



The Soulard Renaissance

Volume XV, Issue III

Summer 1990

Bastille Days, 1990

Bastille Days Storms into Soulard

By Jeanne C. Weber

July 14, 1990 marked the 201st anniversary of the storming of the Bastille (prison) in Paris, France. Prior to the attack on the Bastille on July 14, 1789, the Parisians were frustrated by the absolute power of King Louis XVI. He could make most decisions without consulting the citizens or elected group, (the parliament at that time). Classes were not treated equally. Tax rates were set arbitrarily and inconsistently. "Sans Culottes" (Peasants who wore loose clothing instead of the more expensive breeches) were not allowed to receive the total income of their crops and sometimes starved. They were also required to provide unpaid services, such as building roads, bridges and waterways. At the same time, the nobles paid no taxes and were given special privileges. The French were also receiving word about the democracy in America.

These demands and inequalities created hostility among the "sans culottes." Adding to that anger was the disastrous harvest of 1788. The peasants were starving and

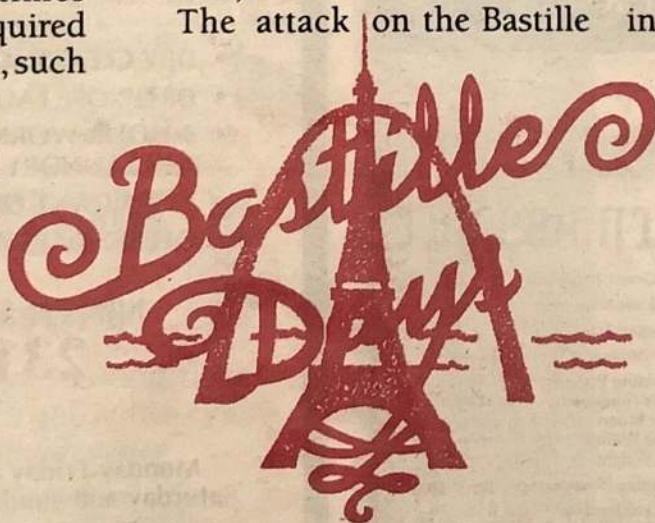
King Louis XVI was demanding that taxes be raised to get him out of bankruptcy. In order to raise taxes he had to convene the Estates General, a group consisting of three estates; the church, nobility and the middle class. The Estates General had not met since 1614 and began making demands immediately. The Third Estate forced the king to recognize the group as a governing body, the National Assembly. It began to discuss a new kind of government, one in which the king had less power. The king ordered his troops to keep peace in Paris and on July 14, a crowd stormed the prison fortress, the Bastille.

The attack on the Bastille

resulted in similar attacks all over France. The newly-formed National Assembly supported the actions by declaring that all men were free and equal and that everyone would have to pay taxes. The revolutionary cry became "Liberté, Egalité, Animosité" (Liberty, Equality and Fraternity).

While the French had taken some political control, the revolt caused food prices to increase dramatically. On October 5, 1789, a large crowd marched to Versailles to see the king. The peasants killed several royal guards and the king finally realized that he must meet the demands of the citizens. he moved into the Tuileries Palace in Paris

and on August 10, 1792, the palace was taken over by the citizens. A failed attempt to escape to Austria and the naming of France as a republic led to the complete fall of the control of King Louis XVI. He was eventually guillotined in January of 1793 after a trial proved that he had been plotting against the revolution. His wife, Marie Antoinette, was later tried and eight months later was also beheaded.



July 13, 14, and 15 1990



Notes From the Brick House

By Doug Everley
President, SRG

What a Veiled Prophet and what a weekend! Stand up, SRG, and take a bow! Again we showed St. Louis that Soulard is a robust community, on the go, with active, hard-working residents.

For the first time the SRG committed to work a booth at the fair. The plan was to raise funds for the renovation of our office building at Thirteenth and Gravois. With only slight knowledge of what was required, and trepidation of what to expect, the general membership and Ways and Means Committee said, "Yes! Our neighborhood wants to be involved in this annual event."

A great deal of work went into the preparation. Meetings were held with V.P. Fair personnel to learn the ins and outs of booth operation, with such little tidbits of knowledge as where to order ice and what to do with the money from sales. SRG members attended a seminar on TIPS for serving alcohol beverages. (I had no idea that if you add all the digits of the number on an Illinois Driver's license it equals the square root of the birthday of the license holder. I tried this once, but the booth captain would not let me check I.D.s thereafter.)

The booth, though, was a great success. Our plans for a little ten-foot concession that dispensed beer only turned into a forty-foot lunch counter. Perched atop the Jefferson Memorial garage, we were the only fair sponsored food stand around. Despite the heat, (you know the adage of the sidewalk being so hot you can fry an egg? Roofs of parking garages work the same way) enthusiasm was at an all-time high. Without continuous chatter, we attracted folks to buy who didn't even know they were hungry and thirsty.

Thanks, especially, to Jeanne Weber, Cindy Howe, and Richard Hansen, who organized our booth. Very special appreciation goes out to those who don't live in Soulard but, nonetheless, pitched in to give us a hand. This event required twenty-four hour manning from 6:00 Friday evening until 10:00 Wednesday night and a great deal of work was involved.

SRG and Soulard, be proud! You helped make the V.P. Fair the success that it was and in doing so, helped improve and bring credit to our neighborhood. Predictions are that our goals will be far surpassed. Thanks, SRG, you outdid yourselves once again.

NOTE: As a result of the V.P. Fair booth, the annual Lafayette Square-Soulard softball game is postponed until August 12. This is being planned around a neighborhood picnic. See you all at the Square at noon to root on our team to another victory. (They haven't lost a game this season.) Lafayette, better start saving for next year's beverage purchase.

Remember: The Soulard Restoration Group Meets the First Wednesday of Each Month at Trinity Lutheran School, 8th Street and Soulard, at 7:30 p.m.



The Soulard Renaissance

The Soulard Renaissance has a circulation of 6,000 and is published six times a year by the Soulard Restoration Group. It is distributed in Soulard and St. Louis area businesses and our advertisers.

Call 773-0966 for information and to place ads. Copy deadline for the next issue is August 30, 1990.

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A cyclist races through the streets of Soulard during Bastille Days' "Tour de Soulard."

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Hidden Treasure in Soulard

by John Ludwig

Moving! What did that mean to most of us when we were kids? No friends, new friends, new places, being scared of the unknown, not coming out of our room for days on end. Well, luckily when we moved to Soulard, it was the end of August and school started the first week of September. Going through most of the normal fears, our son was forced out of his room and quickly made friends at school.

Forgetting the dilemma of moving to the city, he was on the go before we knew it. He was questioning if he could join Boys' Club like the rest of the kids he knew. We told him to first find out more details about this Boys' Club, and he did.

Coming home, he told us of a facility that sounded like it would cost hundreds of dollars to join. He began describing this wonderful place, sort of like a Vic Tanny for boys. We decided to investigate this too good to be true place ourselves and this is what we found.

At 2524 South 11th Street is "Boys' Club of St. Louis," a multi-faceted facility sure to have something for everyone!

Built in 1929, the club expanded with a multi-purpose sports complex for its 50th anniversary. The Boys' Club is said to be the most inclusive club in town for young boys.

Offered to our boys under the guidance of trained professionals are endless sporting activities played intramurally on the grounds of the club. Baseball, basketball, iceless hockey, swimming, boxing, weight lifting, soccer, wrestling, and track and field are just some of the sports available.

Boys' Club of St. Louis is a great place to go and spend some healthy, constructive, supervised time. . . . Boys' Club is more than a place! It's a state of mind.

—Ken Wild, Director

There are more than 200 individual teams of which sign-up and try-outs is a must. But each child is given a position, depending on his ability. The trophy case proudly displays past winnings of local, regional and national championships.

For those as sports minded, there is a library, game room, arts and crafts instruction, TV room, health education, trips and tours, or nothing more than a great place to meet friends.

In meeting with the staff, we found a definite philosophy throughout the club that we agreed with.

"Boys' Club of St. Louis is a great place to go and spend some healthy, constructive, supervised time," said Ken Wild, Executive Director. "And yet, Boys' Club is more than a place! It's a state of mind. A belief that given a little guidance and encouragement, boys can grow up to become respected citizens in our ever-increasing complex society," Wild continued.

"Our basic objective is to offer direction to all boys in St. Louis, with special concern for the less privileged boy and show them the way to earn their self respect and the respect of others," Wild said.

The hours of operation enable kids to spend most of their free time at the club during the summer. The club is open Monday through Friday, 10:00 a.m. to

5:00 p.m.; Saturday, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. During school months the hours change to Monday through Friday, 3:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. and Saturday, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

And last, but not least, is the fee to join. Thanks to major contributions by the United Way and private donations, the cost is a mere \$10 a year. So if you know a young man age five through 18 who is moving to the city, or already lives here and needs something to do for the summer, tell him about Boys' Club of St. Louis. It could be the one thing he really needs.

Legislative Update

Missouri Sales Tax Drop

By State Representative Ronnie L. White
63rd District

Missourians will find their spending dollar going a little bit further after June 30, when a nine-month, one-fifth cent sales tax expired.

The tax, which started Oct. 1, was enacted to offset last year's \$150 million state budget shortfall. This deficit was a result of a Missouri Supreme Court ruling that said our state owes federal retirees refunds for the last three years of taxes that they paid on their pensions.

The state court decision was prompted by a U.S. Supreme Court ruling more than a year ago that called for all states to tax their public retirees' pensions equally. Missouri had been taxing federal pensions but exempting state and local pensions. The legislature devised a plan last summer to pay for the refunds of 65,000

federal workers who paid these taxes from 1985 to 1988, the years covered by the state's statute of limitations. The plan was a two-pronged approach, which included the sales tax and a two-year graduated corporate income tax that started on Jan. 1.

To bring Missouri in line with the U.S. Supreme Court ruling, we then passed a plan that would tax all federal and state retirees equally, but exempt up to \$6,000 of their pension income from taxes if their income is under a certain amount.

This year, as promised, the legislature approved a measure that would extend this exemption to private pensioners as well. As a result, all Missouri retirees will receive equal treatment, if the bill is signed into law by the governor.

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For First Time Customers

Neighborhood Fabric

by Jay Gibbs

These two views of the same flounder house at 1825 S. 9th Street offer eloquent testimony for the principle of hard work, of sweat equity. By the time Miles and Lori purchased this circa 1850s house in the mid-1980s it was not exactly home sweet home.

The original federal-style architecture had been obscured by badly altered windows, by an ugly later addition tacked onto the side, and by sheathing of tawdry tar paper and caked-on paint (as if one more layer could somehow ameliorate the bulged brick). The inside of this former 2-family home was a nightmare of severely sagging floors, threadbare wiring, leaky roof, rusty plumbing, and a perpetually flooded basement.

For almost five years, Miles and Lori, with a little help from their friends, have been gut-rehabbing this wreck into a home. This conversion has not only improved the house, but also has improved by extension the whole surrounding streetscape. Today, the flounder actually looks like a flounder again, and is accentuated by a nice flower garden with wrought iron fence and brick patio. The interior spaces are approaching completion in this now-reclaimed, single-family home. What else can be said? The results are exemplary.

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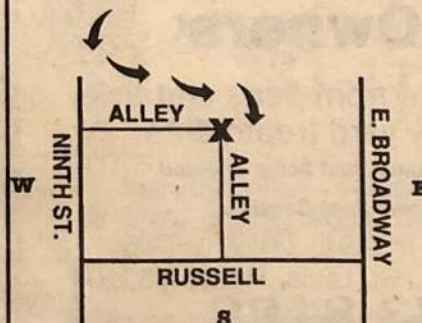
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SRG takes first step in obtaining office

by Phil Willman

In March 1990 the Souland Restoration Group purchased a building located at the intersection of 12th Street and Gravois Ave. in Souland. "This purchase is a big first step which the SRG has taken towards its long-standing goal of obtaining a permanent office in the neighborhood," said Doug Everley, SRG President.

The building, with an official address of 1230 Gravois, will be converted into office and meeting space for neighborhood use.

Most recently the site of a used car sales office, the building was most prob-

ably constructed in the 1930s. City directories show it was used as a gas station until the mid-1960s.

Negotiations for the purchase of the building were complicated by the presence of underground gasoline tanks on the property. Both the seller and the SRG were concerned about the potential for extensive soil contamination, which would require costly removal. However, excavation of the tanks and soil samples demonstrated that the site was clean. The purchase closed without a hitch.

Plans are now underway to renovate the interior space of approximately 2,000 square feet into two offices and a meeting room. "The building will be ideal for

neighborhood meetings, social functions and house tour activities," noted Everley.

In addition, Everley indicated, the SRG plans to hire sometime in the future, an Executive Director, who would use the building as an office.

The exterior of the building will be restored as much as possible to its original appearance. The Spanish style terra cotta tile roof and stucco wall finish will be retained. Multi-pane windows on the street facade, which have been closed in with cinder block, will be reinstalled.

Extensive landscaping will also be considered. Located on a triangular lot, the building is highly visible by

westbound traffic on Gravois and southbound traffic on Gravois. Currently a concrete parking lot surrounds the building. Several landscaping ideas are being explored, including removing the parking lot and creating a "mini park" with trees in front of the building.

A subcommittee of the SRG Fundraising Committee has been formed to begin the process of renovating the building. The subcommittee will work on raising funds, drawing up plans and actually doing the renovation. Anyone interested in any of these activities, even if it means hammering a few nails, should contact Phil Willman at 773-6573.

Japanese Culture Featured at Garden During International Month

International Month at the Missouri Botanical Garden culminates with the 16th Annual Japanese Festival August 25 through September 3. This year's theme, "Seeing Japan," will offer visitors a look at various aspects of the Japanese culture. Each weekday will be dedicated to a different subject matter. Monday will feature travelogues and travel tips Tuesday arts and crafts take center stage, Wednesday will highlight Japanese gardening, Thursday spotlights the visual and performing arts, and on Friday the traditional Children's Day returns. Weekends will offer a mixture of programs with the ever-popular taiko

drumming, storytelling, arts and crafts and more.

The Fannie May/Coleman Foundation is sponsoring the Japanese Festival for the fifth straight year.

Admission weekends and Labor Day is \$3 for adults 13-64, \$1 for senior citizens 65 and over, and free for children 12 and under. Weekday admission is \$2 for those aged 13 to 64, \$1 for adults 65 and over and free for children 12 and under. Admission is free Wednesday and Saturday mornings until noon.

For additional information contact the Festival Hotline beginning Monday, August 20, 577-5198.

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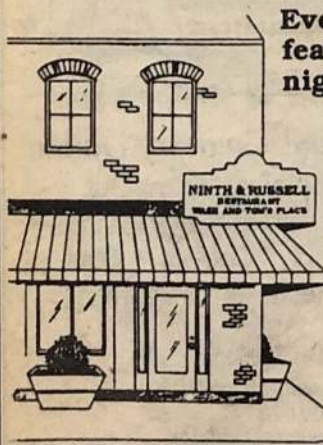
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Fine Wine, Gourmet Lunch All in One

by Janet Van Fleet
and Michael Moore

In a world of fast living and fast food, it is a nice surprise to discover a progressive business that is catering to fine living and fine food. The Lafayette Gourmet in neighboring Lafayette Square is just such a surprise.

"We are people and service oriented," said Vicky Belgari and Richard Ross, managers of the shop. "We'll bend over

backwards to make something work for you."

Ross and Belgari put their creative imaginations to work to prepare gift baskets, party trays and now their menu for lunch. The Lafayette Gourmet is using their two dining rooms and patio for a casual gourmet lunch.

With a back dining room, The Lafayette Gourmet is available for private luncheons. The restaurant can seat up to fifty people.

All of the cooking is done by Belgari and it is all homemade. The soup, sandwiches, pate plates, salads deserts and quiche are served in a beautiful atmosphere with white linen tables.

Before the Lafayette Gourmet began serving lunch, many had already discovered its assortment of fine wines, imported jellies, sauces, cookies, candies, coffee, teas, oils, and vinegars.

"We have some very fine wines from Hungary, France, Germany and Australia in our wine cellar. We also carry champagne from Italy, Spain and Chile," Ross said. "If you call ahead for your wine, we will chill it for you," Ross added.

The shop is also well stocked with many different foreign beers, cork screws, cook books, cognac, brandy and prime liquors. Most of the wines are very moderately priced. The most expensive is \$80 for Dom Perignon.

One very interesting and popular gift box available at The Lafayette Gourmet is of ten different imported beers. You

can pick which ten and they will box it up for you for \$17.95. The Beer Box is very popular for Father's Day or birthdays.

Every week, Ross selects a wine of the week to sample for lunch. The shop has also had wine tastings while delicious chocolate covered strawberries are served.

Ross and Belgari are so eager to please, they will even have a private wine tasting party in your own home.

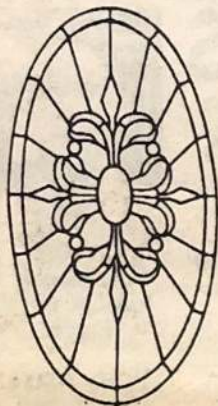
The Lafayette Gourmet likes to pamper their customers. They are equipped with a FAX machine so shoppers and diners on a tight time schedule can FAX in their orders to the shop. Ross will also deliver orders to your home or office. The FAX number is 621-7874.

Instead of running through the drive-through for lunch, wouldn't it be nice to sit out on the patio enjoying a glass of white wine and a salad on a cool St. Louis afternoon?

The Lafayette Gourmet is located at 1915 Park Avenue.

We have some very fine wines from Hungary, France, Germany and Australia in our wine cellar. We also carry champagne from Italy, Spain and Chile.

—Richard Ross



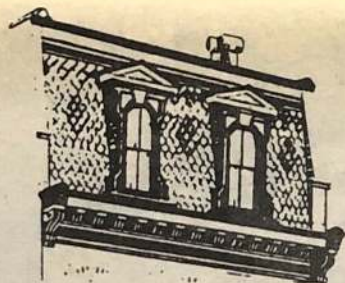
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Save the Earth: RECYCLE

What is all of the excitement over Recycling? Is it only the newest fad? Or is it the awareness that the future environment is the responsibility of each individual?

For many years dedicated people have professed the virtues of recycling, mostly on deaf ears. Corporate polluters have lobbied against the legislation that would require recycling and others have stood idly by ignoring the problem or feeling inadequate to affect any change. But it is through the combined efforts of individuals that real change is happening.

For the first time since its conception 20 years ago Corporate contributions played a major role in Earth Day, and many companies have ongoing recycling efforts. Communities and neighborhoods are participating in grass-roots recycling programs and Federal and State legislation is being past requiring recycling under certain circumstances. These efforts are only a start and there is a long way to go but as each person begins to recycle the result is two-fold, less damage is done to the environment and the repair begins.

Why should you personally recycle? Each year the average American generates approximately 1,000 pounds of trash and collectively that's 154 million tons enough to fill the New Orleans Superdome from top to bottom, twice a day, every day. About 50% of it is recyclable. Currently, only 10% of this trash is being recycled, another 10% is being burned and 80% of it is being buried. So think about the consequences of having to bury 800 pounds of trash times the number of people in your household in your own backyard each year.

Know what your actions mean:

- A tin can thrown in the trash to be buried takes 100 years to decompose.
- An aluminum can 200-500 years.
- A plastic six-pack cover 450 years.
- A glass bottle is still undetermined.
- Using recycled glass to make new glass reduces the amount of air and water pollution 50-60 percent compared with producing glass from silica.
- Recycling a 4 foot stack of newspaper will save a 40 foot pine tree.
- The only source of tin in this country is recycled tin, all other must be imported.

Start your recycling efforts on a small scale with one or two items and increase your efforts over time. A few simple items to start with are newspapers, aluminum cans, glass and plastic bottles. Use paper grocery bags or some reusable containers as collection bins. Place the bins in a convenient spot so that dropping items in them can become automatic and not an extra effort.

Following are some tips on preparing your recyclables:

- **Newspapers:** They must be clean and free of shiny inserts. They ought not to be soiled — for example, with food or chemicals — and ought not to be packaged in plastic or paper grocery bags.
- **Glass:** Caps should be removed and containers rinsed. Bottles should be separated by color that is, clear, green and amber. No plate glass or ceramics should be included.
- **Aluminum Cans:** They should be clean and free of other waste products.
- **Plastic Bottles:** They should be clean and separated by type and color. Soda bottles are generally made of polyethylene terephthalate. Milk and detergent bottles generally are made of high-density plastics.

What do you do with it after you've saved it? You need to find a recycling center that accepts what you have. Following this story is a list of some centers and the materials they collect.

Start recycling today. There are already recyclers in our neighborhood, one of whom is Judy Maksimovich, who for the last several months has been picking up recyclables from other neighbors and taking them to a recycling center. Special acknowledgment and thanks to you Judy for your efforts.

Efforts are underway to develop a neighborhood based depository or pick up system so that handling of your recyclables is more convenient. If you would like to be a part of that effort please call Cindy Harrison at 773-4078 for more information.

Most of the information in this article was taken from the St. Louis Post-Dispatch Recycling Guide of Sunday May 27, 1990.

Following are some area recyclers:

Ameri-Can

3144 N. Broadway, St. Louis
231-1938
Hours: 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. weekdays;
9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Saturday
Recycles: Aluminum cans, ferrous and non-ferrous scrap metals

American Iron and Metal Salvage Co.

3945 N. Broadway, St. Louis
421-4860
Hours: 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. weekdays;
8:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon Saturday
Recycles: Aluminum cans, scrap aluminum, car batteries, lead and stainless steel, copper and brass

Can Man Recycling

3325 Chouteau Ave., St. Louis
773-1777
Hours: 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. weekdays;
9:00 a.m. to 12:00 Saturday
Recycles: Aluminum cans, scrap aluminum, catalytic converters, aluminum foil, radiators, electric motors, stainless steel, copper, lead and brass



Circo Glass Recycling

3807 Bates Ave., St. Louis
353-2921 (recording)
353-2207 (office)
Hours: 8:30 to 11:30 a.m., 12:30 to 4:00 p.m. weekdays
Recycles: Aluminum cans, bottles and plate glass

City of Kirkwood Francis Scheidegger Recycling Depository

350 S. Taylor Ave., Kirkwood
965-2410
Hours: 24 hours daily
Collects: Aluminum cans, brown paper bags, cardboard, glass containers, newspapers, scrap metals and appliances, plastic milk jugs and 2-liter soda bottles without labels

Operation Brightside Recycling Center

1660 S. Kingshighway, St. Louis
776-0600, 776-0055
Hours: 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Tuesday through Friday; 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Saturday
Collects: Aluminum cans and scrap aluminum (no foil), newspapers, glass containers, cardboard, motor oil and plastic bottles

Almost 50 million aluminum cans were recycled in the U.S. last year. Aluminum recycling saves about 95 percent of the energy needed to make new aluminum from bauxite, the primary ore of aluminum.

Rich Farrell's Summer Sale!

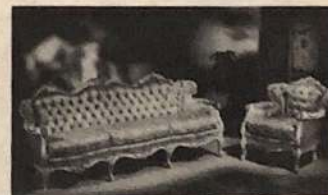
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Neighborhood Groups Cooperate to

A spirit of fun and cooperation permeated the food and drink booth at the Souland refreshment stand at this year's VP Fair, June 30, July 1, 3 and 4. Nearly 150 members and friends of the Souland Restoration Group (SRG) and the Souland Business Association (SBA) joined together to staff the booth atop the Gateway Arch Parking Garage. The anticipated \$3,500 proceeds from the booth will be shared between the two groups in their continuing efforts to improve the Souland Historic District.

Earlier this year, the Ways and Means Committee of the SRG approached the VP Fair commission about the possibility of having a booth at America's largest birthday celebration. After being accepted to have a 40 foot "A" booth, the committee leaders Cindy Howe, Doug Howe, Jeanne Weber, and Richard Hansen decided that additional help may be needed and approached the SBA with a shared profit plan. Bonnie Velat, treasurer of the SBA and owner of the Framery on Russell, readily agreed to help with the booth. Together, these two groups recruited volunteers to work the over 1000 man hours needed to run an effective booth.

Although the proceeds from the booth were not as great as anticipated the coordinators still feel the undertaking was a success. Cindy Howe stated "Because of the lower than expected turnout for the fair, all the booths had lower sales. However, all the workers really had a good time together and it was great to work with another neighborhood group successfully."

Despite the triple digit temperature readings, the booth volunteers had a great time hawking their wares. Mary O'Day, a shift captain, was often seen leading the workers in a "Cold Beer" chant. Ron D'Aloia used his New York accent to bring potential buyers to the booth with "Get yuh cold beerah hearah." Many others contributed to the camaraderie with jokes and laughter.

Bonnie Velat looks forward to next year saying, "I don't think we should make the decision not to have a booth just on one year's performance." Doug Howe had a positive outlook stating "It's \$3,500 we didn't have yesterday."

The VP Fair committee thanks all the hard workers at the fair and the various restaurants and bars that donated liquid refreshments for the workers.



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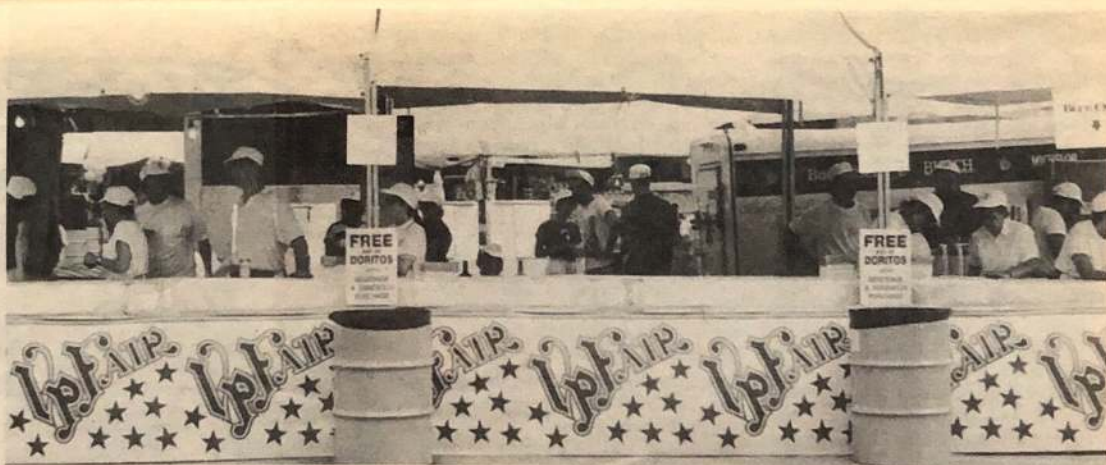
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Clockwise, from top: Cecilia and Fred Andres and Cindy Howe hold down the fort as one SRG member relaxes. Right, top photo: Janet Van Fleet whistles while she works. Right, bottom photo: Richard Hansen tries to impress his crew by talking on the cellular phone. Bottom photo: Mary Beth Taticek remembers to wear her plastic gloves while carefully mixing those delicious Margueritas while Mike Moore supervises the Coke line. Bottom, left photo: The Soulard Booth at the VP Fair. Top, left photo: Richard Eaton, Tina Edwards and John Durnell vogue for the camera.



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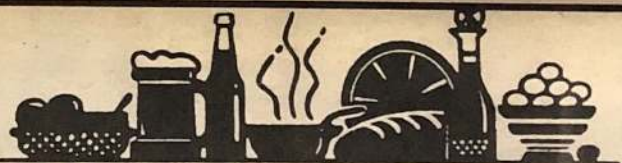
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The Further Adventures of a

by Jay Gibbs

He's baaaaaack! Folks, you are at this very moment witnessing the return of yours truly, A. Rehabber. I know that you thought that this odd character was dead and buried, well, ever heard of exhumation? On the other hand, scratch that analogy; I don't smell that bad. Anyway, it is good to come back.

The Souldard Renaissance has become rather bland, I think most of you will agree; it needs less programming and more spice. And I'll endeavor to provide some of the latter.

In this new/old column, I will go back to that oldest of comic devices, and make fun of myself. Remember my "food" piece? I'm gonna rerun it, but with a sequel: what does a rehabber eat when he does have a kitchen? Remember my three years old boast that I'd be finished with the house in a few months? Yeah, sure, Remember Minnie the Rehab Kitty? Soon you'll meet Bogie the Timid Semi-Rehab Doggie. And so on.

In addition, I'll not hesitate to take comic aim at other tempting targets, especially those Souldard people and institutions who/which take themselves too seriously. OK, you've been warned.

And I'll write about general life in the neighborhood, from a wry perspective. For instance, look for some observations and quotations about life for

Souldard single persons. Or, how about a day at Souldard Market? And maybe I'll watch the west county yuppies in full feeding frenzy and courting ritual form at local bars. Oh boy, this is gonna be fun!

Enough about the future already, what about this issue? OK, OK. Hey, let's talk about shells, one of my favorite Souldard subjects. (Groan.)

First of all, does everybody know what a shell" is? It's like, wow, those really grody vacant empty buildings in Souldard with the narly plywood windows and bitchin' see-thru roofs and like totally tubularly flooded basements and icky smells and like I'm too sure oh my property values and gag me with a spoon like shouldn't they all be torn down?

Imagine what sort of madness motivates any one, who already has an old house with plenty of rehab work, to purchase another ready-made bundle of costly aggravations. Another old house, in its raw, natural habitat. Why does he or she go looking for more trouble?

It's a sort of disease, this compulsive love of shells, these wrecks in all their derelict, dry-rotted glory. It's a little crazy, like gambling away the mortgage money, or like buying junk bonds (I'll bet Michael Milken never bought and sold old vacant houses, though). If you

think that's crazy, imagine owning one dead-capital shell, and buying yet another one! Is there really a sucker born every minute?

I purchased 912 Emmet St. — Exhibit A — in May, 1989. Without detailing all the year-long subsequent frustrations, let me tell you, I'd have likely made more financial progress if I'd buried the cash in a shallow hole and watered it every day.

But that wasn't enough misery. In April 1990 I bought 2204 Rear Menard

St., an even sadder, more pathetic orphan of a hulk than 912. The first time I went inside 2204, I literally fell through the floor up to my waist, and fell in love with this little French Creole cottage alleyhouse. Call it Exhibit B, and call me nuts. Out of my mind. Insane. Stupid. Pound foolish. Dumb. One member of the SRG Code Committee warned me, "Jay, be careful, you don't want to be thought of as a shell speculator." Egad, insult above all others!

However, God and St. Joseph hath



Exhibit A: 912 Emmet Street

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n Amateur Rehabber

smiled upon my sad state. After having shown 912 over 30 times, and having had it under contract (unsuccessfully) with three different developers, finally, a real person buyer named Mindy is buying this shell, to rehab it as her home. By the time you read this, the sale contract will have been executed, God willing.

Only a week after signing the contract on 912, I signed the contract to sell 2204. This deal is already done: 2204 Rear Menard is now the property of

Contractor Bob, who did such good finishing work in my house a couple years ago. Now he has his own project to work on, more power to him, may the force (of rehabber's vision) be with him; he plans to remake this historic little alleyhouse into his home.

So what's all this craziness leading to? If all goes well, I'll shortly be free of shells. Two more derelict, vacant shells will be infused with fresh money, fresh talent, fresh enthusiasm, and will eventually become two more owner-occu-

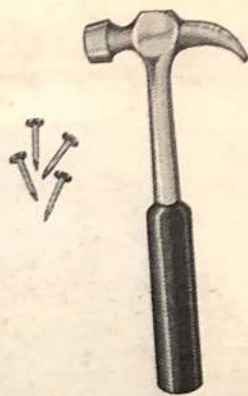
pied, single family homes in the historic district of Soulard.

I was crazy once before. Check out "Neighborhood Fabric" in this issue: five years ago I sold 1825 S. 9th St. to its present owners, who have since effected a marvelous transformation of that place into their home. I don't take any credit for their hard work, only the credit for getting that vacant shell into rehabbers' hands.

There's a powerful satisfaction in that knowledge, in helping to save a hunk of history. It's similar to watching the yearly growth of a tree you've planted, a similar feeling of having improved something. Maybe that's not so crazy.

So what's this crazy shell speculator going to do now? Well, heh, heh, heh, I have my eye on another shell that's for sale, another sad-sack mess, another circa pre-Civil War urban eyesore that most folks want razed. First, though, I'm going to take a short break: relax, enjoy the summer, have some fun, you know, OK sure like live a normal life, man. And I'll talk to some people about this shell, and we'll see if the crazy compulsion strikes, when the moon is full and the numbers are right.

Yes, I've been crazy, heh, heh, heh, but now, thank you Mindy and Bob, I'm crazy like a fox. Until next time...WAIT! One more thing. Who is this "J.R. Doug" person writing "The Lighter Side"? Get an identity, dude! Take off the veil, we



already have a prophet! I mean, sign your real name, you wimp!! OK? ... bye.



Exhibit B: 2204 Rear Menard Street

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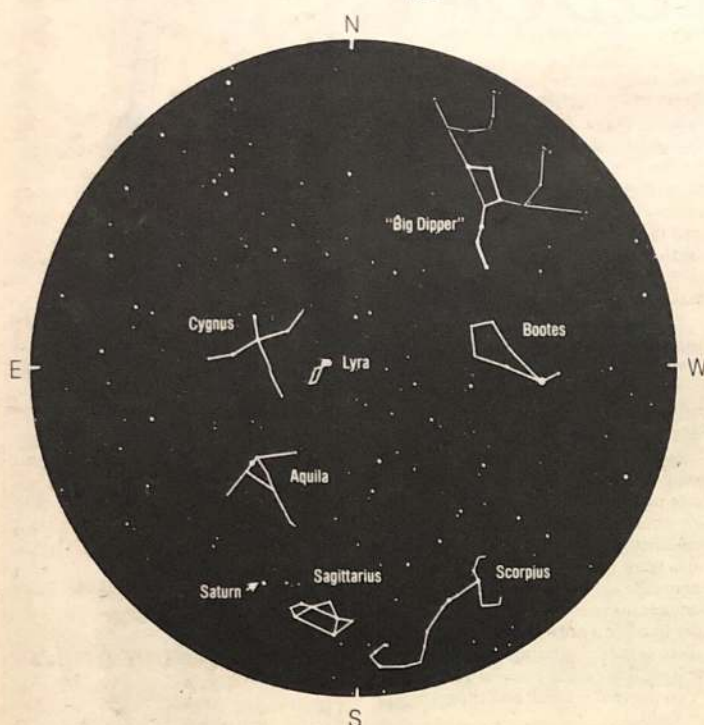
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Star Gazing Made Easy During Summer



By John Wharton

John Wharton is the director of the McDonnell Star Theater.

Darkness comes late on a mid-

summer's evening. But, the summer night is worth the wait, as the sky at this time of the year plays host to a variety of notable and easy-to-recognize star patterns.

We'll begin by first finding our directions in the night sky. A handy and familiar directional indicator can be found in the evening at this time halfway up in the northwest — the Big Dipper. This familiar shape is called an asterism by astronomers. While the ancient constellations were developed to help tell stories and legends, an asterism is a more basic and contemporary star pattern, used simply as a convenience in casually mapping the sky. The stars of the Big Dipper are actually regarded as the hind quarters and inexplicably long tail of the constellation of Ursa Major, or Great Bear.

To use the Big Dipper to help find directions, look to the two stars in the cup of the Dipper farthest from the handle. By drawing an imaginary line out of the cup, a path is made to the star Polaris, the famous North Star. Polaris gets its fame not by being bright (its about the 47th brightest, and not what you could call dazzling), but rather by being in the right place at the right time. At this current epoch in the Earth's history, our north pole of rotation just happens to point almost directly at Polaris, making the entire sky appear to spin around this star. In this way, Polaris provides us with a quick way to establish the direction north under the night sky.

The Big Dipper can guide you to another prominent star. An arcing line drawn out of the Dipper's handle will lead you to orange-colored Arcturus in the constellation of Bootes, halfway up in the west. This pattern was formed to honor a legendary herdsman, but most people now find it easier to see this patch of sky as a kite, or perhaps an ice cream cone.

Return once more to the Big Dipper, this time locating the two stars in the cup that are nearest the handle. An imaginary line drawn up and out of the Dipper shape will eventually guide you to a large triangle of three bright stars high in the southeast, known as the Summer Triangle. This casual contemporary pattern is formed from the brightest stars in three ancient constellations. The easiest-to-recognize of the three patterns is Cygnus the Swan, with bright blue-white Deneb marking the tail as well as anchoring the top-left corner of the Triangle. At the top-right position is Vega, next to a small rect-

angle forming Lyra the Lyre, or harp. The third star in the Triangle is Altair, in Aquila the Eagle.

Low in the south are two more prominent constellations. A large fishhook defines the shape of Scorpius the Scorpion, with bright-orange Antares indicating the scorpion's heart. To the left of Scorpius is Sagittarius the Archer. From a contemporary point of view, this pattern looks strikingly like a teapot.

Star-gazers fortunate enough to be away from the glare of city lights should be able to look from Scorpius and Sagittarius up through Aquila and Cygnus, and then down to the north to find a hazy celestial glow. This faint ribbon of light is actually the main section of our home galaxy, the Milky Way. The glow of the Milky Way is the combined light of billions of distant stars, and even a small telescope or pair of binoculars will resolve many faint stars in this part of the sky.

To the left of Sagittarius is a planetary object of interest, bright yellow-white Saturn, whose beautiful ice-particle rings are apparent in even a smaller telescope. Saturn is around a billion miles from the sun, over nine times farther than the Earth, and so takes much longer—over 29 years—to make one complete circuit of the sun. This slower orbit is reflected in Saturn's position in the sky. Last summer, for example, you might have seen Saturn above the teapot shape of Sagittarius. A year later, it hasn't shifted in the sky much at all.

While Saturn graces much of the evening sky, the pre-dawn hours this summer are highlighted by brilliant Venus, our relatively close and cloud-shrouded neighbor world. In mid-August, Venus is joined low in the east by bright Jupiter, a more-distant planet, but also larger much larger, and so still quite reflective. On the mornings of August 12 and 13, Venus and Jupiter will appear quite close to each other in a striking arrangement low in the east before sunrise.

St. Louis-area star map, created on the Digistar® planetarium system, is good for around 10:30 p.m. in mid-July and 8:30 p.m. in mid-August.

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Soulard Softball Team Ahead by 2 Games

by Pete Grace

YEA TEAM!! This article is being written after a fantastic 5-1 victory over our big rival — American Bank — on a beautiful Sunday morning (makeup game). We now have a stirring record of 6 wins and a tie (the tie occurring in the only game this writer did not participate in — so draw your own conclusions). **SOULARD IN FIRST PLACE BY TWO GAMES!**

Outfitted in our gaudy purple shirts with white lettering ("SOULARD" in the front ... "Where the past meets the present" on the back), we are a formidable group indeed. Here is a breakdown of the team — with capsule comments (all in fun).

• Manager: Old Sweet Harold "Yell 'til You're" Horsley. The undertaker. Took over for Ed Bushmeyer who left the area but still plays for us. Harold is a so-so pitcher, makes a good tall shortstop ... questionable managing moves ... but what the heck, we're in first place!

• Chuck "Give Me a Diet" Coker:

Big Chuck ... lots of power ... nothing gets by him at first base ... can't say the same when he plays left field. Assistant coach ... knows what every player on the other team did previously at bat. Most of us don't even know whom we are playing!

• Barb "I'm Just One of the" Geisman: finally started showing up ... plays a mean second base ... great on the double play combinations. Now if she would only get an official SOULARD shirt!

• Susan "Not Afraid of Losin'" Linkul: Also a very capable second baseman ... always smiling ... lives on the other side of the state (West County), but we don't hold that against her. Looking to move into the city (maybe that's why she is smiling)!

• Pete "Amazing" Grace: The wizard at shortstop ... questionable throws to first instead of second — but Diet Coker takes it in stride. Came within one out of pitching a shutout in the 5-1 game. Found a new position?

• Don "Do We Really" Kehr: When not on vacation, DK is an excellent backup in the outfield or at shortstop ... loves to coax a walk (if a man walks, the woman batting behind him also gets a

walk — in effect, two people on base with one walk).

• Cecelia "Scooter" Andres: Power and speed ... sure hands ... listens to her coaches — wait, APRIL FOOLS, right? CA plays third but prefers catching — because of her "bug" background? Actually caught a fly ball Sunday for the last out!

• Cynthia "Smokey" Harrison: Our catcher or substitute right fielder ... calls a good game behind the plate ... hopes to one day be able to throw the ball back to the pitcher on the fly! Pulled some muscles but bounced (well, crawled) right back the next game. Tough!

• Ed "Come Out of the" Bushmeyer: Pitched the only shutout in the history of the TOWER GROVE PARK SOFTBALL LEAGUE on June 14, a 17-0 laugh — and he did it while wearing his business suit pants! Wonder if he absentmindedly wears his purple SOULARD shirt to the office? Seems more relaxed this year. It probably comes from not having to manage this bunch of crazies.

• Theresa "White" Burcham: Our newcomer this year, thanks to Don Kehr. Plays a fine defensive right field, made a game saving catch the last game.

• Sharon "I Left My Glove But It Was Still Here Two Weeks Later" Matayas. Now is this an honest league or what? Sharon fills in wherever Old Sweet Harold needs her.

• Bob "Put the Barbecue on the" Weber: Aspiring professional golfer. Played nine holes BEFORE our last game and still made offensive and defensive contributions. What a guy. Covers right center field. Should be more relaxed now that Jeanne (see next capsule) is away for the summer.

• Jeanne "Habla Espanol" Weber: Our token foreign player (See above — going to Europe) ... Power hitter ... smart runner ("Where do I go now, coach?"). Actually caught a foul ball while catching — a Soulard first.

• Bob "Mole" Olander: Another aspiring golfer — see Bob Weber. A hustler ... our only lefthand batter ... good defensive outfielder.

• Carmella "Beam Me Up, Captain" Kirk: A city person, though not our



The Soulard Softball Team relaxes after another victory. The team has a record of six wins and one tie.

neighborhood. Also plays on a KSHE radio team — not our music! All around excellent player ... two game saving catches in center field our first game against American Bank. Responsible for Amazing Grace's moves — like "Pete move in ... Pete move out ... Pete move over ...". What would I do without her?

• Ken "Breeze" Pawelek: An outsider, resides in South America, excuse me, South County. Second year with the

team. Rides his motorcycle to the games (and home afterwards, we assume). Defends left field, played shortstop recently ... good power. If you get on base ahead of him, you had better "move" if he hits it.

• Amy "Action" Jackson: Somehow related to Diet Coker. Very dependable right fielder — when she shows up. Blames it on car problems?

See SOFTBALL, page 14



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Annual Softball Game, Picnic August 12

Event: The Annual Soulard vs. Lafayette Square softball game

Where: Lafayette Square Park

When: Sunday, August 12, 12 Noon

At high noon the teams will take the field. And just think, for absolutely-no-admission-fee you could be there to see one of the great all-American showdowns south of the Arch and north of Arnold. The Soulard Restoration Group and Lafayette Square teams will face off in their annual softball game. For only the second time in no-one-can-remember-how-many-years, the SRG will provide the liquid refreshments for fans and players the penalty for losing last years game. So, come on out. Cheer on your favorite "team." Chat with your neighbors and kick back for some all-American fun.

Event: The 2nd (therefore) Annual Soulard Restoration Group (SRG) Family Picnic

Where: Lafayette Square Park

When: Sunday, August 12 Immediately following the softball game

Bring your spouse. Bring your kids. Bring your neighbors. Bring a salad. All SRG members and friends are invited to join for an afternoon of neighborhood camaraderie. If you've only heard about those wonderful SRG people, and would like to get to know them better, then you are invited too. Burger, brats, beer and soda will be provided.

If you would like any additional information about the above events, please contact the SRG at 771-5563.

Softball Team Looks Forward to Big Game

Continued from page 13

• Tim "Don't Call Me Reverend" Martin: Baby Face comes to play, even brings his own rooting section. Great arm in the outfield — legs aren't too bad either!

MASCOTS:

• Betsy and Jan Grace — Have yet to witness a losing game. Betsy is a good on-hand babysitter for —

• Adam Martin (see Tim) ... a rough and tumble kid, ready to take his father's place (in about 20 years).

• Pfred Andres — the husband and agent for Scooter Andres. Joins us after game at Norton's, made the Sunday game

(who was that other woman in your Corvette, Pfred?).

• Cindy Martin: See Tim... see Adam ... see the new baby — please!

IN MEMORIAM:

• Phillip Willman: Unable to play this season due to severe leg damage suffered during a game last year while patrolling the outfield. Of course, we are undefeated without Phil. ...

• Rodney Wright: A roster player who has yet to make an appearance. If you are not going to play, Rod, please turn your shirt over to Barb Geisman. Thank You.

• Russell Farber: Speaking of gaudy purple shirts, this is the man responsible for our uniforms. Perhaps that is why Russ never shows up. Actually, a rumor is going around that he did make an appearance at a makeup game — that had been called off three days earlier!

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Aug. 2 at 7:00 vs. CBGB PUB

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By the way, we have already warned Pat that we will be expecting "full treatment" when we bring home the trophy. Of course, he pretended not to hear us.

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Observations on Life in Soulard

By J. R. Doug

Editor's Note: This is the second in a series of articles on the "lighter side."

It seems to me that too often in Soulard, we are only concerned about the big issues. Topics like beautification, fund raising, promoting residential and business development, and zoning and code issues dominate discussions about neighborhood improvement. Because of that, we've ignored some "small" issues that have dramatic impact on Soulard quality of life. This second "Observations on Life in Soulard" will focus on four of these critically important "smaller" needs.

First is an issue that the business development committees should work on. We need someplace in the neighborhood where you can buy freshly baked donuts on Sunday morning. One of life's simple pleasures is reading the Sunday morning newspaper while having a good cup of coffee and a freshly baked glazed donut. You can buy the Post. You can fix the coffee. But where can you buy a donut on Sunday morning without driving an unacceptably long distance?

The donut place down on Broadway is great — but it's not open on Sunday morning. What Soulard needs is a place like the Donut Drive In at Chippewa and Watson. On Sunday morning, they have freshly baked glazed donuts that are still warm from the oven. But it's too far to drive — they get cold before you can get home.

Second, we need more creative restaurant names in Soulard. While our neighborhood is blessed with a wide variety of great restaurants, owners have gone overboard with using an address for the name of their restaurant: Soulard's (at Soulard and 7th), Tucker's (on Tucker or 12th), 9th and Russell (you got it, at 9th and Russell), Allen Avenue (on Allen) and Marion's 1860 Saloon (at 1860 South). Enough already!

We used to have more colorful names: remember Tammany Hall, the Downstreet Cafe, and Pleasant Company? And you can look around the metropolitan area and find creative names for restaurants. Who would not want to eat at the Double Bogey Bar and Grill? Maggie McDuff's Cork & Platter? Mammer Jammer Restaurant? Mr. Moke's Brew and Vittles? The New In? Yummy's Chicken and Cones? (All real places — look them up!) Or my personal favorite: S & M Foods (stagger the imagination). We certainly don't need West County-sounding names in Soulard — but a little imagination would help.

Third, we need a faster McDonald's. Is it my imagination, or is our local McDonald's incredibly slow? The last time I went to the drive-up window, I was able to listen to three innings of the Cardinal baseball game before getting my Big Mac — and there was a rain delay in the second inning.

This is a particularly acute issue given the baby boom in Soulard. Since they now have children, yuppie lunches at Patty Long's will soon be replaced with Happy Meals at McDonald's. Let's be honest. The best reason for going to McDonald's is because it's fast. But not in Soulard. So let's appoint a neighborhood committee to look into this Mc-problem.

Fourth, our neighborhood needs more young, single men. In my first "Observations on Life in Soulard," I described the unfortunate mismatch on the neighborhood softball team of unmarried female players and married male players. This mismatch exists not only on the softball team, but in the neighborhood as a whole.

Soulard has become a haven for very

attractive, young, single women. Recent estimates show ten unmarried 20-30 year old women for every one unmarried male the same age. This has led to some ugly consequences. It is rumored that before getting married, the last single and very eligible male in Soulard was more sexually active than Rob Lowe — even counting teenagers. It is also rumored that single Soulard women are flocking to the sexy legs contest at Chill's in their desperate search for male companionship.

On every Friday and Saturday night, Soulard bars are filled with slimy West County men who have heard rumors of the male/female mismatch in Soulard. (Can't we have a West County quota in neighborhood bars — an only allow, say, 10% of the SRG Membership and Residential Promotion Committees. Find more single men. Help the women who moved to Soulard to escape tacky, pick-up lines in West County meat markets like The Big Kahuna.

Of course, we have other important "small" needs in Soulard. Those are my top four. For those who have made note of others, please share them with J.R. by writing me in care of The Soulard Renaissance.



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