

Tower Grove Heights Gazette

Volume 14, No. 1

Grand to Gustine

Arsenal to Utah Place

Winter 2003



Centennial Spurs Genealogical Sleuthing

By Mark Abbott

Many people spend years tracing their ancestors. But as Tower Grove Heights approaches its hundredth birthday, many people in the neighborhood have begun to wonder how old their houses are, who built them, and who has lived in them. With a little time and effort, you can discover your house's "genealogy."

The most essential piece of information that you will need, you already have—the address of your house. Once you have the address, the adventure can begin.

Knowing your address, you start by going to the Assessor's Office that is located in City Hall on the first floor. Inside the Assessor's Office, the next step is to determine the block number in which your house is located. While there is a directory that will give you the block number, the easiest way is to locate your block on a large map in the Office. Once the block number is known you can proceed to the plat books. The plat books are thin heavy volumes on rollers under the Office counters. These books contain parcel maps for every block in the city. Inside the outline of the parcel is a pencil record of the most recent transfer of the property. You undoubtedly know this information, but what it also gives, is a number indicating the page and volume of the immediate prior transaction noted in the record books. This piece of information will lead you from one transaction to the next backwards in time.

Back to the seventies, the transactions are kept in big blue books situated in the middle of the office. Most pages have 3 transaction forms to a page. In the upper right hand corner of the form is the volume and page number. On the upper left hand corner is the date that the transaction was filed. Immediately under this the notation of who the sellers and the buyers were. In the first transaction form you look at you will see your transaction. But under this information you will see another set of numbers which are the volume and page number of the record book which shows who the person that you bought the

house from bought the property before that. You simply proceed from one transaction to the next. For each transaction that you look at be sure to keep a written tally.

Your goal is to trace property ownership as far back as you can possibly go. For the most recent transactions, you go from one blue book to the next. However, once you get past the seventies, your search will take you to boxes of microfiche. The same information will be there, but it may be somewhat harder to read. If you are lucky, you will be able to trace your search all the way back to 1878 when the Connecticut Mutual Life Insurance company bought the land from William Halliday.

Sometimes your search will hit a snag. Your property may have found its way into Probate Court or the record transactions are lost or illegible. What you can do at the point is to go down the hall to the Recorder of Deeds. Here the records are indexed by year according to grantors (sellers) and grantees (buyers). Sometimes in the deed there will be a reference to the prior transaction. If not, you have to go to the basement and either use catalogs that list buyers and sellers by last name or go through all of the transactions by year.

Once you have completed your ownership search, there is much more to find out about your property. Before the 1940's, the deeds are very lengthy and provide such information as financing and what restrictive covenants were in effect (for example, all houses in Tower Grove Heights had to at two stories with brick or masonry exteriors). The Recorder's Office also has the plat books that show how and when Tower Grove Heights was subdivided. *(continued on p. 8)*

IN THIS ISSUE:

| | |
|--|--------|
| A Word from TGHNA's New President | p. 3 |
| News from our Alderwoman & Senator | p. 4-5 |
| What the Heck is Chicken Night? | p. 6 |
| Resident Profile: Kim Cole | p. 7 |
| Tower Grove Park News | p. 9 |
| Susan Anderson Brings New Energy to Bus. Dist. | p. 10 |
| Restaurant Review/Trivia Night Information | p. 11 |
| Membership Drive | p. 12 |

Founding Editor: Janice Nesser
Editing Team: Matthew Fernandes, Sara Langan, Doug Samsel, Carrie Samsel
Business Managers: Mark Berry and Julia Engelhardt

Contributing Writers: Mark Abbott, Amanda Doyle, Jennifer Florida, Sara Langan, Erin O'Reilly, Suzanne Rhodenbaugh, Matt Fernandes, Kathryn Zellich, John Karel, Ann Auer, Robin Vannoy

The Gazette is a non-profit publication published quarterly by the Tower Grove Heights Neighborhood Association. For information concerning advertising rates and layout planning call Mark or Julia at (314) 771-5885 or email

GazetteAdvertising@towergroveheights.com.

Your letters and comments are always welcome at the Gazette. Mail them to: The Gazette/TGHNA, 3735 Connecticut, St. Louis, MO 63116 or email

GazetteEditor@towergroveheights.com.

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

Help TGHNA hang these 30 by 90 inch banners designed by Vickie Kearns.

Show your support by:

1. Joining in 2003 (\$7 individuals/ \$12 families or the new option of LIFE membership for \$100). The block with the most members by June 1, 2003 will receive a block party.

2. Attending and bringing friends to Trivia night on March 8, 2003

Members receive:

- Four issues of the Tower Grove Heights Gazette
- 2003 Buzz Book
- Discount on Art of City Living Fall, 2003
- A feeling of pride that you have contributed!

(See a diagram of proposed banner locations on p. 7)



USA
MORTGAGE
A Division of DAS Acquisition Company, LLC



N. SUZANNE GOLEMB

Account Executive

314.628.2026

www.nsgolemb.com

nsgolemb@usa-mortgage.com

**Your Neighborhood
Mortgage Specialist**

Working for you....



Member
Mortgage Bankers
Association of
Missouri

Suzanne Golemb knows what it takes to get loans approved. She understands the impact that a mortgage loan can have on a customer and is committed to making the process "stress-free".

Suzanne has a strong belief and support in community development. She is a neighbor, homeowner, property developer and landlord. She is a past board member and current member of the Tower Grove Heights Neighborhood Association; a past board member of the Grand Oak Hill Community Corp.; and a member of Metropolis Saint Louis.

2001 Award Winning Performance

For All Your Lending Needs

- Programs to Meet Your Needs
 - 100% Financed (0% Down)
 - No Income / No Asset Verification
 - 5% Down - No PMI
 - Investment / Second Homes
 - Second Mortgages / Home Equity
- Purchase / Refinance
- Pre-Qualifications / Pre-Approvals
- Less Than Perfect Credit
- Fast Closings
- Excellent Customer Service

A Word from TGHNA's New President

Hello neighbors. I am Robin Ransom Vannoy, the new president of the Tower Grove Heights Neighborhood Association. I share my home with my husband Rick, our 2 1/2 year old son Alex, and our other "child", dog Bailey. We moved into our home in October of 1998.

I chuckle sometimes to myself when I think about living in Tower Grove Heights. I am originally from North St. Louis City, the Fairground Park neighborhood. Rick is originally from New Jersey and has always lived in the Central West End, you know, utopia to some. When we began house hunting, most of our friends and colleagues who live in St. Louis County suggested that we definitely move out of the city. We looked at houses in Webster Groves, Shrewsbury and Kirkwood, but either had trouble finding a brick home, or we'd find homes with exorbitant price tags without sufficient space.

Depressed and exhausted, we decided to look in the city. After about one week, Rick called and said he'd found the perfect house. Well let me tell you, the house was far from

perfect. The biggest problem was that the house lacked a front porch. However, it did have a nice gas lamp out front, so we decided we could live without shelter during inclement weather, at least temporarily. Well, the inside of the house had its faults as well. Let's just say that the 70's theme of olive/army green and bright floral patters was rampant throughout. I was in a quandary. Rick deferred to me as all husbands should do (that's just a joke). We decided to forge ahead and put a contract on the home that day. Whenever we'd meet new people, they'd say, "Oh yeah, you're the couple without the porch."

Now I'd love to tell you that we bought the home because of the charm of the neighborhood, and the warmth of its residents. But actually two other couples saw the home prior to us on the same day and the price was such a steal. Having lived in TGH for the last four years, I have come to really appreciate its diversity racially, economically and religiously. The differences between us all is what makes us unique. I hope that as president, I can encourage others to



Robin Ransom Vannoy & son Alex

become involved in neighborhood organizations.

As residents of TGH, we have become complacent, partly because we have had a strong neighborhood association that's kept the neighborhood in tact. But we are facing a challenging time now in which we have a lot of work that needs to be done but few workers willing to volunteer. While we all have our own personal lives to tend to, let's not let our neighborhood slip below the bar of excellence that we've established thus far. I urge you to get involved, attend our monthly meetings so that you can be kept abreast of issues affecting you. We also welcome any ideas of social events that you'd think would be fun for the neighborhood association to sponsor for its members.

I look forward to meeting those of you that I don't know at the monthly meetings. I must say that I have arrived: I've gone from being referred to as the person in the house without a porch to being president of the neighborhood association. All of you should be so lucky (just joking). Let's make this a year to remember (positively) in TGH. Thank you for the support!

FREE CHECKING

Why even consider a checking account that steadily chips away at your balance?
At Commerce, we offer totally **FREE CHECKING**.

- ✓ No monthly fees
- ✓ No minimum balance
- ✓ Unlimited check writing

Tower Grove Banking Center
3134 South Grand
746-8211

"For my money, it's Commerce."

 **Commerce Bank**
Member FDIC

New Year's Update from Alderwoman Jennifer Florida

It's January and I am compelled to reflect on this past year and our accomplishments.

Significant commercial and residential development occurred in our neighborhoods. Gravois Plaza has been leveled and rebuilt. Many new stores have opened their doors in the last couple of months. Mayor Slay & I celebrated the grand opening of Shop-n-Save with a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony in November. We have the development of the South Side National Bank Building to look forward to as well as the opening of Walgreen's on Gravois in the spring.

We have been busy at Grand Oak Hill Community Corporation. We are addressing all nuisance issues through our Citywide Nuisance Committee. Through Grand Oak Hill I have implemented Ward 15's Management Assistance Program (MAP). MAP Community Liaison Shannon Prewit & I work closely with Problem Properties City Counselors & our Neighborhood Stabilization Officer to bring 15th Ward problem properties under management of MAP. Grand Oak Hill Community Corporation is well on its way to becoming a full service housing corporation actively doing development, administering 15th Ward Home Repair Program & managing properties targeted as nuisance.

Our Block Captains are well organized and meeting monthly. Joe Thele (our NSO) and myself monitor concerns and address any issues.

Overall, we experienced a productive year. I appreciate everyone's hard work.

Recap of Development:

Gravois Plaza: The construction of the New Gravois Plaza is complete. Please patronize our new shopping center.

South Side National Bank Building at Grand & Gravois: Steve



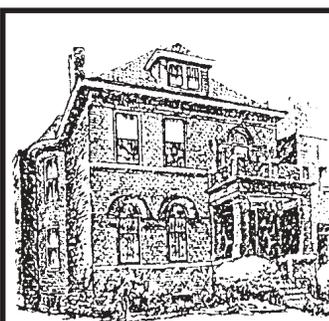
Left to Right: Marlene Gebhard, President of Shop 'n Save, Jennifer Florida, Alderwoman, Mayor Francis Slay, and Rick Hoenig, Shop 'n Save Store Manager at the Grand Opening of Gravois Plaza Shop 'n Save.

Trampe plans a \$5 million apartment redevelopment of the tower and 1980's addition. He intends to start redevelopment next summer contingent on financing. Allegiant plans to continue operations in the historic bank building in the old teller space.

Walgreen's is building a new store located at Gravois & Grace. They have agreed to build the store right on the street with parking on

the sides of the new building. They hope to have their new facility constructed by spring of 2003. Walgreen's temporarily operates out of a trailer on S. Grand, south of KFC.

For those of you who are new to the ward or have not heard, Grand Oak Hill Community Corporation is our full service housing corporation that administers the 15th Targeted Assistance Home Repair Program & Grand



THE WINTER HOUSE BED AND BREAKFAST

Host: Kendall Winter

Give Your Out-of-Town Guests a Home
Away from Home

3522 Arsenal Street
Saint Louis, Missouri 63118

(314) 664-4399



**Tower
Grove
Homes**

In the Business of Neighborhood Building

*For more information
on homes for sale
or lease, call
Susie Gudermuth
(314) 771-7097*

**Urban living
with
a small
town feel.**

Oak Hill Management Assistance Program (management, tenant screening and placement). This service is free and will be used as a tool in dealing with nuisance properties, 865-5530.

Just a reminder...we NEED Block Captains for ALL of our 15th Ward Blocks! These Block Captains meet at Grand Oak Hill at Juniata and Bent, the last Monday of the month at 7:00PM. Tower Grove Heights Block Captains also have a meeting at 6:30 p.m. the odd dated months before the TGH General Meeting.

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

As always, it is my honor & privilege to serve as your alderman. I hope to be as responsive as possible, continuing to build on our strengths.

| | |
|----------------------------------|--------|
| PorterHouse Steak Dinner | \$8.70 |
| Shrimp Dinner | \$8.30 |
| BBQ Rib Dinner | \$8.30 |
| Catfish Dinner | \$6.55 |
| Chicken Dinner | \$5.60 |
| Charbroiled Chicken Breast Plate | \$5.50 |

STOP BY FOR LUNCH OR DINNER!

2100 Gravois * 776-7292

Report from the Capitol

State Senator Pat Dougherty Introduces Senior Care and Protection Act

Senator Pat Dougherty, D-St. Louis, filed a comprehensive bill enacting a series of innovative reforms to, and strengthened oversight mechanisms of, Missouri's elder and long-term care facilities.

Among an array of provisions, Dougherty's Senior Care and Protection Act (SB 311) would:

- Require incidents of suspected abuse be reported within 24 hours to the Department of Health and Senior Services. DHSS must then promptly notify law enforcement agencies of the report.
- Require a criminal background check on all care providers having contact with patients/resident.
- Require DHSS to perform at least two onsite inspections of every facility each year.
- Reward senior care facilities providing a consistently high quality of care and protection, and penalize underperforming facilities that do not improve.
- Prohibit care facilities from evicting/harassing residents who file complaints. Allow residents up to two years to file deprivation of rights complaints.
- Toughen the state's neglect statute to make it easier for DHSS to bar those individuals who have abused, neglected, or financially

exploited seniors from working in the eldercare industry.

- Strengthen civil penalties for poor performance. (*Current law allows nursing homes to avoid civil penalties if problems cited have been corrected at the time of re-inspection.*)
- Hold top senior care provider management accountable by requiring nursing home executives to certify the quality of care being provided in their nursing homes.
- Prevent sub-par senior care providers based in other states from operating in Missouri. (*Current law prevents consideration of an operator's history in another state before allowing them to do business in Missouri.*)
- Allow DHSS to revoke the license of a long-term care facility for the same reasons it would deny issuing that license in the first place.

Dougherty's Senior Care and Protection Act has earned the support of the Lieutenant Governor, and a number of other Senators and Representatives have also voiced early and strong support. Dougherty fully expects the acts final passage to happen during this session.

Dougherty says of his efforts to make the act law, "Our seniors deserve no less."

SENATOR
PATRICK DOUGHERTY
MISSOURI SENATE
4TH DISTRICT

Home: 4031 Parker Ave. St. Louis, MO 63116
Tele: 314-772-1948

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

email: pat_dougherty@senate.state.mo.us

What the Heck is Chicken Night?

by Suzanne Rhodenbaugh

Lost in the mists of time is the true story of how Chicken Night came to be. Some say a mysterious force drew people to the northeast corner of Shenandoah and Nebraska in Tower Grove East, where sat the resplendent Shenandoah Bar & Grill. Others claim Dave and Jill Nissen and Michael and Meg Renner, Tower Grove Heights denizens, got wind of good cheap eats at the Shenandoah, and spread the word.

Clear enough was the fact of four pieces of superb Southern-fried chicken, slaw or salad and potato, dished up every Thursday night for \$3.99 (later upped to the virtually-scandalous \$4.99), by George Korac, Serbian-American restaurateur (and his mom and sundry others), and served by Julie Gardabie, waitress and barkeep extraordinaire.

So some Thursday evenings, and soon *every* Thursday, a loosely-knit group began to come to the Shenandoah. At first it was mainly Heights neighbors. Then their friends and workmates from other parts of the ward, city, county (and eventually World — no lie) began to come.

Arsenal dweller Dave Scheu

handily supplied a sort of logo for the weekly quasi-event: a chicken perched on a motorcycle, referring to George Korac's dual status as chicken-cooker and Harley-rider. This logo was actually printed in purple on screaming yellow tee-shirts for the softball team, part of the Pub League, which evolved from Chicken Night: The Drumsticks. Since Chicken Night involves pitchers of beer as well as food, also lost in the mists of time is the exact historical origin of The Drumsticks, though it's safe to say Dave Scheu is the main founder, driving force, organizer and coach. He remembers the bases, bats, balls and schedule; he keeps the line-up and score; he triages injuries when two or more Drumsticks run into one another on the field, and/or suffer other untoward game events.

The Drumsticks in two seasons have racked up an impressive record, by the way. They have come to games and even practices and played hard, with consistent joviality. Then in the beautiful post-game summer dusk of Tower Grove Park, they've headed to their cars and pick-ups and aimed them toward the verity of Chicken Night.

Yes, Chicken Night, which is indefinable and inscrutable, and associated with chicken and beer. The fame



George Korac, restaurant owner & chef, and Julie Gardabie, waitress & barkeep, Shenandoah Bar & Grill.

of it has reached Europe and possibly farther, for people bring their visiting relatives, friends and colleagues. Some of these visitors (mostly not from overseas) become stalwarts; others sample the fare of food and socializing and come occasionally; others—too delicate for the jukebox, the two TV's blaring sports, the smoke, the raucous decor, and an occasional scowling or rip-snorting regular—don't have the stomach for it, so to speak, and never return.

As we at the Gazette "go to press" (in journalism talk, you know), the very future of Chicken Night is indeterminate. Some man of means has bought the building which houses the Shenandoah, and George has no immediate plans for re-establishing it elsewhere. So Chicken Night may become another St. Louis Legend, one of those magic things that began and lived on spontaneity, but ended when The World impinged. Or, it may evolve into Bratwurst Night or Pizza Night or Kabob Night or Pierogie Night or Who Knows What. Because it's so beautifully unorganized, it's hard to say.



Pictures this page courtesy of Dennis Fortna

A December, 2002 Chicken Night at the Shenandoah Bar & Grill.

Resident Profile: Kim Cole

By Erin O'Reily

Kim Cole and I took a colorful, walking interview in Tower Grove Park with her dog, Harley Davidson. Harley is a well-mannered Springer Spaniel who came to Kim when he was 6 months old. Kim says most all her relatives have Springer Spaniels, and she admits to being a Springer Spaniel snob. He is well trained which amazes me because I am used to beagles and cats who do what they please. Speaking of cats, Kim also has a cat whose name is JellyBean.

Kim grew up in southwestern Michigan and Indiana, and considers herself a Hoosier. She grew up around her Dutch grandparents who operated bulb farms.

She attended Purdue University and studied Home Economics. However, she started to break out of the mold by spending a year in Manhattan, studying fashion, buying, and merchandizing as part of her

Home Economics courses before graduating with her degree in 1983. Then she came to St. Louis for a sales job at Southtown Famous Barr.

Kim polished her career in sales in 4 years at FB, and then decided to pursue an MBA back in Indiana. During the MBA program she finagled a 9-month exchange program to the Netherlands as part of the course work before she decided a MBA was not what she wanted.

St. Louis again beckoned her in the form of Law school at SLU, from which she graduated in 1996. From there she combined her sales experience with her law degree and took a job at BARBRI, an organization that gave educational seminars to prepare law students for the bar exam. She enjoyed working for BARBRI for 6 years until just recently when she became "job free" due to downsizing.

While she has gone through the phases of grieving over her lost



Kim Cole and her dog Harley Davidson. employment, she has fixed up her home on Juniata street, organized all her drawers, traveled, and now has gotten into crafting (she's reviving her Home Ec. skills!)

Kim is quite involved in neighborhood activities since moving to TGH in 1998. She is a member of TGHNA, and is a block captain for the 3800 block of Juniata.

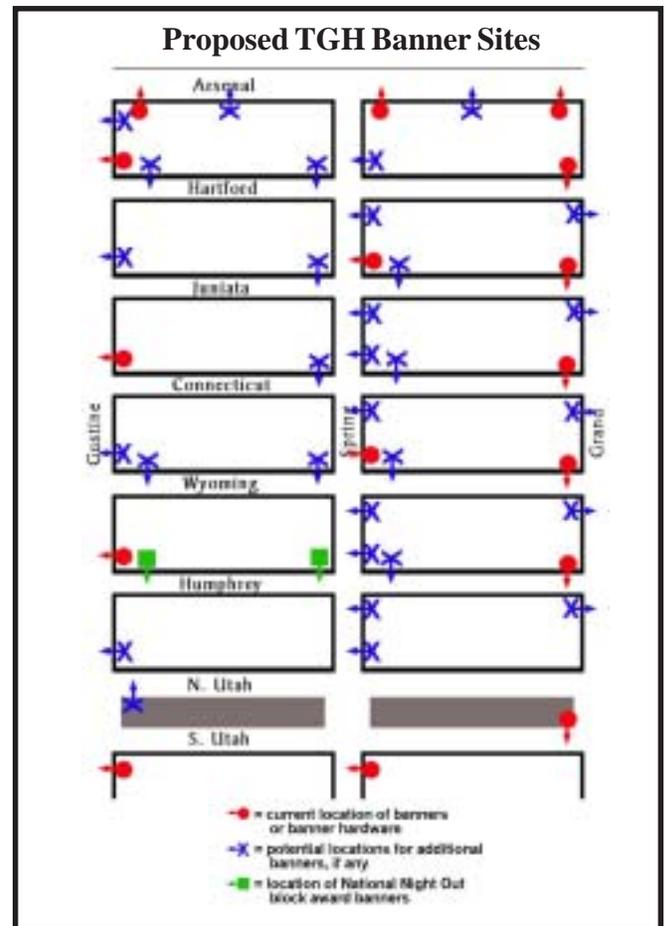
If anyone knows of a job where she could make use of her home ec., sales, accounting and law knowledge, then give her a call — she's in the buzz book!

St. Pius the Fifth Church
 3130 S. Grand Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63118
www.stpiusv.org, stpiusv@stpiusv.org



Mass Schedule
 Saturday - 4:30 pm
 Sunday - 7:30 & 10:00 am

Parish-Sponsored K-8 School
St. Frances Cabrini Academy
Mrs. Maureen Depriest, Principal
 3022 Oregon Ave.
 776-0883



Centennial Homes cont'd from p.1

To find out about the house itself, you need to go the Microfilm Room. This is where the building permits are kept and are arranged by block number. The building permit will tell you when the house was first built, the builder, and will also show what features were initially part of the house and the lot (for example, whether the house initially had a garage).

The census and city directories can tell you about the people who lived in the house before you. Enumerator records are available for the 1930 census and before. These can be found in the downtown public library. If you know the property owner, you can use the Soundex catalog to locate the specific page in the census. These enumerator records will give a list of all the residents in the house at the time of the census, as well as their ages, occupations, places of birth, and family relationships. For some years, you can find religious information, claimed net worth, whether or not the residents own the property, etc. Between censuses, you can look at various reverse directories that are arranged by address. The Missouri Historical Society's Library and Collection Center at 225 S. Skinker has the largest collection of these directories.

To complete your genealogical quest and to gain a better sense of the neighborhood and the city, I would recommend the following books: *The Lion in the Valley* by James Neal Primm (the most comprehensive history of the city), *Grand Oak Hill* by Norbury Wayman (one of a collection of short neighborhood histories prepared by the City in the 1970's), Compton and Dry's *Pictorial St. Louis* (a fascinating "bird's eye" look of the entire city in 1875), and *Where We Live*, a collection of neighborhood histories by Tim Fox—a former Tower Grove resident (which includes a history of Grand Oak Hill). Happy searching. Let me know how it is going!

Mark Abbott is a resident of Tower Grove Heights, the Chair of the Department of Urban Specializations/Director of the Center for Neighborhood Affairs, Harris-Stowe State College, and teaches History of St. Louis at Washington University.

Lucas Optometry, Inc

TODD N. LUCAS, O.D.

Eye Examinations • Contact Lenses • Eye Glasses

3165 South Grand Blvd.

St. Louis, MO 63118

Participatory Provider for

Blue Choice

Group Health Plan

and Many Other Vision & Eye Health Plans

Office Hours By Appointment

(314) 772-3737



Kurt E. Wolfram

Attorney at Law

Personal Injury
and Commercial Litigation



4500 West Pine, suite 300
St. Louis, MO 63108

telephone (314)361-2700
fax (314)361-2052



OAK HILL TRUE VALUE HARDWARE & PAINT CO.

4100 CONNECTICUT ST. AT OAK HILL
776-0741

A FULL SERVICE FAMILY OWNED
HARDWARE STORE SERVING SOUTH ST.
LOUIS FOR OVER 60 YEARS

HOURS: Monday thru Friday 8 to 5:30
Saturday 8 to 5

10% OFF WINDOW/SCREEN REPAIRS

Present This Coupon With Windows or Screens To
Be Expertly Repaired For A 10% Discount On
Labor & Materials.

Coupon expires 3/31/03 (TGHNA)
Not applicable to work in progress
Oak Hill Hardware

Winter & Improvements Work Their Magic at the Park

By John Karel, Park Director

In winter, The Park becomes a truly magical place, and with new additions even more inviting.

A carriage ride is a wonderful way to enjoy the Park during the winter season, especially with the recent upgrades in the equestrian program: a second carriage, a full time employee, a recently tuckpointed stable building, a new carriage garage, and a renovated porch at the stable residence. These could not have been completed without the generous donations of the Friends of Tower Grove Park. To become a Friend of the Park and to reserve your carriage ride, call Eve at 314-771-2679. You bring the hot chocolate and we will provide the blankets!

We are now well settled into our newly renovated offices and hope you have had a chance to stop by to visit and say hello. During the summer, we found a most promising tenant for the Southgate Lodge (our old office) in the South City Open Studio and Gallery. This art school should make a wonderful addition to the Park and the surrounding community. Call Jenna at 314-865-0060 for information regarding classes for your children.

Ongoing work: more improvements at the tennis area, improvements to the walkways, another new water fountain, continued renovation at the Director's Residence, roof maintenance on the other residences, and maintenance on the Music Stand, Stupp Center, and Pavilions will keep us very busy for the remainder of the fiscal year.

Thanks for all your comments about the Park. Please feel free to contact me or any staff member at 314-771-2679 with any questions and suggestions. Happy winter!

Come visit . . .

Oak Hill Presbyterian Church
Corner of Oak Hill & Connecticut
4111 Connecticut, St. Louis
Call us at 664-5525 or visit us at
www.forministry.com/63116OHPC



Sunday School 9:15 a.m. ♦ Worship 10:30 a.m.

Park Grassroots Program Sprouts

By Ann Auer

All of us who live around Tower Grove Park have seen the many improvements made throughout the years. Whether it has been the restoration of the Park's many colorful pavilions, the continuing reforestation program, or the recent sewer work, all of these projects have contributed to the value of the park and therefore to the value of our neighborhoods. These improvements came through the hard work of the Commissioners, Friends of the Tower Grove Park and the staff. As with any institution that relies on public funds and foundation grants, the park often calls on its constituents to write a support letter or make a phone call on its behalf. This can often make the difference between a good outcome and a bad one.

Last fall the Park began implementing a grassroots program aimed at organizing its response capabilities to these types of issues. An integral part of that effort is to identify individuals from throughout the neighborhoods who support the Park and would be willing to be a part of this program.

A questionnaire has been developed to

gather information that will then be entered into a database for use in the future. If you would be interested in hearing more about the Tower Grove Park Grassroots program or receiving a copy of the questionnaire, please contact Ann Auer at Auer Associates, (314) 772-4673, or through e-mail at auerhouse@sbcglobal.net

Celebrate Mardi Gras South Grand style this year. So. Grand merchants are sponsoring **Grand Mardi Gras** on February 22. Events include miniature golf for prizes, comedians, art exhibits, and Battle of the Bands, to name a few. See the website www.grandmardigras.com for more details.

The passion is growing.

There are now 3 Botanicals on the Park stores in the St. Louis area.

St. Louis City:
3014 South Grand,
314.772.7674

West County:
11725 Manchester Road
at Des Peres Commons,
314.909.8868

St. Louis, MO:
2808 Highway K at
Dale Cahill Crossing,
636.281.0999

BOTANICALS
ON THE PARK

IGNITE YOUR PASSION WITH STYLE

Floral Home Accessories Collectibles Wedding Services Interior Design

Shop From Home: www.btp.com

Exec. Director of CID Brings New Energy Into South Grand Business District



Susan Anderson

By Amanda Doyle

Speed is a natural tendency for Susan Anderson. It's a good thing that cruise control was invented, says Anderson, because left to her own devices, "I

look down at the speedometer at what seems like a comfortable spot, and inevitably, I'm doing 87 miles an hour," she laughs. Maybe it's no surprise, then, that when she was hired as the executive director of the South Grand Community Improvement District (CIDD), she hit the ground running. With her one-year anniversary just passed, she's overseen some big changes in the way the Grand businesses do business, and brought a new focus to the South Grand district as a whole.

Community organizing and business development work are not new endeavors for Anderson; she has served as executive director of the Southwest Garden Neighborhood Association, spent ten years in the Central West End managing its CID, and had leadership positions in Forest Park Southeast and at the Washington University Med Center Redevelopment Association. From that wealth of experience have come lessons she's applying to our corner of St. Louis.

First and foremost: "No one knows what the district needs like the district itself," Anderson says. Because they've been burned before, or marginalized by planners, much of Anderson's first year on the job has been spent getting to know the business owners, the property owners and the fine points of how the business district and surrounding neighborhoods intersect. She has made contact with most of the property owners represented in the nearly 80 businesses, a process that has sometimes entailed her showing up at their front doors to introduce herself and hand over some literature.

Securing the active participation of the property owners was crucial because it was the property owners who had to agree

to a financing scheme that enables the CID to exist: state legislation permits property owners in a defined area (in our case, Grand from Arsenal to McKean/McDonald, and a few nearby, side-street properties) to assess themselves a fee which goes into a CID fund for communal needs. The assessment is based on the square footage of the land, first floor space, and any space on second and higher floors. The more you own, the more you pay, and the plan goes into effect with a simple majority vote of the property owners. Anderson notes that the majority of property owners were quite enthusiastic about instituting the CID, even though it essentially means charging themselves another fee.

"What they get out of it is improvements to the district so that the business can thrive," she says. "That's why we're here. And what we mostly focus on first is the 'clean and safe' items." To that end, the CID funds have been used to contract for seven-day-a-week cleaning of streets and sidewalks, hire off-duty police officers to patrol the area, and install larger trash cans along the street. Beyond the basics, the CID tried out a series of parties in Tower Grove Park last summer, and helped bring three art openings to the neighborhood.

The SoGrand Parties in the park are a good example of how Anderson tries to listen to the needs of business owners first when deciding how to proceed. Although the businesses were happy to have South Grand promoted via the parties, they didn't see as much spillover foot traffic following the concerts as they had been hoping for. Essentially, the message they had for Anderson at the end of last summer was, "We think they're great, but we don't have a few years for the idea to catch on and for people to figure out they could stick around on Grand afterwards, shopping and eating dinner." Anderson responded to their feedback by moving this summer's planned parties to the middle of the district, on the parking lot just north of Jay International Foods, so that party-goers would be more immediately presented with retail and dining options.

When it comes to understanding what sets city living apart from the other options, Anderson both talks the talk and walks the walk. Living for the past 28 years in the same house (near the new YMCA on Sublette), she has spent much of her personal and pro-

fessional life learning about the strengths and positioning of urban neighborhoods. "What makes the city work is a business district next door to people's homes," she emphasizes.

When it comes to specific businesses that people want near them, Anderson has probably heard them all. "I can't tell you how many times I heard from people that they wanted a book store on Grand, and now that Dunaway Books is open, I feel just great that we were in the right position at the time they were looking to move," she says. Other businesses that have come to Grand during her tenure include New Dawn Health Foods, Absolutli Goosed, I&I Gallery and Sekisui, at the corner of Grand and Arsenal.

To become involved in the business district's activities, you may attend one of their regular committee meetings (marketing, public safety, maintenance and capital improvements); call Susan Anderson at 772-5750 for information.

CheapTRX
Alternative Shopping - Perfect Body Piercing

(A black and white photograph of a man in a white t-shirt and shorts, and a woman in a plaid dress, both wearing boots, walking together.)

Clothes, Cards & Gifts
for the more adventurous shopper.

3211 South Grand Blvd.
314.664.4011



Wasabi Jolt Delivered to So. Grand

By Matthew Fernandes

We are now officially spoiled.

Grand South Grand's offerings have consistently improved over the last decade (even if the progress seems at times at a snail's pace.) The recent opening of the amazing Sekisui, however, will surely deliver a powerful, wasabi-like jolt to the strip.

The food here is divine and will likely

bring sushi lovers from across the region to our neighborhood.

After walking past the indoor waterfall we sat at our table and ordered green tea. Upon opening the menu I regretted not having spent the entire day studying it. Beyond the full slate of sushi (from basic tuna to octopus and eel), Sekisui has plentiful offerings of appetizers, soups (miso) and entrees.

On this night I kept it simple, ordering Chirashi, assorted sashimi (raw fish) over rice, (\$15.95), and shared a few different sushi rolls (\$4.50-\$8).

Our courteous waitress appeared with our plate of sushi rolls within ten minutes of ordering.

The sushi was top notch and served the way it oughta' be – sushi, wasabi, pickled ginger and soy sauce. The pieces were not too bulky to pop in your mouth whole (another common flaw at other joints) and the fish was very fresh tasting.

The sashimi bowl consisted of about a dozen large strips of various raw fish including tuna, salmon, yellow tail, sweet

shrimp, eel and octopus. Quail egg cakes and salty salmon roe were also present. (Yep, like the fishing bait.) The bowl was a delight and plenty large proportionally.

Other items I sampled included the Scallops Kushi-yaki (2 skewers of grilled meat, \$5.25), which were tasty and melted in the mouth. The Calamari Tempura (\$2.50) was nice but served not quite hot enough.

There are over a dozen premium sake selections and a list of about 40 wines. Also, there are many options on the menu for vegetarians.

Sekisui is easily one of the best sushi rooms in the metro area – and it's just a few steps from home.

Spoiled, indeed.

Sekisui (seki=stone; sui=water)
3024 South Grand Boulevard (at Arsenal)
772-0002
Hours: LUNCH: Tues.- Fri., 11:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.
DINNER: Sun. & Tues. - Thurs., 5 p.m.- 9:30 p.m.; Fri.& Sat., 5 p.m.-10:30 p.m.
Smoking: Smoke-free.

Elegant
KOT
Eccentric

GRAND SOUTH GRAND
International Cuisine &
Fine Dining ... Incomparable Shops
... Global Markets ... Services ...

2003 EVENTS
Grand Mardi Gras February 22
Grand S. Grand House Tour April 12 & 13
Festival of Nations June 7 & 8
Pride Fest June 28 & 29
So Grand Parties (on Grand) June 12, July 11,
August 14, September 18
Halloween Photo/Treats (optional) Oct. 25
Grand Family Photo & Food Drive Dec. 6

CALL 314-772-5758 FOR MORE INFORMATION.

I & I GALLERY

*Handmade
Mardi Gras
masks
our specialty!*

**Glass
Aromas
Textures
Giftware**

3238 S. Grand Ave. • St. Louis, MO 63118 • 311.776.1125

Trivia Night

To Benefit The:

*Tower Grove Heights
Neighborhood Association*

Saturday, March 8th

7p.m. Doors open at 6:30 p.m.

**First Divine Science Church, 3617 Wyoming
Lower Level Fellowship Hall**

**Cost: Table of 8: \$80.00,
Individual ticket: \$10.00**

**Refreshments: BYO Snacks (Popcorn provided). Two beverage
tickets provided.**

Additional Soda/Beverages available for sale.

This event is child-friendly, and is smoke and alcohol free.

For more information, Call Joe Ogier at 314-773-8563,

Or see us at our website: www.Towergroveheights.com

**TGHNA Trivia Night Registration : Please Return by 3/1/03
Make payment to: Tower Grove Heights Neighborhood Association.**

Mail To: TGHNA 3735 Connecticut St. St. Louis MO 63116

Name _____ Tel: _____

Address _____

Table of 8 ___ @ \$80.00 = _____

Individual Tickets ___ @ \$10.00 = _____

**TOWER GROVE HEIGHTS
NEIGHBORHOOD
ASSOCIATION**

Monthly meetings 7:15 PM on 4th Tuesday, First Church of Divine Science, 3617 Wyoming St.

President: Robin Vannoy

President Elect: vacant

Past President: Brian Marston

Secretary: Diane Hurwitz

Treasurer: Tom Rhodenbaugh

NSO: Joe Thele, 773-0664,

email: thele@stlouiscity.com

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Block Representatives: Sara Langan

Fun & Fundraising: Cheryl Jones

Gazette: Matthew Fernandes

Membership: Sara Langan

Neighborhood Improvement & Safety:

Joe Ogier

Telephone Inquiry Service: Jean Iezzi

(314)772-5982

Webmaster: LeAnne Lis

www.towergroveheights.com

BLOCK REPRESENTATIVES

3600/3700 Arsenal

Dennis Fortna

3800 Arsenal

Charles Khan

3600/3700 Hartford

Bobbie Ohmer

Sue Stefanski

3800 Hartford

Ross Hammond

Joe Thele

3600/3700 Juniata

Mary Keefe

Julia Engelhardt

3800 Juniata

Kim Cole

Lucinda McNary

3600/3700 Connecticut

Need Representative!

3800 Connecticut

Virlene Reichert

3600/3700 Wyoming

Creston Ragan

3800 Wyoming

Pat Strawhun

3600/3700 Humphrey

Sue Freedman

3800 Humphrey

Erin L. O'Reilly

Cathy Vanderheyden

3600/3700 Utah Place

Mary Duggan

3800 Utah Place

Susie Gudermuth

Need additional Rep!

Tower Grove Heights Needs You! The TGHNA is the one thing that best illustrates the Heights' commitment to community. It is the place where we come together:

- To find out what is happening in the neighborhood.
- To make the Heights a cleaner and safer place.
- To have a liaison with City Hall and other agencies.
- To make the neighborhood a more interesting and fun place to live.
- To better protect our property values.

However, the Tower Grove Heights Neighborhood Association can only be YOUR Association if you join. We need your participation if TGHNA is going to be a reflection of what YOU want the Heights to become. So please don't delay in joining or rejoining. Memberships run from January to January. Please indicate your level for the year 2003:

___ Individual (1 vote) \$7/yr

___ Household (2 votes) \$12/yr

___ Business (1 vote) \$25/yr (Includes 10% discount on Gazette Ads for 4 Issues)

___ ****NEW**** Life Membership (1 vote) \$100 for LIFE

Please PRINT:

Name _____ Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

*Please check if you would like to be included in the 2003 Neighborhood Buzz Book to be distributed to members in July 2003: ___ yes ___ no

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

Contribute to the Gazette!

Call 773-4985 to contribute (story ideas, tips, comments...)

Please remember the Tower Grove Heights Neighborhood Association when you are making donations this year. 100% of your donation to TGHNA is tax deductible and the money will be used to improve the neighborhood. If you would like to donate, send a check made out to "TGHNA" to Tower Grove Heights Neighborhood Association, 3735 Connecticut St., St. Louis, MO, 63116.

Upcoming meetings:

Tuesday, February 25, 7:15 p.m. & Tuesday, March 25, 7:15 p.m.

First Church of Divine Science, 3617 Wyoming St.



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

NONPROFIT
O R G
U.S. POSTAGE
P A I D
ST. LOUIS, MO
PERMIT NO. 3794

*It's Membership time!
Join the Tower Grove Heights
Neighborhood Association today!*

Printed on Recycled Paper