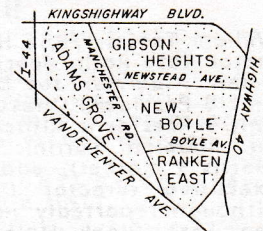


FPSE NEWS & VIEWS

THE FOREST PARK SOUTHEAST NEIGHBORHOOD NEWSPAPER

"THE NEWS OF OUR NEIGHBORHOOD"



DECEMBER 1991 - JANUARY 1992

HOLIDAY ISSUE

Vol. 4/No. 2 COPYRIGHT 1991

SANTA CLAUSE COMES TO FPSE FOR PICTURES

Monday, December 16, 1991
Wednesday, December 18, 1991

From 5:30 until 8:00 PM

Gibson Heights Presbyterian Church
1075 South Taylor Avenue

\$2.50/ picture*

*Pictures will be processed and mailed to you within one week.

OFFICE TO MOVE

By K. Chaulfe

In late December the Forest Park SE Housing Corporation is moving into its new office in the apartment building it owns at 1092 So. Taylor. The move will allow the Corp. to save on rent.

From the early to mid 1980s the FPSE Housing Corp owned and occupied the storefront at the corner of Arco and Gibson. The Corp. rehabbed the building, creating office space for itself on the first floor and low-income rental units above.

The financially strapped Housing Corp. sold the building in the late 1980s to artist James McGarrell. He now has a studio in the large corner storefront. The Housing Corp. became his tenant and moved into the small office at 1084 So. Taylor.

Although more modern, 1084 So. Taylor has several problems. The roof and windows leak, if the wind blows the rain from the right direction. There have also been problems with the restroom.

An agreement between McGarrell
continued on page 3

CITICORP GRANTS

By Mark Jefferies

Citicorp's Urban Renaissance Grant Program has awarded grants to the Forest Park Southeast Housing Corp and Metro Ministry.

According to Executive Director Kate Roth, the Housing Corp has been awarded \$6500 for a gangway security program. Roth said, "Unsecured gangways are a serious problem. They provide escape routes for criminals and afford places for drug dealers to transact business."

The grant will finance security gates and lights for gangways. Two styles of ornamental gates are offered. Building owners will be asked to pay part of the cost depending upon income. Kick-off for the program is expected to be this spring and applications will be available then.

According to Robert Ford of Citicorp, Metro Ministry received a \$2400 grant to assist in renovating Rainbow Park. The park frequently floods after rains. Ford stated that the grant is independent of controversial plans to place a statue of Christopher Harris in the park (see STATUE).

CHRISTOPHER HARRIS STATUE IS IT WANTED IN FPSE?

By K. Chaulfe

Police Chief Clarence Harmon has announced that guns, purchased in the gun buy-back program, will be melted and cast as a statue of murder victim Christopher Harris. The statue will be a monument to innocent victims of gun violence and may be placed in the Forest Park Southeast Neighborhood. Growing neighborhood opposition favors locating the monument outside FPSE because of the negative neighborhood image it might generate.

On June 9, 1991 nine-year-old Christopher Harris was used as a human shield during a drug-related shooting on Gibson Ave. Harris was shot in the back and died a few hours later at the hospital.

Community response was immediate. Caroline Wurm (4500 block Gibson Ave.) organized a candlelight vigil. Sympathy and financial aid were given to Harris's family. Police patrols on Gibson and throughout Forest Park Southeast increased. Eventually, all east-west streets north of Manchester were closed. Statistics demonstrate that crime and drug trafficking on Gibson have significantly decreased.

For months after Harris's death, our neighborhood's name was battered in the local press. Gibson Ave. and Forest Park Southeast Neighborhood became synonymous with drugs, guns and violence. Numerous articles recounted the killing. FPSE was described as a neighborhood "breathing on fragile life support," an area over-run with crime and drugs, and rapidly decaying. Almost no mention was made of redevelopment and improvements here, or growing resident involvement.

Selling and renting FPSE properties became increasingly difficult as the media blitz continued. According to Fred Crawford (4400 block Gibson Ave) the price offered for his building dropped \$7000 after the murder. Landlords throughout FPSE complain of fewer good tenants willing to rent

here. Landlords are being forced to accept less desirable tenants.

Sparked by Harris's death, Rev. Larry Rice and the St. Louis City Police Department began a gun buy-back program. About \$350,000 was spent buying 7,470 guns. Police Chief Clarence Harmon announced that the guns will be melted and cast as a statue of Christopher Harris. Harris will symbolize all innocent victims of gun violence.

The gun buy-back program and statue received nation-wide press. Harmon appeared on network TV. He described the statue as a positive symbol of "taking back the streets."

Without consulting neighborhood leaders, Harmon declared the statue will be placed in FPSE. When he proposed locating it in Rainbow Park (Taylor and Gibson), Harmon thought the land was city property. Rainbow Park is owned and maintained by Metro Ministry, 1040 So. Taylor Ave.

In November the Forest Park Southeast Housing Corporation voted to oppose locating the statue in FPSE. They expressed concern that the "media hoopla" associated with the statue's dedication would again hurt the neighborhood's reputation. The statue's dedication is planned for the spring, about the same time the Taylor Avenue display house will be finished and open to the public. The Board saw the statue as a potential obstacle to marketing our neighborhood to renters and home buyers. Anyone coming to the neighborhood would see the memorial, hear the story and think FPSE is not a safe place to live. Board President Cate Dolan declared that a more appropriate memorial to Harris would be a scholarship fund or tutoring service.

In early November a meeting was called to discuss Harmon's plan to place the statue in FPSE. In attendance were Police Chief Harmon, Lt.

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ADAMS SCHOOL'S FUTURE

By Karl Chaulfe

According to School Board Member John Mahoney, the fate of Adams School has not been decided. Currently, Adams is scheduled to close in the spring of 1994. Kindergarten through fifth grade are taught at Adams.

Mahoney stated that Adams School and the attempt to save it "have taken on a life of their own" since the 1980 decision to close the school. He noted that Judge Steven Limbaugh, who ordered the school closed, was not familiar with St. Louis City schools and neighborhoods. Limbaugh was from Cape Girardeau.

Mahoney praised Judge Gunn, Limbaugh's successor. "Gunn is from St. Louis and is more sensitive to city neighborhoods and their schools," Mahoney stated. Mahoney hopes that Gunn will value naturally integrated schools, such as Adams, as an anchor for the community. He is encouraged by Gunn's willingness to meet with the

group trying to save Adams School.

Mahoney cited several possible futures for Adams School. Adams could become a Magnet School. The Board of Education plans to develop a series of magnet science schools. Adams is proposed for the site of the magnet middle science school, grades 6 through 8. Mahoney said, "If chosen, the present buildings will be razed and a new school built."

If Adams School is closed, the building could become a community center. External funding will be needed for renovation and operation.

Finally, Adams School may continue indefinitely beyond the 1994 deadline as an elementary school. Extensive renovation will be required.

Mahoney stated, "We are under a deadline mandated by court order. A decision on Adams could be reached by April." At present, Adams School will be maintained, but no major improvements are planned.

HARRIS STATUE

William Taylor, FPSE Housing Corp Director Kate Roth, Board President Cate Dolan, Alderman Joe D. Roddy, Block Unit 6 President Chester Perine, Block Unit 5 President Althea Bolden, sculptor Rudolph Torrini, Sylvia Wilkens (Harris's mother), and Metro Ministry Executive Director Dianne Johnson. Although reportedly not invited, Ranken East Block Unit President Dan Corbin also attended.

The private meeting was described as emotional. One participant accuses Harmon of attempting "emotional blackmail" by inviting Harris's family. "The mother's presence hindered an open exchange and made it difficult to say we don't want the statue here." Another participant accuses Harmon of using the statue for public relations. "It's a way for the police to get good press without really addressing the problem."

At the meeting Torrini displayed his model of the proposed statue. In it Christopher Harris stands barefoot and looks upward. His hands are behind his back holding a softball. The completed monument will consist of a four foot statue standing on a five foot granite base. The inscription on the base may read, "Dedicated to Christopher Harris and the victims of gun violence." It has been suggested that the names of other victims could be added to the granite base as murders occur.

According to Torrini, the guns will be melted and the resulting metal analyzed. Other metals will be added to produce an alloy that will not rust and can be cast. Torrini described the statue as, "The antithesis of the violence that killed the child, an affirmation of faith." He stated that it is wrong of the community to oppose the statue and "pretend that the death never happened."

The design of the statue has been criticized. Corbin stated that a barefoot black child is a negative racial stereotype. He also noted that it looks as though Harris's hands are handcuffed behind his back. In contrast, a neighborhood artist has called the statue unimaginative, noting its striking similarity to "Little Dancer of Fourteen Years" by Degas. That statue is of a girl looking upward with her hands clasped behind her back.

When neighborhood representatives at the meeting expressed opposition to placing the statue in FPSE, both Torrini and Harris's mother reportedly became emotional. According to Bolden, "At the end of the meeting, Harris's mother (Wilkens) stated that if the neighborhood did not want the statue, she would take it home." Wilkens moved from FPSE shortly after the shooting and now resides in the county. Corbin offered Ranken East Park in the 4100 block of Chouteau as a home for the statue. Ranken East Park won first place in the 1991 Brightside contest. Harmon apparently does not favor this location and it is not being considered.

Shortly after the meeting, police officers delivered petitions about placing the statue in FPSE to some block unit presidents and asked them to collect signatures. It is also reported that Tom Goshen, an ex-officer of New Boyle Block Unit and no longer a resident of FPSE, contacted Chief Harmon encouraging him to place the statue here. One block unit president stated that Goshen persuaded him to collect signatures. In response to what residents described as "outside interference," letters were sent to Harmon expressing concerns about locating the statue here. Copies were

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sent to Metro Ministry.

It is reported that Harmon considered not placing the statue in FPSE so as to avoid controversy. He may have returned to his original plan when supposed representatives of Adams Grove, New Boyle, Ranken East and BU 6 informed him that they supported an FPSE location.

In November BU6 Vice-President Trish Curtis stated that the block unit had never endorsed placing the statue in FPSE. Yet, in early December Lt. Taylor stated he had received confirmation that Block Unit 6 fully supported placing the statue here.

In the ceremony to end the buy-back program, Harmon described FPSE as the most appropriate place for the statue. Several newspapers have since stated that the statue will be placed here. In contrast, Alderman Roddy assured BU6 in November that no location had been chosen.

At Block Unit 6's November meeting President Chester Perine announced he had collected 35 signatures in

It is uncertain if additional neighborhood input will be sought in choosing a place for the statue.

support of placing the statue in Rainbow Park. He also claimed that basketball courts will be provided, if we accept the statue. Several residents disputed this claim. Perine, who lost reelection that night, blamed his defeat on his support of the statue.

At the BU meeting Jackie Jackels suggested locating the statue in a more public place "so the police and politicians would be reminded of Harris's death." Alderman Roddy claimed to have little control over where the statue is placed. He also stated he was not certain the statue was an appropriated memorial. The majority opinion expressed at the meeting opposed placing the statue in FPSE.

Block Unit 5 voted to write Chief Harmon and ask him not to place the statue in FPSE unless it has support of all neighborhood organizations. This would effectively eliminate Rainbow Park because the Housing Corp. had already voted to oppose all FPSE locations. During the discussion Pres. Bolden expressed fear that police protection might be reduced, if Harmon was opposed. At BU6's meeting Alderman Roddy alluded to the same concern.

Other residents stated that the monument is too large for the park. Some thought that a constant reminder of Harris's death would be bad for children who play there.

Metro could deny use of the park, but it is under financial pressure to accept the statue. Metro has wanted to re-landscape Rainbow Park but lacks the funds. According to FPSE Housing Corp. Board Member Allen Levin, Wetterau Inc. will contribute \$10,000 to Metro for landscaping, if the statue is placed in Rainbow Park.

Executive Director Dianne Johnson stated that Metro's Board of Directors is attempting to remain neutral. She said, "The Board supports Harmon and placing the statue in Rainbow Park, but does not want to become part of a controversy." Johnson related that the Board discounted letters from neighborhood residents and arguments expressing concern about property values. She continued, "The Board looks at this from a moral point; what is morally good for the community."

Johnson believes her Board will vote to accept the statue "regardless

page two

LIONEL TRAINS

More than a toy - a tradition.
Happy Holidays

how the community feels." She stated, "We want all parties to work together on this: those that support the statue and those that don't. But if there is negative publicity, the Board will vote to accept the statue. I know my Board." Johnson criticized Harmon for excluding Metro and the community before announcing where he planned to place the statue.

According to police Lt. Taylor, he and Dave Gnaegy from HOK, an architectural firm, have reviewed three possible locations for the statue. All are within FPSE: Rainbow Park, Gibson Heights Park (corner of Newstead and Gibson aves.) and Adams School. Lt. Taylor was uncertain when a location would be chosen or if additional neighborhood input will be sought.

POLICE SUBSTATION

By Mark Jefferies

Forest Park Southeast has become the sight of a Third Police District Substation. A substation is a place provided by a business or the community for patrol officers to use as an office. There they can do paper work, make phone calls and eat meals without having to leave their patrol area. Substations also make officers more visible and able to serve the community. There are 36 substations city-wide and seven in the Third District.

The FPSE Substation began operation on December 1 at 1092 S Taylor. The building is owned by the FPSE Housing Corp. and was renovated in 1990. According to Housing Corp Board Member Allen Levin, the station will allow officers to spend more time in our neighborhood.

Washington University Medical Center Redevelopment Corp. is paying the first three months rent and half of the rent for the next 21 months. The remaining rent will be paid through donations.

MC Shoe Company has donated \$500.00 and some furniture. Block Unit 5 pledged \$70 per month for up to twelve months. Utilities will also be paid with donations; Renard Paper - telephone bills, Mike Hartman - electric bill, and United Residents Against Crime - phone installation. FPSE NEWS & VIEWS donated a telephone. Area residents donated desks and chairs to furnish the office.

According to Kate Roth the substation will provide added safety to the neighborhood and help control the recent drug problems on Oakland Ave. Roth stated, "The substation is located at the south end of the building and will have a good view down Oakland Ave."

Building residents are reportedly very pleased to have the station. Its presence may help find other good tenants for the apartment building.

FPSE Housing Corporation will be moving its office across the hall from the substation in January.

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. Chauffe, R. Sandall and M. Jefferies at FPSE NEWS & VIEWS, 4420 Arco Ave., St. Louis, Mo. 63110. Deadline for the next issue is February 1, 1992.

FPSE BULLETIN BOARD

By Richard Sandall

The Forest Park Southeast Neighborhood Bulletin Board is again up and running. Learning what is happening in your neighborhood is now only a phone call away. Just dial 622-3456 and follow the simple instructions. Access code for FPSE is 130. Phone and discover what meetings and events are being held.

The Board's monthly calendar is open to everyone and all organizations are encouraged to list their events. The contact person for the FPSE Bulletin Board is Askia Thabit, "The Voice Of FPSE". Leave information for the Bulletin Board at 534-4135.

FPSE Bulletin Board is operate free of charge by Operation SafeStreet in co-operation with United Residents Against Crime (URAC).

HOUSING CORP NEWS

By Karl Chauffe

See also Substation, Move, Statue & CitiCorp.)

October: Real Estate Report, Street Closings, Gates

The 1091-93 S Taylor (Display House) partnership is progressing. Executive Director Kate Roth will represent the Board at the closing.

1084-92 S Taylor (12-family) has six tenants. Recent open houses attracted no applicants despite costly ads. Negative publicity following neighborhood murders is blamed. An application was submitted to CDA for funds to landscape the property. The Board discussed renting some units as senior citizens Section 8 or marketing to students.

The September barbecue earned \$200. Roth expressed hope that future efforts would bring in more once people "learned what a good value they were receiving for their dollar".

The Board discussed closing Oak-
continued on page 4

MOVE from page 1

and past Executive Director Jan Elder allows for a 10% rent increase each January. The current rent is about \$325/mo., reportedly high rent for office space in FPSE. Several Board Members have complained that the increase is too steep and out-strips inflation. Because of continued financial difficulties, the Board of Directors voted only a 5% increase last year.

In 1988 \$200,000 in ConServ funds became available to FPSE. The Housing Corp used this money to purchase the trouble-plagued 12-family apartment building at 1088-92 So. Taylor. Borrowing additional money from the bank, the Corp moderately rehabbed the building. Rents were to pay the note and expenses. The Corp. set strict standards for tenants and hired Westminster Management.

The murder of Christopher Harris and a slow rental market made it difficult to find good tenants. Occupancy has hovered at 50% and is below the break-even point. According to Kate Roth, moving the Housing Office to one of the unoccupied apartments will save money. She stated, "We can apply the rent we now pay to McGarrell toward the expenses of the building. We save money on rent increases and eliminate the deficit on the apartment building." In November the Corp's Board approved the move.

It is reported that McGarrell may rent the 1084 S. Taylor to an art student as a studio.

BLOCK UNIT NEWS

By Karl Chauffe

See also Third District, Roddy Report, Substation, Move, Grants & Statue

GIBSON HEIGHTS NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION (BLOCK UNIT 6)

September: Hart, Funds, Real Estate & Night Out

Operation SafeStreet Executive Director Suzanne Hart announced that FPSE will receive a landscaped pocket-park for winning the 1990 National Night Out contest.

Block unit checking account will be closed. Commerce Bank instituted a \$5.00 charge on checking accounts with less than a \$500 balance.

The Real Estate Committee is sending letters to property owners whose tenants are suspected of dealing in drugs. Information is supplied by neighbors and forwarded to the police.

Jane Sykes reported that National Night Out 1991 was a success. Four TV stations attended the event highlighted by pony rides, a petting farm, clowns and entertainment.

October: By-laws, [REDACTED] Contest & Park

Members passed By-law changes that:

1. Expands the Executive Board to include a Parliamentarian.
2. Elects a nominating committee of 3 to 5 members.
3. Elects officers to fill vacancies on the Board.
4. Requires a vote for the reimbursement of expenses not previously approved by the membership.
5. Provides for the election of the Housing Corporation representative and requires the organization of standing committees.
6. Requires public executive meetings, one week before regular monthly meetings.

Kate Roth reported that a letter from the Real Estate Committee to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] regarding suspicious activity on their property was stolen at BU 5's September meeting. Six other letters were untouched.

The park committee chose the LRA-owned lot at Gibson and Newstead aves for the site of the pocket park. They endorsed infrastructure improvements including new sidewalks and functioning sewers. Additional funds may be needed for the planned park.

Jackie Jackels announced plans for a Halloween decoration contest. Cate Dolan, Jackie Jackels and Karl Chauffe were elected the nominating committee for upcoming block unit elections.

November: Election, Real Estate, Crime & Street Closings

Elected officers for 1992 are: Bill Jackels - President, Jane Sykes - Vice President, Helene Perine - Treasurer, Richard Sandall - Secretary and Angie Renner - Parliamentarian.

The Real Estate Committee has had some success on Oakland Ave. Several problem tenants have moved and Oakland shows less loitering. 4405 Gibson, owned by R.S. Pujl, is in Housing Court. Problems with that property have included numerous building code violations, litter and debris in the yard and drug trafficking.

Members praised the street closings, despite minor inconveniences. Trish Curtis encouraged everyone to keep the alleys clean.

J. Jackels expressed disappointment in the lack of participation in the

Halloween Decoration contest. Annie Schumbauer won first place. Kate Roth and Jane Sykes proposed a Christmas Decoration contest.

GIBSON HEIGHTS NEIGHBORS (BLOCK UNIT 5)

September: News Letters, Real Estate & Litter

Francis Dysarz is interim secretary. A membership drive began in October. Assistance is needed to organize a data base of residents' names, addresses and phone numbers.

Allen Levin noted that delivery of GIBSON HEIGHTS NEIGHBORS Newsletter had become unreliable. Alternate distribution schemes were discussed, including having members deliver them.

Lucille Roddy complimented AG workers for cleaning Taylor Ave. Levin stressed clean streets as a deterrent to crime. He stated, "Drug dealers are less likely to operate in a clean neighborhood because they know that people care and may be watching." Levin again proposed an "adopt-a-street" program. In return for recognition, groups adopt blocks to keep clean. Lucille Roddy argued that people should only clean on their own streets. Levin countered, "It is better to pick up trash each month than to argue about whose responsibility it is."

Richard Jacoby will manage 1086-88 So. Kingshighway. Area residents should contact him at 677-1711 if any problems arise.

October: Police Meeting, NSN Report & Wash U. Expansion

President Bolden reported that Police Captain Page already knew of neighborhood problems discussed at a recent private meeting.

Ian Anderson complained about a loud and suspicious ice cream truck that has been cruising FPSE late at night.

Gene Kilgen spoke on expansion of the Washington University Medical Complex north of Highway 40. The expansion includes: an ambulatory center, parking garage and possible purchase of the Blue Cross Building on Forest Park Blvd.

November: NSN Report, Substation, Statue, & Roth

Barb Prosser succeeds Jerry Moriarity as treasurer.

NSN Patrols are now concentrating on trouble spots, such as 4500 block of Oakland. Report suspected areas to NSN at 652-2711. Burglaries increase this time of year. NSN officers are available to provide security checks of your home.

Block Unit 5 pledged \$70/mo. for one year to support the police substation at 1092 So. Taylor.

Residents praised Kate Roth's work at the Housing Corp. Levin credited Roth with rehabilitating 1088-92 S. Taylor and planning the proposed Display House at 1091-93 S. Taylor. Mark Jefferies stated, "Under Kate the Housing Corp. is finally doing what it was suppose to."

Block Unit 5 voted to send a letter to Chief Harmon and Metro Ministry requesting that the statue of Christopher Harris not be placed in FPSE unless it receives support from all neighborhood organizations (See Statue).

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HOLIDAY SAFETY TIPS

By K. Becherer

The holiday season is a time for family and friends. It is a time for giving. Unfortunately, some people believe it is also a time for taking. The holiday season is a peak period for theft and burglary. Below are ten helpful hints to make this a safe holiday season.

At Home:

1. Lock all doors and windows, even if you will only be gone for a minute. Don't forget second floor windows. You may not see them as a way into your house, but a cat burglars will.

2. If you will not return before dark, leave a light and radio on in the house. Never leave a note saying when you will return. This will only tell a burglar how long he has to work undisturbed.

3. Never leave packages in a car overnight. Empty boxes should also be removed. You may know they are empty; a thief may not.

4. Never open your door to a stranger or let them know that you are alone. Remember, chain locks stop no

one.

5. Ask service people for an ID before you open the door.

While Out:

6. Don't carry large amounts of money and don't carry all your money in one place. Leave your purse at home, if possible.

7. It may be dark when you are ready to go home from shopping or visiting. Only park your car or catch busses in well-traveled, well-lighted areas.

8. On busses, hold onto packages. Sit in the front near the driver. If you need directions, ask the driver, not other passengers.

9. When returning to your car, have the door key ready. Before reaching your car see if anyone is hiding near or under it. Before getting into your car check back seat and floor to be certain no one is hiding inside.

10. If you see something suspicious, report it to the police. You may help save someone's holiday.

POLICE NEWS

By M. Jefferies

Third Police District Public Relations Officer Terry Shoemaker encouraged residents to keep their neighborhood clean. According to Shoemaker, "A clean neighborhood is a safe neighborhood. It sends the message that residents living there care. They are the type of people who will be watching and will report drug activity." Shoemaker continued, "Gangs know that clean neighborhoods are not a safe place to deal drugs and they will move elsewhere."

Shoemaker announced that the SCAT (Street Corner Apprehension Team) is again operating and will probably be in FPSE soon. He encouraged everyone to report suspected drug activity to the Drug Hotline at 622-4333.

A Truancy Center has been established at Mullanphy School. Police are now detaining youths not in school between 9:00AM and 3:00PM Monday through Friday. The youths are taken to the center and remain there until they either give the name of their school or their parents are contacted. The police are exploring the possibility of establishing a Curfew Violation Center for adolescents who violate the city's night curfew.

DUMPING REWARD

St. Louis is getting serious about illegal dumping. Under Ordinance #62330, you could collect a \$100 reward for information leading to the conviction of anyone dumping on lots, alleys, streets and/or yards.

To report a dumping incident call the police at 231-1212 and report the following information:

1. Location of dumping - an address if possible.
2. Vehicle license plate number.
3. Company name if applicable.
4. Description of the person(s) including:

Height	Weight	Age
Race	Hair colour	
Other Features		

In some cases you may be required to testify in court. For more information or to have questions answered, call ConServ Officer Carole Rulo at 622-4628.

ALDERMAN RODDY REPORTS

By K. Chaffe

Four neighborhood residents have enrolled in Project Health Career, an employment program operated by St. Louis University Medical Center. They will graduate in about six months. Applicants to the program must have a GED or high school diploma and pass an interview.

Roddy criticized the ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH for reporting the increased murder rate in the city. He accused the POST of "creating a crisis atmosphere in the City". Roddy said he resented the implication that unemployment was the cause for the increase in crime.

Roddy expressed concern regarding the up-coming city-wide ward redistricting. He stated there were several proposed redistricting plans and he hoped FPSE would not be divided between two wards. Loss of the senior citizen homes north of Hwy 40 would greatly reduce Roddy's prospects of re-election.

Street closings in FPSE received approval from the aldermanic street committee and will be introduced for Board of Aldermen approval soon. Several petitions from FPSE residents were submitted in support of the closings. Roddy noted that police complain about closings, but closings are very popular with politicians.

Roddy explained that capital improvement funds are insufficient for major alley repair. There is money for patching the alleys, but the majority of funds must go to the streets.

The city has not announced plans for dealing with yard wastes. Beginning in January, it will be illegal to dispose of the yard wastes in city dumpsters.

Roddy stated that he has little control over where the statue of Christopher Harris is placed. He questioned if this was the best type of memorial and assured members of Block Unit 6 that no decision about the placement of the statue had been made.

**HELP MAKE FPSE A
MORE FESTIVE
NEIGHBORHOOD FOR THE
HOLIDAYS
DECORATE**

CORP NEWS FROM P 3

land Ave. at Kingshighway because of the increased drug trafficking. Bistate representative Fred Douglas visited the 4500 block and reportedly saw several drug deals. He will support the closure as a last resort, but encouraged the Board to work with landlords to eliminate the problems. Allen Levin (BU5) proposed approaching Bistate in the spring if no improvements are noted. Board President Dolan stated, "I am for street closings. It allows us to make a stand and cut into the drug trafficking."

Ald. Mary Ross has requested petitions in favor of closing Oakland, Arco and Gibson at Newstead, Boyle and Manchester.

Roth applied for a \$7000 Citicorp Urban Renaissance grant to finance a program to install gangway gates. Owners will be charged on a sliding scale.

November: Budget, Habitat, Statue & Substation

The Housing Corp. closed on 1091-93 S. Taylor. Contractor John Durnell will start construction in November. Completion is expected in early April.

The Housing Office is moving to 1092 So. Taylor. A net savings will be realized as rent is used for the mortgage at 1088-92 So. Taylor. Another apartment will become a Third Police District substation.

Roth encouraged Board members to attend Third District Police public affairs meetings. Dan Corbin (Ranken East) also suggested that Ald. Roddy should be encouraged to go. Aldermen from other wards frequently attended. FPSE has been asked to host the March public affairs meeting.

Habitat continues to decline requests to rehab in FPSE. Corbin criticized Habitat's new construction as being too small. "They are closets to stuff people into". Habitat has requested permission to install chain-link fences around its properties. Chain-link fences violate Sam McRee regulations. Habitat's agreement with the Housing Corporation and will void the tax abatement. Only wrought iron fencing is acceptable for street-facing sides of properties.

The 1992 Corporation budget is \$37,500. Projected expenses may exceed income by \$2000. WJMCRC's three-year commitment of \$1000/yr. expires in January, threatening a larger shortfall.

The Board voted to oppose placing a statue of Christopher Harris in the neighborhood.

December: Grant, 4398 Gibson & Chouteau Trust

Dedication of 1091-93 on December 3 was followed by a small gathering. The Taylor Display House will be called Taylor Phase II.

The police substation began operation on December 1. Donation of material is still needed.

FPSE received a \$6500 grant to fund a gangway security program. Applications will be available in the spring.

The Board is looking into possible redevelopment of 4398 Gibson as apartments for physically disabled people. The building was described as needing a "gut rehab".

The first floor of the Chouteau Trust Building was leased by New Horizons Center, a day care center for children who need special care or are disabled.

PET CORNER

DON'T DECLAW YOUR CAT

From Animal Friends

A cat's claw is similar in composition to our fingernails, but is laterally compressed and retractable into a sheath. Long rubber band-like tendons allow the claws to extend and retract quickly.

Cats use their claws for defense, climbing and sure-footedness. Unfortunately, cats frequently scratch furniture. Clawing is a natural function and a biological necessity for cats. It relieves tension, removes the old sheath (outer layer of the nail) and is a form of exercise. Cats eliminate frustrations and boredom by clawing.

Declawing is not the solution to clawing. It is painful bone surgery that amputates the entire first joint of each toe. Ligaments and tendons are severed. Sensory and motor nerves are cut, damaged and sometimes destroyed. Most pain killers harm cats. Aspirin and ibuprofen are deadly. Cats suffer through the weeks following surgery.

Declawing may cause severe emotional problems, personality changes and depression. Deprived of its claws, a cat may become fearful and hide constantly. Never declaw an adult cat.

Declawing rear feet serves no purpose and gradually weakens muscles, shoulders and back. Several European countries have outlawed this surgery and the Canadian Vet. Association has asked members not to declaw except when euthanasia is the only alternative.

Declawing is painful surgery that removes the first joint of each toe... Pain killers harm cats and no pain medication is given during convalescence. Never declaw back feet.

There are alternatives to declawing. A sturdy scratching post will frequently eliminate clawing problems. The post should be at least 6 inches in diameter, covered with Sisal rope or the back side of carpeting and tall enough for the cat to stand and stretch out.

When you see your cat clawing furniture, distract it by a loud noise, spray of water and a loud "NO". Place him at the scratching post with his two front paws in the clawing position. Never hit the cat, but reward him with praise when he uses the post on his own.

Protect upholstery with double stick tape. Cats become frightened when their paws stick and are unlikely to return. Pin curtains up for a few weeks when a new kitten is present. Kittens naturally climb until their leg muscles mature.

Clipping the tips of the front claws will allow a cat to claw without doing much damage. A blood vessel and nerve extend into the claw and can be seen in good light. Always stay at least 1/8 inch away from the vessel and nerve. Ask your vet to show you where to clip. Wait until the cat is sleepy and calm. Using an ordinary nail clipper, cut a few of the claws at a time. Cats can be sensitive to paw handling. It is best to accustom the cat by petting his claws when you pet him.

A SPECIAL CHRISTMAS

By M. Berg

It was Christmas Eve in 1927. It was a beautiful sunshiny day, not too cold. There was no hint of a "White Christmas". Everything in our home was in readiness for the holiday. Although my mother was pregnant, she had even scrubbed the front stone steps. Later she walked to St. Cronan's Church for afternoon confession.

I did not know that the doctor had made a house call earlier that day. He had assured my mother the baby would not be born until after New Year's. His last words as he left our house were, "I can go home and have a good Christmas with my family."

My sister Kathryn and my two younger brothers were excited over the Christmas tree, presents and the prospect of a visit from Santa Clause. We were all on our best behavior. About 7:30 PM my father told my sister and me to go to Midnight Mass at St. Bernard's Church with our neighbors so we would have all Christmas Day to play with our presents. This was the first year Midnight Mass was being celebrated at Catholic Churches in St. Louis. Everyone had been discussing it for weeks. We felt very special to be allowed to go with our friends. Little did we know, this was a way to get us out of the house.

We left home about 8:00 PM to go to the neighbor's house. The sky was

bright with stars as we walked about a mile to St. Bernard's Church. In my mind, it could have been Bethlehem, the night Jesus was born. Kathryn and I had never been out this late before.

When we arrived home about 2:00 AM, my father proudly exclaimed, "Come and see your new baby brother. He was born on Christmas a few minutes after midnight." I had been coached for several weeks that I was getting too old for dolls. "Wouldn't you rather have a real live baby instead?", my mother had asked.

That same Christmas vacation I read "Little Women" for the first time. I could hardly put it down. Some time before a friend had given my mother some toys her daughter had outgrown. The book was among them. As I grew older, I reread this book many times.

I don't remember any other presents I received, but I do remember that wonderful Christmas when I was ten years old. Our family was filled with joy and love.

My father did not finish decorating the Christmas tree until 5:00 AM Christmas morning. Every year after that the tree was decorated several days in advance and all the children helped.

NSN REPORT: IS THE END NEAR?

Neighborhood Safety Network (NSN) is a resident-financed security patrol that has been operating in the 4400-4500 blocks north of Manchester Ave. since early 1990. Off-duty police officers patrol the area in car and on foot in four-hour shifts, several nights each week. Because they are police officers, they can make arrests.

In the past two years NSN officers have made more than 104 arrests for a variety of illegal activities including narcotics possession, public urination, assault, robbery and public drinking. Many of these arrests might not have been made if NSN officers had not been there. In addition, the officers have issued 122 parking tickets, conducted 113 field interviews and dispersed loitering gangs of youths from street corners. Since NSN began operation, crime in block units 5 and 6 has decreased between 30 to 50%.

NSN has sponsored a variety of other activities including crime meetings, discounts on security systems, home security checks, security system installation and the NSN newsletter. NSN has helped forge better relations with the Third Police District. This

has benefitted all of FPSE through increased police awareness and protection.

Money collected by NSN goes to hiring officers and increasing the number of NSN patrols. Unpaid neighborhood volunteers run the program. The patrols cost about \$2,000 a month.

NSN is becoming a victim of its own success. With a lower incidence of crime, some residents feel the patrols are no longer needed. They have stopped paying their pledges. NSN has been forced to reduce patrols as the holiday season begins. Typically crime increases this time of year and added protection is needed. According to an NSN representative, if the present trend continues, the program could cease operation early in 1992.

Anyone wishing to contribute to NSN should call 652-2711 for more information. Now is the time to prevent crime, not after it again becomes a problem.

PUPPET SHOW AT KINGSHIGHWAY LIBRARY

By A. Saudler

On Friday, December 27 at 1:00 PM the Kingshighway Branch Library, 4641 Shenandoah Ave., is sponsoring a free puppet show by the Cat's Paw Puppet Troupe.

In addition to books, magazines, videos, tapes and CDs for those cold winter days, the library also offers a variety of services of which you may be unaware. There are a typewriter for public use, quiet room for studying, large auditorium for community meetings, voter registration, GED and grant forms, copy machine (\$.10 per copy) and a regular schedule of free programs for all ages. Hours are Monday and Wednesday, 12 to 9:00 PM, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM.

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DID YOU KNOW?

Why do moving fan blades collect dust? Regardless if it is a ceiling fan or window fan, more dust collects on the leading edge of the blades than any other part of the fan.

The reason dust collects on the blades is because of air velocity. The air velocity gradually decreases toward the surface of the blades. At the blade's surface the velocity is zero; the air does not move. Dust particles simply fall onto the blade.

Any mass of air will contain a certain amount of dust that gradually settles onto furniture, floors and walls. Because a fan moves a large quantity of air, the blades come into contact with much more dust. Thus, more dust collects on the blades than any other part.

EDITORIAL: THE HARRIS STATUE - QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

The death of Christopher Harris was a tragedy. About that there can be no contention. That it should be memorialized by a statue in FPSE is open to debate.

Why memorialize Harris?

No one has explained why Harris's death should be memorialized. Harris did not do anything extraordinary in his nine years. Except for his death, we would not have heard of him. His demise was not a noble act of self-sacrifice. It did not set an example we can aspire to emulate. He did not throw himself in front of someone in an attempt to save their life. He was grabbed, used as a human shield and killed. He is just another victim of drug-related violence. His death was a tragedy, but only one of many this past year.

Why make a statue?

The idea of casting a statue from melted guns provided the "twist" that made the gun buy-back program noteworthy. St. Louis did not conceive the gun buy-back program; we copied it. The idea of a statue is popular because the statue will be a durable object that can be seen, unlike scholarship funds or programs. The statue will be a landmark before which police and politicians can be photographed. It will provide a reason for national press coverage and more publicity for Chief Harmon, sculptor Torrini and Wetterau Inc. The statue will be a symbol suggesting that the police are winning the drug war, even if they are not.

What will the statue represent?

To Harmon and Torrini the statue is a tribute to the victims of gun-related violence. It symbolizes that the police are "taking back the streets." To them it states that Harris's life was not wasted.

To others the statue will represent the failure of the police to protect our neighborhood and its children. The drug problem on Gibson Ave was well-known before Harris's death, but little was done. The police did not mount an appropriate response until the

shooting made national press. They practiced crisis control, not prevention. The police have not "taken back the streets." They have only traded Gibson Ave. for Oakland Ave. Gibson drug dealers have moved to Oakland. Harmon's talk of "taking back the streets" is only public relations.

Why place the statue in FPSE?

No other neighborhood would be foolish enough to take it. The statue mem-



I ASKED FOR A JOB, FOOD OR A PLACE TO LIVE. THEY SAID I NEEDED A STATUE.

orializes death and violence. It has nothing to do with Harris's life, only his death. It is not inspirational; it is depressing. The statue will convey a negative image wherever it is placed. Having the statue in our neighborhood will be like hanging a banner saying, "Don't move here. This neighborhood is unsafe." We have nothing to gain from having the statue in FPSE. It will not make FPSE a safer or more desirable place to live. The statue will only make it more difficult to convince self-supporting, stable families to move here.

If Harmon insists upon placing the statue in FPSE, it will become a symbol of police indifference to neighborhood wishes. It will indicate an unwillingness to assist residents who are trying to stabilize and improve FPSE. The police keep telling us, we must work together. That is a two-way proposition that extends beyond reporting crime.

If Metro Ministry allows the statue to be placed in Rainbow Park, it

will simply be another betrayal of FPSE by Metro. To many residents the statue will symbolize Metro's disregard for those who invest time and money improving FPSE. It will justify one resident's quip, "If you are self-sufficient, you have no rights in Metro's neighborhood community."

Metro will also be seen as "selling out" the neighborhood for the \$10,000 promised by Wetterau Inc. Metro complains that the neighborhood does not offer support for its programs. Can Metro expect anything else considering its record of ignoring neighborhood concerns? Metro is governed by a Board of 34 members. None reside here; none speak for our interests. Metro's actions reflect this.

The statue and base will cost \$15,000. That money could help people. If Metro was really concerned with the morally right, it would refuse to have anything to do with the statue. Metro should denounce the statue for the publicity gimmick it is. That is the moral high ground, but it would cost Metro the \$10,000 donation from Wetterau.

What are the alternatives?

The statue will be a static icon. It will not make the city safer or address any of the problems that lead to Harris's death. It will not discourage drug abuse or assist anyone who wants to stop. The statue will not help children stay in school or adults to obtain a GED. It will not shelter the homeless, feed the hungry or employ the jobless.

Suggested alternatives to a statue include a scholarship fund for neighborhood children, supplies for Adams School, a summer program and jobs for area youths, summer camp, or a drug information program for neighborhood residents. The list of alternatives is endless, because human needs are endless.

One thing I have never heard a needy person request, however, is for a statue in his neighborhood.

Karl M. Chaffee

LETTERS TO FPSE

ON OUR OWN

By M. Jefferies

WASTE AND INEFFICIENCY

Our own ALDERMAN JOE RODDY's 1988 campaign flier noted that "Joe's background in finance, his understanding of budgets and his knowledge of financial analysis will enable him to isolate on those parts of city government where waste and inefficiency persists." Does Joe's background and knowledge have him isolating in on his father's City Courts Office? Inefficiency and waste there cost the taxpayers \$300,000. Come on Joe, do what you promised. Start that isolating!!!

MAYBE WE'RE BETTER IF THEY DON'T For months the FPSE Housing Corp has been trying to convince Habitat For Humanity to rehab buildings in Adams Grove. Habitat has refused; maybe for the best.

ON HOME TIME, a yuppie rehab show on Channel 9, Habitat is rehabbing a house. Because of settling, the living room floor slopes 4 inches over a distance of 12 feet. The Habitat contractor did not think this was worth correcting. Too bad if the people moving into the house have casters on their furniture.

THE PURLOINED LETTER

The Real Estate Committee has been sending letters to property owners whose buildings are suspected of being involved in drug trafficking. When the home an officer in the Franklin D. Roosevelt 17th Ward Democrat Club was to be sent a letter, our own JOE P. RODDY attempted to intervene. He offered to talk to the person instead of having the letter sent. His offer was rejected.

In October six letters to be sent to FPSE property owners were placed in the front of the room at block unit 5's meeting so people could sign them. Only about 12 people, including Joe P. Roddy and Lucille Roddy, attended the meeting. At the end of the evening the letter Roddy did not want sent was gone. All the others were still there. Makes you wonder where it went.

A MATTER OF TIMING

For years now we have been hearing about the plans for the closing of the Kingshighway Viaduct. Unfortunately no one appears to have told Metro Link Light Rail. In March when the city plans to close the Viaduct, Metro Link plans to close Taylor Avenue to install tracts.

Name, address and phone number must accompany all letters. Some editing for length and clarity may be required. N&V gaurentees space for a reply to editorials.

Send to EDITORS, FPSE NEWS & VIEWS, 4420 Arco Ave., St. Louis, Mo. 63110

A THANK YOU

Your generous donation of \$200.00 was gratefully received. We appreciate NEWS & VIEWS's generosity and the thoughtfulness behind the gift.

Together we share a common vision of our neighborhood community and look forward to our good association with you as we continue to work together.

Bonnie L. Montle
Clerk of Session
Gibson Heights Presbyterian Church
1075 S Taylor Ave.
St. Louis, Mo. 63110