Cracks extend from base to top in many of the pairs of large reinforced concrete columns that support the roadway. On some columns the concrete has spalled off, exposing rusting reinforcing rods. The underside of the roadbed is in worse condition. Chunks of

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ADAMS SCHOOL REPRIEVE

According to Charles Burgess of St. Louis City Public Schools, Adams School will be kept open until 1995. Burgess stated, "Because of delays in capital improvements at other city schools, we need the space. Adams School will be kept open until at least 1995, probably 1996. This does not represent a decision to keep the school open permanently. As it stands now, Adams is still on the list of schools to be eliminated."

REDISTRICTING: DRAWING THE POWER LINES

By Karl Chautie

Every decade the city must redraw its 28 wards to reflect population shifts. Between 1980 and 1990 the city lost 56,000 residents. The northside experienced a major population decrease, the southside showed smaller losses. Only the central corridor saw a population increase.

Redistricting is often stormy. (See 1981 on page 2.) It begins with an aldermanic subcommittee developing a plan that divides the city into 28 equal-population wards. One or more aldermen can sponsor the subcommittee's plan or submit an alternate plan. Even a group of citizens supported with petitions can present a redistricting proposal to the Board of Aldermen. The plan the aldermen approve is sent to the mayor for his signature or veto. If he signs it, or if the Board over-rides his veto, the plan becomes a city ordinance and wards are reorganized.

Computers could redistrict the city in seconds, if the only concern was designing equal-population wards. Difficulties arise from conflicting personal racial and political interests.

Most aldermen want their wards untouched. New boundaries may exclude supporters, include opponents or create racial shifts that could cost an alderman the next election. Loss of commercial districts from which contributions and jobs can be extracted may decrease an alderman's power. An alderman's greatest fear, however, is that his ward may be moved elsewhere and he would be redistricted into another alderman's ward. This has occurred several times in the past.

Residents also worry. Redistricting can divide a neighborhood into two or more wards. This complicates planning and development. It may place a neighborhood under a less competent alderman or one whose agenda differs from residents' interests. An alderman can determine a neighborhood's fate. For example, the redevelopment in the Shaw Neighborhood in the 8th Ward was in large part due to the efforts of past-Alderman John Koch.

PAULA SMITH SPEAKS ON SCHOOLS

By Mark Jefferies

School Board member Paula Smith addressed Block Unit 6's May meeting. She was part of the "4 for Kids" ticket in the last election.

Smith said her appearance at the meeting is part of her commitment to meet people and discover the changes needed in the school system. It is also part of the Board's plan to make each school board member responsible for a section of the city. Smith stated "This way local residents will have someone they know and trust with their problems and concerns." She continued, "Now that we have a capable team on the school board, we will work to upgrade education."

In response to questions, Smith stated that the Board is still searching for a School Superintendent. "We are trying to find the most qualified individual," she assured the audience.

Some schools will be closed. There

He risked his political career for the good of the neighborhood. In contrast, McRee Town (previously I-44 Neighborhood) and FPSE in the 17th Ward north of Shaw have declined under 17th Ward leadership.

Based upon the 1990 census, each ward should contain 14,167 residents. As shown on the map on page 2, populations in most northside wards fall below this number. In contrast, most southside wards are well above this average. The 17th Ward has an excess of 1513 residents.

Three philosophies of redistricting are being considered in City Hall: the "Expansionist", "Protectionist" and "Racial Balance". The Expansionists favor expanding northside wards southward into the central corridor's successful commercial districts and renovated neighborhoods. For example, the 21st Ward could expand into the 4th until it acquires the additional 840 residents required to reach a population of 14,167. The 4th originally needed 1627 more residents. It lost 840 residents to the 21st Ward and now needs 2400 residents. It could gain these by expanding into the 18th Ward. The 18th in turn expands into the 17th and so forth.

Proponents note that southward expansion would help maintain the current racial balance on the Board of Aldermen and create more racially and economically diverse wards. Aldermanic President Thomas Villa is said to favor an expansionist approach to redistricting. As a politician with possible mayoral aspirations, he can ill-afford to offend northside politicians.

Arguments against southward expansion express underlying racial fears. Some fear northside aldermen represent only poor blacks and that they will seek revenge against wealthy white neighborhoods by withholding capital improvement funds and city services. Opponents declare expansion would gut the central corridor, threaten the continued success of the West End and politically make it part

continued on page 2.

is excess capacity. "There are only about 43,000 students. We expect to close about 34 schools. Because 79% of the student population is black, it will not be possible to have 50-50% racial balance." Smith stated. She looks to Magnet schools to assist in the racial balance, but conceded there will be all black schools until major changes occur in housing. "To bring people back to the city school system," she continued, "we must offer a good quality education."

Smith expressed sympathy for teachers and said she will work for a solution regarding low salary. "The previous Board was irresponsible at how they handled them."

Smith stated that it will be best for the School system to "get out from under the court order" so the system can begin to establish its own priorities.

REDISTRICTING

of north St. Louis. They claim this would radically alter city politics.

The "Protectionist" approach favors protecting current ward boundaries by moving a northside ward to the southside. Proponents argue that because north St. Louis lost population, it should lose an aldermanic seat. They note that northside wards need about 14,000 residents, about the population of a ward. In contrast, southside wards have an excess of about 14,000 residents. Elimination of a northside ward would allow redistricting of the northside to be kept mostly within north St. Louis. Adding a ward to south St. Louis would allow redistricting of the southside to be kept within that area.

The city's population is almost 50% Afro-American, yet blacks are under-represented on the Board of Aldermen. Eliminating a northside ward represented by a black alderman would further reduce black representation. A possible solution is to move either the 2nd, 6th, or 7th Ward to south St. Louis. Each has a large black population, but is represented by a white alderman.

Recently, some black aldermen have demanded that redistricting reflect the racial balance within the city. They want half of the wards to contain sufficiently large black populations that black candidates could win aldermanic elections in those wards. They threaten a court challenge against any plan not reflecting St. Louis's nearly 50/50 racial balance.

IMPLICATIONS FOR 17TH WARD

Any 17th Ward boundary change is a threat to Joe P. Roddy's eroding power base. Ten years ago, as Chairman of the Democratic City Central Committee, Roddy was a major force in city politics. Today, what power Roddy retains is restricted to the 17th Ward.

Roddy has only two constituencies in the Ward: the elderly, concentrated in senior citizen homes in the West End and Plaza Towers, and what one black politician termed "poor black families with a plantation attitude toward Boss Roddy." The loss of one senior citizen home in redistricting could break Roddy's weakening hold on 17th Ward politics.

Under the Expansionist Plan the 17th Ward could lose everything north of Highway 40 and expand southward into the Shaw Neighborhood. This would eliminate all the senior citizen homes upon which Roddy depends for votes and the wealthy Central West End from which he obtains contributions.

A southward expansion of the ward is likely to be opposed by Shaw residents and Roddy. Residents remember when the 17th Ward extended into Shaw during the 1970s. One resident described Roddy as "opposed to any improvement that might cost him votes." Roddy knows the politically

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active Shaw residents will not support his candidates and will oppose his domination of ward politics.

Because of Roddy's reputation, it may be difficult to find any neighborhood willing to be included in the 17th Ward. Residents west of Kingshighway have also expressed opposition to being placed in Roddy's Ward. An eastward expansion across Grand Ave. might initially help Roddy retain power, but it would make the ward dominately black and likely to be targeted for expanding black representation.

In contrast to the Expansionist Plan, the Protectionist Plan would help to preserve the 17th Ward's current boundaries and Roddy's power. It is unlikely that Roddy or his son, the alderman, will openly endorse any plan that would visibly reduce black representation in the city. Such an endorsement would jeopardize Roddy's black support. Most likely, Roddy and his son will speak publicly as little as possible about redistricting.

IMPLICATIONS FOR FPSE

In the short-term, FPSE's interests may be served by retaining the 17th Ward's current boundaries. Ward expansion into middle class neighborhoods not controlled by Roddy would require him to work to obtain their support. Capital improvement funds and services could be concentrated in these newly added neighborhoods. Other areas in the ward, including FPSE, could starve for funding. 1991 was the first year Alderman Roddy promised to dedicate substantial city funds to FPSE. If major boundary changes occur, these could be the last funds for the near future.

In the long-term, FPSE's interests may be served by the disruption of Roddy-dominated ward politics. Under the present ward configuration, Roddy is confident he can have his son re-elected. There is little pressure on Roddy to work to improve the ward. Radically altered boundaries, would change this situation. A more astute population would begin to hold 17th Ward politicians accountable for their actions.



REHAB AWARDS

Two recently rehabbed buildings in FPSE received awards from the city's Heritage and Urban Design Commission as part of Preservations Week activities. Awards for neighborhood residential rehabilitation went to the FPSE Neighborhood Housing Corp. for their redevelopment of the 12-family at 1084-1092 South Taylor and to Randy and Mary Bueckendorf for their rehabilitation of (Graceland) 4520 Arco Ave. These projects were among 17 honoured at City Hall.

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1981 REDISTRICTING A LOOK BACK

By Karl Chauve

In October 1981 local newspapers reported redistricting proposals that moved the 25th Ward from the West End to south St. Louis and placed much of downtown St. Louis into the 7th Ward. The architect of the plan was 7th Ward Committeeman Sorkis Webbe.

Mayor Vince Schoemehl immediately stated he would veto the plan because it divided the West End among several wards. He considered Webbe a political rival and a threat to future downtown development.

With Schoemehl's encouragement, residents of the 25th Ward formed the Committee for Fair Ward Representation (CFWR). They prepared an alternate redistricting plan and initiated a petition drive to force the Board of Aldermen to adopt their proposal or hold a city-wide referendum.

Twenty Aldermen co-sponsored Webbe's redistricting plan, the exact number needed to over-ride a mayoral veto. Schoemehl disrupted the press conference announcing the redistricting plan by stating there were rumors of a recall attempt against him.

Schoemehl began a drive to reduce the number of wards from 28 to 11. He stated that fewer, but larger, wards would force aldermen to consider broader interests. Aldermanic President Zysch responded by requesting Democratic City Central Committee Chairman Joe P. Roddy to hold a special meeting of party leaders to discuss removing Schoemehl as the head of the city's Democratic Party. Roddy, a Schoemehl supporter, refused.

Attempts at compromise failed. The Board passed the redistricting plan 23 to 5. The CFWR collected more than 22,000 signatures.

In late November, Schoemehl abandoned the drive to reduce the number of wards. The CFWR presented their petitions to the Board of Aldermen, thereby forcing the aldermen to either accept CFWR's plan or hold a city-wide referendum.

At the regular City Central Democratic Committee meeting in December, the CCDC voted to oppose a city-wide referendum on redistricting. Roddy was criticized for refusing to hold a special meeting and accused of racial and sexual discrimination. Members called for an investigation of Roddy's office.

Schoemehl vetoed Webbe's redistricting plan. The aldermen overrode the mayoral veto. Irritated aldermen suggested eliminating some mayoral patronage positions, including those held by Roddy's relatives.

In mid-February, the Board of Aldermen, Schoemehl and the CFWR reached a compromise. The 25th Ward moved to south St. Louis, but additional parts of the CWE were put into the 28th Ward. More of downtown remained in the 6th Ward. The CFWR withdrew its petition, eliminating the need for the special election on redistricting.

Concerned Citizens of Forest Park Southeast, a non-profit, non-political group working to improve FPSE, publishes NEWS & VIEWS bi-monthly. Founded in June, 1988, N&V is delivered at no cost to approximately 1700 homes and numerous city officials. N&V provides free distribution of fliers for non-profit organizations and campaign literature for candidates. This is not to be construed as an endorsement. Contributions by FPSE residents and others pay for printing. Direct inquiries to editors K. Chauve, R. Sandall and M. Jefferies at FPCE NEWS & VIEWS, 4420 Arco Ave., St. Louis, Mo. 63110. Deadline for the next issue is August 15, 1991.

FPSE HOUSING CORP NEWS

By Karl Chauffe

May: Thirty Something, Display House & Taylor 12-Family

Darrell James plans to reopen AFFIRMATION Night Club at 1247 S. Vandewenter as THIRTY-SOMETHING. Planned for mainly an over 30s professional crowd, the club will operate Tuesday through Saturday. Extensive remodeling is planned for the interior.

Durnell Inc was chosen as the developer for the Display House Project. The subcommittee reported that Durnell's designs would appeal to many perspective buyers. Durnell proposes a two bedroom, 2 1/2 bathroom townhouse. Housing Corp Executive Director Kate Roth stated that although Durnell's projected costs were about \$1900 higher, he offered better amenities including ceramic tile in kitchen and bath, hardwood on the first floor, custom-built staircase, wood windows, a deck on each floor and a concrete parking pad in the rear. Mike Curran, a nominee for a Board advisory position, suggested "toning down" the project so Durnell would be certain to make a profit. Curran warned, "If he (Durnell) doesn't make a profit, you are going to lose him. He will not want to do additional projects here."

There are currently 6 tenants in the Taylor Ave. 12-family. A seventh tenant was asked to leave after an increase in visitors prompted complaints from the other tenants. Two tenants are expected to move in by June 1.

Dwayne Hester has agreed to several conditions so as to obtain approval for a six-month zoning variation for a foodshop at Newstead and Gibson avenues. Prohibited from the location are alcohol, loitering, litter, arcade games and storage in the rear yard. Store hours will be between 6 AM and 10 PM.

Roth reminded board members that their organizations must elect representatives to the Housing Corp. Board of Directors before the Corp's June meeting.

The Board decided to postpone the annual summer fund raiser picnic. Roth complained that too little money is raised for the time and effort required. A fall event will be discussed at a later meeting.

ABBOTT SAYS NO TO ADAMS GROVE

By Karl M. Chauffe

Abbott Ambulance Service is looking for a new headquarters because their current location will become a light rail train station. One of the properties considered by Abbott was the 4400 block of Hunt Ave. in Adams Grove.

At Block Unit 5's May meeting, Alderman Roddy expressed considerable irritation when asked about Abbott's plans. He stated, "This is not something that I have spoken about in public. I don't like it when these rumors get out and build up hopes and then nothing comes of them." According to a Hunt Ave. property owner, information about Abbott's interest in the property was leaked by the alderman's father, Joe P. Roddy.

Abbott spokesperson Terrance Dougherty told N&V there was never great enthusiasm for the Hunt location because of limited access. He stated, "It was never a high priority location." Alderman Roddy has reportedly stated that some of the land was contaminated.

June: Lutheran Services, Gee Steward, Elections & Variance

Representatives of the Lutheran Family and Children Services explained their program (See Lutheran Family Services on page 1).

Gee Steward of Operation Impact explained that GAP funding for the FPSE display house at 1091-93 Taylor will be delayed for about 90 days. The Board was presented with three choices: 1. Wait until funds are approved before beginning the project, but lose the 1991 building season, 2. Use ConServ funds, but risk not being able to recover the funds from GAP money when available, or 3. Borrow additional money from the bank. The Board voted to use ConServ funding.

The Housing Corp did not oppose the application for a liquor license by Darrell James for 1247 Vandewenter for his new bar, THIRTY SOMETHING. James has agreed to patrol for litter, prevent loitering, engage a professional security guard for all evenings of operation and not sell package liquor.

The Board unanimously elected Allan Levin treasurer, Helen Sheets secretary, and Cate Dolan president. In the only contested position, Dan Corbin easily defeated Tom Goshen for vice-president. Bryan Young was re-elected at-large member. Mike Curran was elected to a non-voting, advisory Board position.

The Board will send a letter to Housing Conservation opposing New Life Evangelist Center's request for a variance to allow five people to reside in a three room apartment at 4339 Gibson Ave. The small apartment is zoned for only three people. Housing Corp Executive Director Kate Roth stated that New Boyle Association President Ida Fields also opposed the variance.

LUTHERANS

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are guests of LFCS, they can be evicted easily, unlike renters.

Families stay in the transitional houses for 6 months, and then are aided in finding permanent housing. LFCS attempts to locate landlords who will accept less rent to get good tenants. After finding a permanent home, LFCS provides a year of follow-up services. Most families who have gone through LFCS's program in FPSE have chosen to locate elsewhere.

LFCS's buildings on Boyle will be rehabbed to the standards set by the Samuel McRee Redevelopment Corp. Lutheran congregation volunteers do much of the work. Zimmerman stated, "We are attempting to renovate these buildings so they could be sold as single family residences at a future date, if we no longer need them."

Zimmerman asked for Housing Corp assistance in dealing with FPSE resident and landlord Rick Jacobs. Jacobs owns the vacant building at 1302 Boyle Ave. It sits between the two LFCS buildings.

According to LFCS, when they initially approached Jacobs to buy his building, he wanted \$6,000. Now that work has begun on the two adjacent LFCS buildings, they claim Jacobs has raised his price to \$15,000. New Boyle representative Tom Goshen suggested that the Housing Corp put pressure on Jacobs.

Jacobs could not be reached for comment. According to Housing Corp Director Kate Roth, Jacob has expressed his intention to renovate 1302 Boyle.

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BLOCK UNIT NEWS

By Karl M. Chauffe

(See also Aderman Roddy Reports [page 5] & Smith Speaks [page 1].)

RANKEN EAST ASSOCIATION

May: Dumping, Brightside & Elections

Residents complained about increased illegal dumping in alleys and on vacant lots. ConServ Officer Carole Rulo encouraged residents to record license plates of vehicles doing the dumping and report them to the police.

President Dan Corbin recognized Dexter Silver, design and execution of the mural, Jim Kirk, procuring donations of paint and Joe Kutzman, landscaping for their work on the Brightside project.

By acclamation, the block unit elected Dan Corbin president, Dexter Silver vice-president and Gwendolyn Silver secretary-treasurer. Confusion during the FPSE Housing Corp representative election resulted when more votes were cast than there were qualified voters. In a later hand vote, Aldia Haley was elected representative. Failure to follow parliamentary procedure tainted the outcome of that election. Also, Haley was not a member of the organization when elected.

Joint Meeting of GIBSON HEIGHTS NEIGHBORS (BU 5) and GIBSON HEIGHTS NEIGHBORHOOD (BU6)

April: Scherer & Nominating Committees

FPSE Housing Corp. Director Kate Roth announced that Operation SafeStreet has offered to landscape a neighborhood LRA lot as an additional prize for winning National Night Out.

BU5 President Allen Levin thanked Jerry Scherer for his long service to the neighborhood and especially BU5. Scherer was BU5 Housing Corp representative, but will be moving from FPSE. Both block units established nominating committees for Housing Corp representatives. For BU5 the committee consisted of Larry Ritter, Mark Weber, Jerry Scherer and Joe P. Roddy and for BU6 Paula Lemeran, Karl Chauffe, Chester Perine and Helena Perine.

Following a brief presentation by Dwayne Hester, Block Unit 6 voted to support his plan to operate a foodshop at the corner of Newstead and Gibson aves.

GIBSON HEIGHTS NEIGHBORS (BLOCK UNIT 5)

May: Election & Restaurant

Allen Levin was unanimously elected representative to the FPSE Housing Corp. Levin announced he would resign as co-president of the block unit. Mark Weber, Sue Lauritsen, Nancy Denner, Joe P. Roddy and John Merrick were appointed to serve on the nominating committee for co-president.

The block unit purchased 10 tickets (\$40.00) to the senior citizen mostaccioli dinner and to donate \$25.00 to the Metro Ministry preschool barbecue.

Kate Roth announced that a Mr. Lu has applied for a conditional use permit to open a carry-out Chinese restaurant at Kingshighway and Arco avenues.

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LEGAL ADVISOR AUTO INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS & CONSEQUENCES

By Gaylard Williams

You have just purchased a car, but before you begin driving, don't forget your automobile liability insurance. The insurance compensates people for property and personal losses, suffered in automobile accidents. When an uninsured driver is involved in an accident we all pay.

Since 1987, all motor vehicle owners registered in Missouri must maintain liability insurance or deposit cash or securities in the amount of \$60,000 with the state treasurer, to operate or allow someone else to operate the vehicle. The law further requires the operator to carry a financial responsibility/insurance card in the vehicle at all times and to produce it on demand of a police (peace) officer.

Failure to have insurance can result in suspension of the vehicle's registration and the driver's license of the owner and/or operator. Failure to surrender your license or vehicle registration (license plates) within 15 days of the suspension, may result in a fine of \$25.00 per month, up to a total of \$300.00. Driving with a suspended license is illegal. If a driver must drive during the suspension period because of work or school, he can apply to the Circuit Court for a limited hardship license. For this a person should consult an attorney.

The suspension becomes effective 30 days after receiving notice from the Director of Revenue. The suspension for a first offense is 60 days. For a second offense it is one year. Additional violations result in a two year suspension.

To have their license and vehicle registration reinstated after the period of suspension, the person will have to pay a reinstatement fee and provide proof of financial responsibility. This is usually accomplished by getting an SR-22 from an insurance carrier. Reinstatement fees are \$200 for a first suspension, \$400 for a second suspension and \$800 for three or more suspensions.

HYDRANT SAFETY CALL 771-4880

By M. Jefferies

It is illegal, dangerous and costly to open a fire hydrant. Each year more than \$786,000 is added to our water bills because of illegally opened hydrants. That is about \$2.00 for each city resident. The cost includes the treatment and pumping of water to the hydrant, treatment of the water after it flows through the sewer and repair to damaged hydrants, streets, sidewalks and private property.

Children playing in the water can be injured. Small children may be knocked down by the pressure and run over by drivers who can not see them in the water. Flooded streets cause automobile accidents. The loss of water pressure may inhibit fighting fires and cause contamination of city drinking water.

It is in everyone's interest to report open hydrants. Call 771-4880. Open hydrants are a Water Division problem, not a police problem. Calling 911 will not get the water turned off.

Parks and Recreation Department has available A-frame buildings equipped with sprinklers. These buildings provide a safe place for children to cool off on hot summer days. They are safer and use less water than open hydrants. For more information on the A-frames call 535-0400.

SUMMER YOUTH PROGRAMS

By Richard Sandall

Pre-school

Gibson Heights Presbyterian Church offers a Summer Program for children ages three to five. The program will operate five days a week from 9:00 AM to 1:45 PM from June 24 through August 2. Breakfast and lunch will be provided. Music, exercises, story telling, teach and learn sessions, arts and crafts, show and tell periods and instructions on keeping work space tidy are parts of the planned program. Enrollment is limited. Cost for the six-week program is \$5.00. For more information call Debbie Lane, 535-1411.

Grade School

Join Metro Ministry's Adventures for Time Travelers. The program is designed for children who have completed grades 4 through 6. They will spend 8:30 AM to 12:30 PM Monday through Thursday from July 8 through July 26 exploring St. Louis's past, having field trips and making handicrafts. Parents can register their child at Metro 1040 S. Taylor between 3:30 and 4:30 PM Monday through Thursday. Fee is \$9.00. Call Vince Marino for more information at 534-1010.

Teenagers

Gibson Heights Presbyterian Church is starting a year-round youth program. This summer, the program will include a camping trip in the third week of July. For more information call Kim Jayne at 531-1009.

G. H. PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH NEWS

By R. Sandall

Gibson Heights Presbyterian Church thanks everyone who supported its Spaghetti Dinner on April 13. It was a tremendous success and has greatly bolstered the Church's budget. Two additional fund raisers are planned this year. On Saturday July 27 the church will hold its annual Ice Cream Social. On October 12 it will host another Spaghetti Dinner. Remember to mark your calendars!!

Thanks to a donation from the Presbytery of Giddings-Lovejoy and the South Side Presbyterian Churches United, we shall offer summer programs for pre-school and school age children. For more information see **SUMMER YOUTH PROGRAMS** above.

Saturday, June 29, is the last Senior Citizen Social for this season. Continuing popularity of these socials, has encouraged us to expand the program to every Saturday beginning in September. All FPSE senior citizens are invited to attend. They begin at noon in the Fellowship Hall on Arco.

Because of the influx of families at the church, we shall institute a Youth Sunday School Program in September.

From July through August, Gibson Heights Church returns to its summer schedule. Worship Services begin at 10:00 AM. No educational classes are held in summer. Everyone is invited to come and grow with the church.

FPSE TO GET PARK AT GIBSON & NEWSTEAD

Operation SafeStreet has awarded FPSE a "pocket park" as an additional prize for winning 1991 National Night Out. The LRA lot on the northwest corner of Gibson and Newstead will be cleared and landscaped. A lighted walkway will extend diagonally across the park. No seating is planned.

ON OUR OWN

By M. Jefferies

UNDER THE TABLE. Sometimes the most interesting motions at our own FPSE HOUSING CORP. meetings are not the motions on the table, but those below it. In addition to passing notes, there can be physical attacks. For example, during the May meeting one director repeatedly kicked another during a discussion on the planned display house. Does the Board award purple hearts for injuries received during Board meetings?

ROBERT'S RULES. After being informed that several of his proposals were illegal because they violated Robert's Rules Of Order, one of our own recently installed block unit officials asked in irritation, "Who is this Mr. Robert, does he live in the neighborhood and why does he get to make all of the rules?"

SHE'S ALIVE! Following the placement of the sign dedicating the garden at Chouteau and Tower Grove avenues to our own IDA FIELDS, President of the New Boyle Neighborhood Improvement Association, N&V received several inquires as to when Mrs Fields had died. We are pleased to report that Mrs Fields is still with us.

EXPERIENCE, THE BEST TEACHER. Our own ALDERMAN RODDY was mugged at gun point on May 10th in front of his home at 4529 Gibson Ave. Roddy was uninjured, but his wallet was stolen. Perhaps now Roddy will take more seriously FPSE residents complaints about street crime.

AND HE KEEPS TALKING AND TALKING AND... Apparently the mouth of our own Block Unit 6 President OWEN GEORGE EATON must operate on ENERGIZER batteries. At the May meeting, Easton "preached" for over 50 minutes. His sermonettes lasted so long there was no time for new business, old business, the aldermanic report or a complete reading of the minutes. Can a gag order be issued for a president?

REHAB VS NEW CONSTRUCTION. Our own HABITAT FOR HUMANITY continues to claim there are no buildings in FPSE that volunteers can rehab. Yet, Lutheran Family and Children Services found two on Boyle and their volunteers have begun renovating them. I guess Lutherans are better carpenters or maybe they just keep their eyes open when they look for buildings.

MAN ON THE RUN. Members of Block Unit 5 were encouraged in their Bright side work by our own ALDERMAN RODDY. As Roddy went by a group of hard-working residents he reportedly stated, "You are doing a really good job. Keep up the good work. Sorry I can't help. I have to get my jogging in." One neighborhood wit has quipped, "Just like a Roddy. They make a big show at running, but then don't do a damn thing to help the neighborhood."

Completion of the park will be in early August.

Past Block Unit 6 President Jane Sykes organized the winning block party. It celebrated the 100th anniversary of the Gibson Heights Subdivision. Over 250 people attended, including Mayor Schoemehl.

ALDERMAN RODDY REPORTS

By K. Chauffe

Over 100 people attended the recent Job Fair. This represents a decline in participation since the fairs began in 1989. Over 500 people attended the Youth Fair sponsored by the SouthSide Youth Coalition.

The city is facing another financial crisis. For the last ten years the budget has remained at about \$300,000,000. The current recession has resulted in a decrease in revenues of about \$10,000,000. Increased cuts in city services will result. Residents should expect slower response time and possibly decreased police protection, if the projected 3 to 4 million dollars is cut from the police budget.

The State of the Ward meeting was a success despite several guest speakers not attending. The main aldermanic goals for this year will be Manchester Ave., abandoned buildings, employment, education and technology.

PET CORNER HEARTWORMS

By S. Bowie

When a mosquito carrying the heartworm larvae bites a dog, larvae enter the dog's skin. There they live for the next 90 to 100 days. When they are about 3 inches long, the immature worms burrow into a blood vessel and migrate to the dog's heart. They settle in the right side of the heart or adjoining blood vessels. Within 5 months the worms reach adulthood. Females grow as large as 14 inches; males about 7.

Adult worms reproduce larvae, called microfilariae. These travel freely in the blood stream and are injected with the dog's blood when the dog is bitten by a mosquito. The larvae develop in the mosquito and are passed on when the mosquito bites again.

Heartworms do most of their damage in the adult stage. The long white worms can clog the heart's chambers and major blood vessels. They can also migrate to the lungs. Much damage can occur before symptoms appear. The disease is usually advanced before visible symptoms even appear - coughing, labored breathing, weakness and tiring. Severe infections commonly result in heart failure and death.

The presence of heartworms can be detected by a simple blood test and treated in its early stage. The more severe the infection, the greater the danger the treatment is to the dog.

Prevention is the most effective and practical means of controlling heartworms. A daily dosage of a new drug during the mosquito season prevents the worms from reaching the adult stage. Additionally, the drug also controls hookworms and roundworms. The drug is only available through a veterinarian and must be given under his directions. It cannot be used on dogs with established heartworm infections until they are cured.

Reports of heartworm infections in other animals, including man, are known, but rare. It is only common to dogs and is not a threat to humans.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"In this world, things are complicated and are decided by many factors. We should look at problems from different aspects, not just one"

Mao Tse-Tung

FOREST PARK

By Marge Berg

For as long as I can remember, I have had a love affair with Forest Park. As a child, I learned to ride a bike and fly a kite in the park. I hiked, fished and had picnics in the park. I rode Miss Jim, the famous zoo elephant, bought with pennies from school children. I rode the electric boats in the lagoon, attended summer musicals at the Muni Opera and Christmas concerts at the Art Museum. Later, when I had a family of my own, we spent part of every summer vacation day in the park.

Several years ago, the Junior League of St. Louis published the book "Forest Park". Knowing our interest and love for the park, one of my sons gave my husband a copy of the book for Christmas. I thought I knew everything about the park. I was wrong.

If the park had been built where originally planned, our neighborhood would not exist.

The idea for a city park was first suggested in 1864, but plans were postponed because of the Civil War. Supporters again proposed the park in 1870. They noted that other major cities had large parks. Park opponents declared it was too far from the city's center and would only benefit those who had land nearby or the wealthy who had a carriage to travel the four miles from the city.

Originally the park was to have been farther to the east and covered 3,000 acres. It would have extended from Grand Avenue, at that time the city limits, westward to Kingshighway. Had this plan been implemented, our neighborhood would never have been built. Gradually the park area was reduced to 1,370 acres and moved farther west to its present location.

In 1872 the St. Louis County Rail-

OVERPASS FROM PAGE 1

concrete have fallen away and the reinforcing rods dangle free, providing no support for the roadbed.

According to Joseph Kuss of the Board of Public Service, city engineers check all bridges and overpasses for safety and structural integrity every two years. After the last inspection, the allowable load limit for the Chouteau Overpass was reduced. Its decayed condition makes it unsafe for extremely heavy vehicles. Kuss stated, "The overpass definitely has to be replaced, but not until the Kingshighway Viaduct is finished. We are currently working with a consulting firm on plans for a new structure, but the existing overpass will not be replaced for some time, at least not until 1994. We need to acquire easements and make arrangements with the railroads. Funding for the new overpass will be from Federal Aid to Urban Roads.

THE GARDEN APOTHECARY

By A. Powellel

Strawberries not only taste good, they are good for you. They contain ellagitanin. Your body converts this to ellagic acid, a substance that prevents cancer in laboratory animals. Ellagic acid binds to carcinogens, preventing them from attaching to DNA and causing damage.

Strawberries can be grown from seed or by runners. Berry size can be increased by removing runners as the plants begin to produce berries. Strawberries thrive in well lighted and well drained soil. They are the only berries which bear their seeds on the outside of the fruit. *page five*

road Company built a narrow gauge line to the park area. Trains ran every quarter hour and a round trip cost twenty cents. This made the park available to many more people. Later, as many as seven streetcar lines provided service to Forest Park and the price was reduced to 5 cents for an adult and half-fare for children. Service ran from 5:30 AM to midnight. Thousands could now take their doctors advice, "Take your children to Forest Park. The fresh air will do more good than medication."

Between 1911 and 1915, Dwight H. Davis was park commissioner. He believed that people should use the park. He worked to attract visitors. One of his first acts as commissioner was to remove all of the "Keep Off The Grass" signs. He remarked, "If we can't have grass and people in our parks, let's sacrifice the grass." He also promoted organized recreation, believing that it would promote health, build character and teach children to play by the rules. This was the beginning of the sports facilities in the park.

By 1929, the park contained 38 tennis courts, 20 baseball diamonds, two soccer fields, two handball courts, a croquet course, archery range and two public golf courses. At one time there was a wonderful playground with instructors at the south-east end of the park near Oakland and Kingshighway. The park was safe, clean and, for my family, close to home.

Forest Park began and survives because it fills the needs of a variety of people. The park is a major asset and many people have cherished memories of happy times there.

Some of the information in this article is from the book "Forest Park" by C. Laughlin and C. Anderson.

BLOCK UNIT NEWS FROM PAGE 3

Some residents expressed concern about litter. Levin noted that the restaurant's previous owners were active residents of the neighborhood, but Lu resides in Baldwin and may not be responsive to neighborhood concerns. Roth requested a letter expressing the block unit's reservations.

Maude Coleman distributed a flier about future possibilities for Ranken Health Center and encouraged everyone to attend the Center's June 10 meeting.

GIBSON HEIGHTS NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION (BLOCK UNIT 6)

May: Smith, Shoemaker, Election & Eaton

Paula Smith spoke about the new school board. (See Smith Speaks on page 1.)

Police Officer Terry Shoemaker (Third District) reiterated Captain Page's commitment to work with the neighborhood. Shoemaker encouraged residents to report any suspicious activity in the neighborhood.

Cate Dolan was unanimously re-elected Housing Corp. representative. Chester Perine was appointed vice-president of the block-unit by the Executive Board.

President George Eaton thanked all those who participated in BrightSide, spoke about fire hydrants, discussed problems at the Ranken Health Center, and commented on numerous topics.

Residents complained to Alderman Roddy about blocked sewers and flooding streets.

GUEST EDITORIAL: HOW HEALTHY IS OUR HEALTH COMMITTEE ?

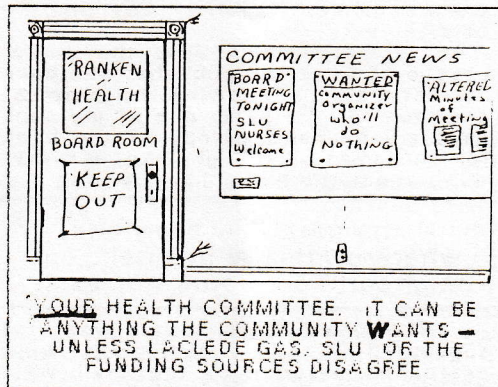
By Kim Jayne

Ranken Neighborhood Health Committee began as a joint effort between the community and St. Louis University's School of Nursing. The community was to identify health issues and address them. The school was to provide support. Unfortunately, SLU has dominated from the beginning. Most efforts have been narrowly focused on forming the Ranken Neighborhood Health Clinic. Other community needs have been largely ignored. There is definitely a need for health services, but other community needs must also be answered.

Community participation on the Board of Directors of the RNHC has always been token. Community representatives are discouraged from making significant contributions at Board meetings. Many have quit in frustration. Three Board presidents in the last four years were intimidated into resigning or faced so many internal obstacles that their efforts were wasted. Students and faculty from the SLU Nursing Program dominate the Board and set the agenda of meetings. Many of the people currently serving on the Board were never elected by the community.

Recently, my job as community organizer was eliminated at RNHC. Conflicts arose when the major charity funding the Center objected to certain community actions organized in the name of the RNHC. A group of women took literally the concept "to empower the people" and decided to take action on one community problem - utilities and their relation to community health.

At the time, Georgia Peters, 45, had frozen to death in her home because Laclede Gas had disconnected her service. Frustration and the futility of dealing with public relations officials from Laclede Gas resulted in fifty people gathering at the Laclede Gas Building on January 9 in memory of Georgia Peters. We wanted to pierce the myth that gas service will not be disconnected during the winter, if you are unable to pay.



Shortly thereafter, my position as community organizer was eliminated. I believe Laclede Gas, and in particular Lee Lieberman, pressured the charities that fund the RNHC to require this action. Ironically, these charities have stated, "The emphasis on community and client participation is what makes this program so innovative."

RNHC is not following its By-laws or policies. The Personnel Policies state that community residents should be given priority for salaried positions.

Of six paid employees, only one full-time and one half-time are from the community. Two positions are held by people from SLU. If RNHC was established to provide graduate placement for the SLU Community Health Nursing Program, the community should have been told.

Recent staff and Board actions violated the Health Committee's directives. For example, in February the Committee voted not to change the community organizer's job description, as requested by Laclede Gas, but only to stipulate that no one was to represent the RNHC in any demonstration. Instead, the position of community organizer was eliminated. Minutes of the subsequent meeting have been altered to hide this discrepancy.

Current RNHC President Owen Eaton does not help mitigate differences within the committee. He is ignorant of Robert's Rules of Order, blatantly chauvinistic and biased. Unfortunately, some members are willing to defend his behavior.

RNHC can either be an arm of SLU's School of Nursing or a community organization. It can not be both. As a community organization, more community input and control are needed. All meetings, including Board meetings must be open to the public.

All people must be treated fairly and justly at meetings. Board members must be elected by and reflect the diversity of the community. Finally, all aspects of the community must be addressed, not just health services.

A LOOK AT THE LIGHT SIDE OF BRIGHTSIDE

By K. Chauffe

BrightSide is over. Previously, its passing was noted for what was missing, namely trash and debris from the alleys and streets. This year it is more noteworthy for what it has left behind: several lots which have been "beautified" to varying degrees. As part of the BrightSide activities each block unit was supposed to adopt a vacant lot and improve it as part of a neighborhood contest.

The best project was Ranken East's garden and mural on Chouteau Ave. It received the first place award in the neighborhood competition. The garden and lawn alone are impressive, but the mural is what makes the greatest impression. I call the mural "Terrified Teddies Take To The Sky". It features a series of colourful balloons carrying aloft several unhappy-looking teddy bears. The adjacent lawn provides a place to sit, view the mural and ponder unanswered questions. Why did the bears leave in the balloons and where are they going? Are the balloons hot air, hydrogen or helium? Do the bears have food and water? Where do they go to the bathroom?

The Adams Grove's Surrealistic Sculpture Landscape on Tower Grove Ave. is another project of note. The large lot is covered by short-chopped weeds and has two short stick-like trees. Three long bleak benches are arranged off center. Two benches, one behind the other, face north. The third is located to the east of the first two and faces west. Two barrel-shape planters form what could be an entrance from Tower Grove Ave.

The psychological implications of this sculpture are overwhelming. The stark barrenness of the area, the exposure to the blazing sun and the

arrangement of the benches make it obvious that the artists intended for this to be seen as a hostile environment. The planters offer a deceptively friendly greeting to what lies beyond.

Some neighborhood residents refer to the Adams Grove project as the FPSE Serra Sculpture. I disagree. It has reached a deeper level of alienation in a modern technopolis than Serra dreamed existed. I call this project "Bus Stop To Nowhere".

Area residents are encouraged to view the sculpture as soon as possible. Knowing the Japanese predilection for surrealistic art, don't be surprised if it is bought and carted off to Tokyo by a wealthy businessman. Yet, another national treasure lost to Japan.

The Gibson Heights (BU6) project at Newstead and Gibson and the New Boyle (BU7) project at Tower Grove and Chouteau must be considered together. On the surface they appear to consist of a random arrangement of square and triangular gardens formed from railroad ties on weed-covered lots. N&V has recently learned that the so-called gardens are actually landing signals for alien spaceships. What appears to be a birdbath on Chouteau is really a space beacon. New Boyle won second prize in the neighborhood contest for the best camouflaged alien space station in an urban environment. The exact date of the next landing is not known. Judging from the large crowds that gather on the corner of Gibson and Newstead, it must be soon.

The most subtle of all the projects was Gibson Heights Neighbors (BU5) at the corner of Gibson and "Old Kingshighway". Appearing as an unimaginative conversion of a muddy shortcut into a stable pathway and garden, the project is actually a subliminal ex-

ercise in Euclidean mathematics designed to improve science scores and fight Japan's domination of world manufacturing.

By walking diagonally across the lot, instead of around the corner on the sidewalk, people will learn that the shortest distance between two points is a straight line, the hypotenuse is shorter than the sum of its two sides, and that you will exert more energy walking over the hill on the path than staying on the sidewalk.

Because of this project, our neighborhood may some day produce a scientist able to communicate with the space aliens who routinely land at Gibson and Chouteau, a wealthy businessman who will buy back the Adams Grove Sculpture, or a philosopher who can tell us where the Ranken East bears go to the bathroom.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

On behalf of the Ranken East Neighborhood Improvement Association and all of the residents of the Ranken East area, I would like to recognize the following people and businesses for their help, assistance and donations for our award-winning BrightSide project.

Thank you,
Dan Corbin, President

Joe Kutzman
Dexter Silvers
Sherwin-Williams Paints
R. Schroeder Sod Farm
Union Pacific Railroad
Goedecke Woods & Co.
Ace Scaffolding and Maintenance
Co. Dinzler Equipment Co.
St. Louis Organ & Piano Service

Jim Kirk
Joe P. Roddy