



Serving Ferguson and Surrounding Communities since 2021

A Clean Resolution

by John McDonald

Make an easy New Year’s resolution. It won’t require any money, no extra time, and very little effort. It will, however, further your personal growth and value as a community member. Simply resolve to clean up after yourself.

When shopping, be considerate of others. Too many customers pick up an item, decide against buying it and carelessly put it down anywhere. Most of what’s left of North County’s retail sector is now dominated by discount stores like Dollar Tree, Walmart and Dollar General and this mess soon overwhelms their bare bones staffs. Return merchandise to where it belongs (and this includes not leaving carts in the middle of the parking lot). Instruct your children to do so, encourage adults with you to do so and model for all those who might notice how to do so.

Leaving stores in disarray drives up costs, and thus prices, not just when inventory gets lost in the jumble but when grocery stores have to throw out food someone left on a shelf to thaw. It also frequently drives away shoppers who go to similar stores but in “nicer neighborhoods”. As one social media poster recently wrote about her preferences, “I do live in Florissant but I try to avoid going most places in North County, I like to go further out to shop and eat.”

Additionally, resolve not to make the trash in your car someone else’s mess to clean up. When that litter is strewn along our streets it not only contributes to North County’s image problem but the broken bottles and bony meat scraps are a thoughtless danger to local pets. Judging by the cheap trash, those who throw beer cans, cigar/cigarette wrappers, fast food containers and liquor bottles out their car windows as they drive through our neighborhoods are generally young adults thumbing their noses at society. However, resealing used diapers or re-tying bags of eaten food and leaving them by the curb suggest some drivers believe their littering is excusable if it’s neat. Of course it isn’t, anymore than cleaning out your car in a parking lot and rationalizing that the store’s maintenance staff will dispose of the pile of debris you left.

Most readers of The Neighborhood News are obviously interested in their communities and already make an effort to be responsible for their own messes but if you see yourself in any of these descriptions, step up. It’s also likely that most readers know family members or friends who don’t make that effort. They’re fairly easily spotted by the messes they leave at home or in the yard for someone else to manage. Cleaning up after yourself, expecting your children to do the same and modeling that behavior for other adults will not only contribute to your personal growth but will make North County a better place. It’s an easy win-win.

FERGUSON HISTORICAL SOCIETY TO HOST “SLAVERY IN ST. LOUIS” EXHIBIT



The Ferguson Historical Society is proud to host “Slavery in St. Louis,” a traveling exhibit on loan from the Ulysses S. Grant National Historic Site. Slavery existed in St. Louis for 100 years under French, Spanish, and American rule of the city. Famous African American civil rights leaders such as William Wells Brown, Dred and Harriet Scott, and James Milton Turner were once enslaved in St. Louis.

Using primary sources, individual stories of enslavement, and additional resources for teachers, this exhibit helps us connect with our city’s complicated history and how it has been remembered (and misremembered) in the present. Our exhibit will also include information and artifacts from this time in Ferguson’s history as well as some information on the railroad and it’s impact on this time in our history.

We will be hosting the exhibit from February 5 - 9, 2024 at the Ferguson Community Center. It will be open to the public Monday - Thursday 11am-7:30pm and Friday 11am- 3pm. We will have a round table discussion Tuesday, Feb 6, at 6:30-8:00pm, hosted by Nick Sacco, Acting Historian and Curator from the Ulysses S. Grant National Historic Site and Rashad Timmons, doctoral candidate from the Univeristy of California, Berkeley, who’s done extensive research on Ferguson during the antebellum period. We’ll have a reception with light refreshments immediately before the roundtable at 5:30pm. The exhibit will also be open for student field trips during the day. If you have a class you’d like to bring to the exhibit, please contact us. Contact information at the end of the article.

In regards to Black history in Ferguson, the Mt. Olive Baptist Church, an African-American church built by emancipated slaves in 1880, was built on Eddy Ave at the back of January-Wabash Park. It was torn down in the 1980s. The Economic Development Director for the City of Ferguson at the time attempted to save the altar before the church was torn down. We have no information on what was decided or what was done. Does it exist somewhere, maybe in someone’s attic or basement? If you have information on that altar, please contact us.

If you would like to bring a class field trip, have information on the Mt. Olive Baptist Church, or have other questions regarding the exhibit, please contact Mary at marebake@sbcglobal.net or 314-332-5546.



February News and Events at the Ferguson Public Library

For more information, please call us at 314-521-4820 or visit us online at fergusonlibrary.net

Children and Teen Events

Stories and Songs for Little Ones

Join us for storytime! Ages 0-5.

Wednesdays at 10 am

Saturday, Feb. 3 at 10 am

Friendship Fest

Celebrate Valentine’s Day by making friendship bracelets! Ages 6-17.

Wednesday, Feb. 14 at 6 pm

Lego Club

Drop in and build a masterpiece with our Lego bricks! Ages 6-11.

Saturday, Feb. 17 at 2 pm

Adult Events

Readings on Race Book Club

We will discuss *Twigs from the Bush* by Margaret Bush Wilson.

Monday, Feb. 12 at 6 pm

Conversations and Coffee

Enjoy discussion of all the latest news over refreshments!

Tuesday, Feb. 13 at 6 pm

Topics in Health

Join us for a monthly discussion on various health topics.

Tuesday, Feb. 20 at 6 pm

All Ages Events

The 2024 Quilt Show

The Quilt Show returns! Come see beautiful quilts on display from area quilters.

February 8-10

Cultural Cuisine

Join us for a tasty exploration of the world! Check with the library for info about this month’s focus.

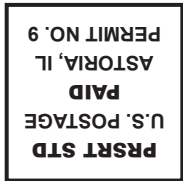
Wednesday, Feb. 21 at 6 pm

February Craft Kits

- Feb. 5-10 - Origami Quilt: Celebrate the 2024 Quilt Show by folding a quilt of your own!
- Feb. 20-24 - Constellation Art: Paint a constellation to decorate your space!

Pick up a free kit while supplies last!

The library will be closed on Monday, February 19 for Presidents' Day.



POSTAL CUSTOMER ECRWSS

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February Celebration Shout-outs

9 Happy Birthday Kathy Asikainen
12 Happy Birthday Abraham Lincoln
18 Happy Birthday Ebonee Curry
21 Happy 5th Birthday Matilda Schmermund
22 Happy Birthday George Washington
25 Happy Birthday Donnie Fox Jr.

Email Shout-outs to asroc873@charter.net - deadline is the 15th of each month



February at a Glance



2 Groundhog Day

8 Jeske Park Neighborhood Association Meeting
7PM

10 Lunar New Year

13 Fat Tuesday (Mardi Gras)

14 Ash Wednesday/Valentines Day

15 West Neighborhood Association Meeting
6PM

17 NorthHills Neighborhood Meeting 10AM

19 Presidents Day

22 South Central Neighborhood Meeting 6PM

26 South West Neighborhood Meeting 6PM



STAY THE COURSE



ON APRIL 2, VOTE TO RETAIN COUNCILMAN BLAKE ASHBY

- Councilman Ashby's tenacity was key in recruiting and hiring the *right* City Manager, John Hampton
- On council, Blake is actively working for secure neighborhoods and safer streets
- Volunteering in Ferguson for over a decade, Blake has a unique understanding of the challenges facing our city
- With City Manager Hampton, Police Chief Troy Doyle, and the Council, we have the leadership in place to satisfy and exit the Consent Decree
- Ferguson is turning the corner and moving in the right direction

Retaining Councilman Blake Ashby is the right choice to help Ferguson Stay the Course

For more information, contact Blake Ashby at (314) 246-0233 or blake@blakeashby.org
Paid for by the Committee to Elect Blake Ashby, Rob Chabot, Treasurer

What's Happening in your Neighborhood That's Good?

We seem to be bombarded with all the negatives in life. Wouldn't it be nice to hear, see, or read something positive? We would love to hear about good things happening around our community. If you notice something good, please us know so we can share it. Let's all look for the good; in each other, and in our community. (photos are always welcome)



Are you cold? So are they.
Extreme weather conditions can
kill your pet. Please keep your
pets inside.

PRAY FOR PEACE

The Ferguson Newspaper Group may be reached

text/voice: 314 249-6323
email: asroc873@charter.net
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On-line edition fergusonsmallbusinessdistrict.com/

This paper is made possible through volunteers and advertisers

Advertise with the paper

Copy for ads for the paper must be received by the 15th of the month for inclusion in the following month's paper.
Please send all ads to Gary: asroc873@charter.net

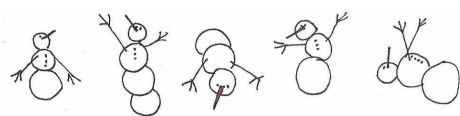
Volunteer with the paper

Info Gathering
City Meetings - attend and summarize City Council Meetings
Other Meetings - assure all city-wide events summaries gathered
Neighborhood groups
Diversity Meetings
Business Spotlight

Donate to the paper

Ferguson Newspaper Group
312 Calverton Road
St. Louis, Mo. 63135

Give a congratulatory shout out for only \$5



CROSSWORD

Green Space

By Robin Shively

ACROSS

- 1. Combine (to)
- 4. Impound water
- 7. Inc. alternative
- 9. Auld ___ Syne
- 12. Road’s edge
- 13. Proposal
- 15. Lyric poem
- 16. Follower of fa
- 17. Corp. image dept.
- 18. Waste parts
- 20. Display type
- 21. He has rules
- 22. Spaghetti brand
- 24. Lavish love upon
- 25. Palmetto st.
- 26. Ms. Jones
- 28. ___ a boy!
- 30. Soup noodles
- 31. ___ Kabong
- 32. Visual art
- 34. Abstinent
- 37. Kansas Auntie
- 38. Bug
- 39. Irish name meaning “dark haired one”
- 41. Diving birds
- 43. Moon of Saturn
- 45. Mountain people of Southeast Asia
- 47. Co. bigwig
- 48. Fertile
- 49. ___ Kettle
- 50. Favorite of Bugs
- 52. And others
- 54. Meditation syllable
- 55. Cannonball railroad
- 56. Brazen boldness
- 57. ___ beaucoup
- 61. Radar’s friend
- 62. Dog in comics
- 63. Chicago train
- 64. Unit of force
- 65. Short composition

DOWN

- 1. Mil. runaway
- 2. Florida county
- 3. Changed color
- 4. It may be floppy
- 5. Fuss
- 6. Pick ___!
- 7. Sculptured ornamentation
- 8. Belonging to
- 9. Remainder
- 10. Fido lingo
- 11. Leisure sport
- 14. Product of a densely treed area
- 17. It’s legal in Illinois
- 19. Those that loose
- 21. Partner of Rolls
- 23. Better
- 24. Hosp. workers
- 25. Tigger’s tail
- 26. Former mayor of Ferguson
- 27. Lotion ingredient
- 29. Paper a house?
- 33. Diamond official
- 35. Nipper
- 36. Lab resident
- 40. Defunct trade agreement
- 41. K to O linkup
- 42. Game ___!
- 44. “The Railway Children” Author Edith
- 45. New York river
- 46. Dale
- 47. Desert transport
- 49. Sasha’s sister
- 50. Arrive
- 51. Boo-boo
- 52. They sometimes get in the way
- 53. Iotas
- 56. Gone by
- 57. 60 min.
- 60. Tower in Toronto

Solution on page 13

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AN IMPORTANT CHANGE FOR NUISANCE PROPERTIES

At the January 9th Ferguson City Council meeting, the city announced a significant new policy regarding nuisance abatement – the city will now add Ferguson’s cost of nuisance abatement directly to a property’s tax bill. The new policy is a testament to the importance of having the right City Manager and how the Council and the City Manager most effectively work together.

“Nuisance abatement” is the City’s term for having to mow, clean up and maintain abandoned or occupied properties that violate city ordinances.

Ferguson’s neighborhoods, like many communities in North County, are dotted with vacant homes that are slowly falling apart. Often the homes were purchased to be rented out or renovated and resold. However the building owners under-estimated the cost of managing, maintaining or improving the properties, and many have essentially abandoned their properties, not maintaining them or even mowing the lawns.

If the property owner falls three years behind in their property tax payments, the properties are auctioned off or taken over by the County. Ferguson, under the leadership of City Manager John Hampton, has begun using an existing dangerous properties ordinance to demolish the worst of the houses without first taking ownership. Ferguson is also exploring use of a new Missouri law that would allow a not for profit such as the Ferguson Neighborhood Improvement Program to sue for ownership of abandoned homes that are just one year behind in taxes.

All of these processes take years. In the meantime, the properties become eyesores that degrade the quality of life of our residents and the value of surrounding properties. Because of the damage they cause, the city has no choice but to mow and clean up the abandoned properties, to abate the nuisance that the properties have become. Every year the city spends approximately \$150,000 mowing and maintaining properties it doesn’t own.

In the past, the City sent the bill to the property owner, with the great majority ignoring the bill just like they ignore their properties. Going forward, Ferguson will take advantage of a law that allows the abatement cost to be added directly to the property’s property tax bill. This is a significant change. If the property owner doesn’t pay the higher property tax, then they are behind on their taxes and after three years lose the property. More likely those that currently keep their property taxes paid will pay the higher property tax cost. The higher tax bill increases pressure on the property owner to either fix up or sell the property.

It will also provide money back to the City for additional nuisance abatement. As the City Manager noted at the Council meeting, Ferguson will do a significant, one-time cleanup of the abandoned houses, mowing, cutting back vegetation and cleaning up trash. Property owners will first be sent a bill, and if not paid the amount will be added to their property tax. The owners will either pay up, or start down the path of losing their properties through a tax sale.

This change is an example of how the Council most effectively works with the City Manager. Councilman Mike Palmer first noted that another City was using this approach. I did research on the laws and other municipalities and talked with a previous Mayor, Steve Wegert, for history and context. A document was submitted to the City Manager requesting an evaluation of the approach. The City Manager engaged the City Attorney, who rendered an opinion that the new approach was already allowed for under Ferguson statutes. City Manager Hampton then worked with staff to develop the policies and procedures around the new approach. The staff is now implementing the new approach.

It’s also yet another example of the importance of strong leadership. Adding the cost of nuisance abatement directly to the property tax bill won’t bring an overnight change. However over time it will have a significant impact on Ferguson’s neighborhoods and housing stock. This is the reality of government - improvement is normally incremental, and the result of consistent, thoughtful management and dozens of smaller decisions. This kind of steady improvement is only possible with strong leadership and a strong, proactive staff. Ferguson finally has that strong leader - City Manager John Hampton.

Councilman Blake Ashby
Ferguson Ward 2





Hello Ferguson!

by Marian Linck

As I approach a milestone birthday I have been thinking about aging. I do not think of myself as “old” while the date on my passport and driver’s license says otherwise. I often look at other people and wonder how old they are and how they feel about the aging process. Sometimes I run to a mirror and think about how others see me as I had seen that older person. Do others see an old woman when they look at me? Am I really an “old woman”?

I remember when I was 10 or 11 years old, I was quite convinced I would never see thirteen. I do not think I had a death wish or thought I had no destiny. I was not even worried or saddened by the fact that I saw no future. I was not a pessimist nor depressed. I was a happy “let the chips fall as they may” kind of youngster. Many people accused me of being a “Pollyanna” while I could find something good in everyone and ever thing. So where did those ideas come from?



At the Coronado Hotel

I certainly never saw myself as an old married lady with grandchildren and friends who were old, doing old people things like talking about politics and how the world is going to hell in a handbasket. OK, there is an old-fashioned figure of speech. Oh my, I am an old lady even though I do not want to admit it to myself or anyone else.

My previous “milestone” birthday was more difficult than this one, so far. Difficult to the point that I needed to run away for a few days and pull myself together. I had reconnected with a friend that I had met while camping with my parents in Indiana Dunes State Park. As I have said in previous articles, I was always on the prowl for someone to play with. Lynne was camping with her family as well and we became friends immediately. She was from Naperville, Illinois, a suburb of Chicago. We exchanged addresses and became pen pals for years. We sent letters sharing our experiences at school, in our neighborhoods and most of all our love for Davey Jones from the Monkees and Peter Noone from Herman’s Hermits. She took the train to visit me one summer and I did the same to Naperville. The letters became less frequent as we got older and found other interests. Ten or Fifteen years ago Lynne found me on a High School Alumni site, and we communicated once again. We had both grown up and obviously grown older. She had enlisted in the Army right out of high school and had been stationed in Germany. We had both gotten married and had a couple of children. She had been divorced and remarried, left the Army, and settled in San Diego.





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Get to the point Marian!

I asked if I could come for a visit to San Diego and leave the cold gray “icky” weather in Missouri behind. She was thrilled to welcome me to her home. We had not seen each other in over 40 years. I visited many places in San Diego including the University of San Diego where she taught English as a second language, San Diego Baseball Stadium, and the statue of Tony Gwynn. One of the highlights of the trip was a visit to the beach and the Coronado Hotel as well as the famous statue of a serviceman kissing the first girl he saw when he came home from the war. We dined in fun restaurants and visited an old Spanish Mission.

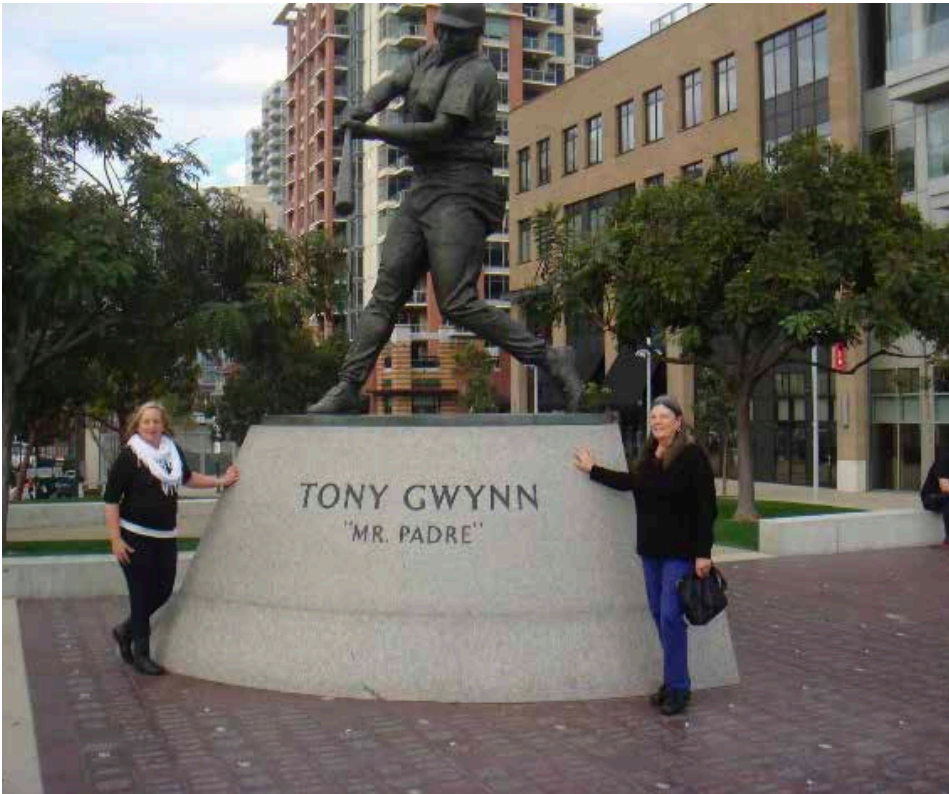


I returned home feeling much better about myself, my age and my friends and family.

This birthday may be a little different. I feel good about my health and well-being. I have a handful of cherished friends that I continue to see and share experiences with. My son and his partner Liz are planning a small dinner for me in February. My husband, and I are planning a week-long trip to St. Augustine, Florida. February and March are good months to escape from St. Louis.

As I finish this article and include some pictures, I look out the window at this cold, cloudy, dreary day and I realize I am grateful for my health. I appreciate my ability to age gracefully. Growing old is a privilege and a gift. I am OK with this milestone birthday.

Thank you for letting me share my thoughts once again this month. I welcome your comments and experiences with your aging process. My email address is manhattanmarian@gmail.com.



At the Tony Gwynn Statue

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"I WANT TO GROW FOOD. WHERE DO I START?"

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 13

6-7:30 PM

ONLINE ONLY



STARTING FROM SEED

SATURDAY, MARCH 16

9-11 AM OR 1-3 PM

AT EARTHDANCE ORGANIC FARM SCHOOL



TOP 10 VEGGIES FOR HOME GARDENING SUCCESS

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20

6-7:30 PM

ONLINE ONLY



THE DOWN AND DIRTY: SECRETS TO GREAT SOIL

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 27

6-7:30 PM

ONLINE ONLY



FROM GRASS TO GARDEN: BED BUILDING BASICS

SATURDAY, MARCH 30

9-11 AM OR 1-3 PM

LOCATION TBD



PESTS, WEEDS, & PLANT DISEASE - OH MY!

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 3

6-7:30 PM

ONLINE ONLY



MAXIMIZING YOUR YIELD FOR YEAR-ROUND DELICIOUSNESS

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 10

6-7:30 PM

ONLINE ONLY



PLANT IT FORWARD - COMMUNITY WORK DAY & POTLUCK

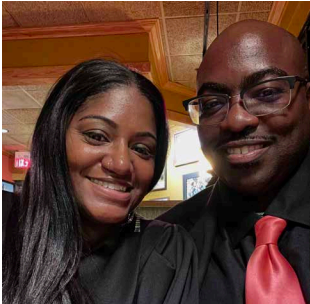
SATURDAY, APRIL 13

9AM-NOON, POTLUCK AT NOON

AT COMMUNITY SITES & THE FARM

Home Grown

For Andrea and Joe Randolph, EarthDance's Spring Training for Gardeners 2023 program seeded even more than their plans for a productive home garden.



Andrea and Joe Randolph

Since Spring Training, they’ve tied the knot (congrats!) and are planting the seeds for their new business, Get Rooted Nutritional Clinic. Get Rooted will feature holistic nutrition counseling, meal planning and prep featuring plant-forward cuisine made with fresh, local produce, and their own line of herbal and food products.

Joe and Andrea credit EarthDance programs with connecting them to a growing root system of people, knowledge, experience, and inspiration that are helping them bring their dream work to life!

Spring Training for Gardeners is a 5-week combination online and hands-on course at the Ferguson-based teaching farm, designed for gardening beginners as well as experienced growers who want to plan and maintain their most successful gardens yet.

Andrea, also an aspiring herbalist, says that she and Joe chose to participate in Spring Training together as they got clearer on a shared vision for the life of their dreams, including working together to help people connect food to their own healing. And they wanted to grow food in their own home garden.



Joe in the garden

Joe said Spring Training and the EarthDance Summer Apprenticeship helped him understand more about what it takes to grow food at a farm scale. “As soon as I started Spring Training, I knew I wanted to do the Apprenticeship. I was trying to figure out my capacity for growing the food for the business.”

“Our goal is to get down to root causes of diseases and dysfunction,” Andrea said. “As functional nutrition counselors, we look at health from an integrative approach, combining a holistic approach with the best of what conventional medicine offers, and collaborating as needed with each person’s team of health care providers. We also look at [a person’s] mental health, environment, traumas, and more - we go over so many different things so we can find the root cause. And we often find that it is in the gut. We work collaboratively to make them better as a whole person.” Andrea will work with each person to help them find an integrative approach that includes a sustainable food plan, offering prepared food as an option.

“That’s where my part comes in,” Joe said. “I went back to culinary school for plant-based cooking. I want to make good food that is completely plant-based. We take an approach that is balanced and sustainable for each person. Maybe you love to eat meat - you can still eat that, but you can add more plant-based foods to have a more balanced meal that is still delicious.”

Joe is also working to connect with local farm co-ops to source the produce for Get Rooted. His EarthDance connections are helping. “[Farmer Educators] Jena [Hood] & Will [Delacey] are awesome, and they are helping to connect us with local food growers.”

“I liked the combination of remote and in-person classes with Spring Training,” Andrea said. “With the on-site classes, we were able to get our hands dirty and actually see a working farm. And, it was right up the street!”

“I loved the participation, there were people from all walks of life volunteering, and so many different levels of experience with gardening,” Joe said.

Joe says he gained even more than gardening skills; clarity around their vision and next steps, and connections with people who will help them realize their dreams. “Working with people and the land at EarthDance brings a feeling of community, of wanting to care for other people. I learned how much our lives as human beings are tied into nature. Just like seeds, we were planted and had to be nurtured to grow. We can and need to be doing this work in connection with nature.”



Spring Training Students

There are Angels among us

As I write this, the temp is -2 and I am trying my best to stay warm in my old drafty house. But the reason I am writing this is to let you all know the good that happened today when a limb fell into the street. I ventured out with gloves, boots, and heavy coat to drag the branches off the street - but to no avail. The limb was a too heavy for this old man to move it into my yard. That’s when a large truck stopped and the driver got out to help me. It took less than a minute for the two of us to wrangle the limb back onto my property where I will be able to cut it up with the chainsaw.

I do not know who the man is but, if you are reading this, THANK YOU! Again, the Lord has shown me the good in our community.

We are blessed - Papa Deau



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The Ferguson Computer Corner

by Doug Neely
February, 2024

This is a short month. Does that mean that each day is less important than the other months? Let’s find out, shall we?

1st---NOTHING! (just wanted to see if you are awake! :))

2nd---GROUNDHOG DAY! (if I forgot this day, they would come to take me away!) Some of you will celebrate anything. :))

9th---National PIZZA Day! One of my favorite holidays!

14th---ASH Wednesday. Go to church for ashes to remind yourself how bad you are!

14th---Valentine’s Day...see? There are still a few days to spread your love to others; and these days, we all need as much love as we can get (make that UNCONDITIONAL love)!

19th---President’s Day

19th---Washington’s Birthday

(I do so wish they would keep them separate instead of squishing them all together. We need all the time we can get to celebrate stuff!)

Did You Know?, dept.

Yes, you can use a TV as a puter monitor?
You can IF they both have an HDMI outlet.
However, even if the TV has the latest and most bestest screen with the most bestest resolution that it will still not be as good as a puter monitor? Trust me, you WILL see the difference. So, don’t do it unless you have no other choice.

Did you know that YOU CAN almost always add memory, as well as storage space to your puter, laptop, or even phone (sometimes tablet, depending upon the model and brand), but it won’t be easy, especially if you don’t know what you are doing. You will need to do your homework and read about it online, since most of you don’t keep or read the

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(800) 859-5566

instruction manual, or maybe didn’t get one in the box when it was new. That means you must go online; if you can’t, go to the library or use a friend’s puter.

I should also point out that you could not replace the processor in your phone or tablet. That’s why it is important to look at the processor that is factory installed before you buy it. Get the most powerful one you can when you go shopping for your phone or tablet, as they do tend to function more slowly as they are “updated” with ever more apps.

F.Y.I., dept.

For the past many months, Yvonne has been suffering from cancer. 2 instances have been, so far, removed. Now there is a 3rd tumor, for which she is receiving treatment. This will take a while. Therefore, I regretfully ask that you not expect that I will be available to work on your puters. You can still email me, and I can call you back to discuss the issue, but that is it. So, for the next several months,

I ask that you would pray for her with me. Pray that there will be no more cancer, and that there will be no bad side effects. Pray for a return to full health for her. And if you go to a church that has a prayer group, please ask them to pray for her also.

ME GO NOW!

1. Well, I have to go find something to eat, as I have been fending for myself a lot lately, and I am not being very efficient about much of anything. Just pray for Yvonne, and I will let you know when she is well. And don’t forget Ash Wednesday. Let God know that you are sorry for your sins, and ask forgiveness. Blessings to all!

2. IF YOU would like to discuss your puter issue with Doug, please email him at: fergusoncomputercorner@aol.com

3. Be certain to include your local phone number, and put the phrase “I need puter advice” into the subject field. Thank you!

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Digital Ferguson - Promises, Promises

by David Pickens

Issac Asimov and I had one thing in common. We thought a lot about robots and how humans interact with them. And while watching the commercials in between the football this weekend, it really came home to me how totally surrounded we are by robots. And judging by the commercials, if Large Corporate Management has its way, we are not just going to be surrounded by robots. They are promising we will be completely at the mercy of robots for everything we want to do. I suspect for once they are making promises they plan to keep.

I saw companies promising that instead of tax advisers, we are going to get artificial intelligence (AI) assistants to figure out our taxes. Instead of travel advisors, we are going to get AI robots to plan every detail for our next trip to Bora Bora. A Litter Robot will free us from needing to scoop kitty mess ever again. Even IBM is bragging that it has designed AI software to automatically write software. I really want to ask IBM who designed that software but I’ll probably just get a robot recording if I try to call them. In any case the promise is always that robots will set us all free! Eventually.

The thing is, for those of us blessed to live a long time, we can see an enormous difference between the ancient promises made to us that robots are going to make our lives better and what has happened in reality. The facts on the ground are really quite different. Almost none of the robot improvements that have been implemented in the last four decades or so have actually benefited any of us personally, unless we happen to be owners of large corporations. The main thing these improvements accomplish is to separate humans from their jobs, so that corporations can capture savings by automation. It’s really as simple as that.

Let me set the wayback machine to near as I can remember 1985 when a full-service gas station at the corner of Jennings Station Road and West Florissant Avenue was converted to self-service. I can’t remember the gasoline brand – maybe Texaco? But I do remember it was right on my route to work and I had traded there for years before they closed for a huge renovation. Once it was finished I stopped to gas up. You could see the owner had spent a ton of money renovating the station and adding many shiny new pumps. The first time I came in after the changes I had no idea how this all worked, but soon discovered customers had to go to a little hut and give the person inside the hut money through a turnstile device and they would turn on the pump.

Now of course this was not nearly as self-service as modern gas stations because you still had to talk to a human. But the automation to allow that to eventually happen had already happened inside the pumps, because before then gas pumps simply pumped gas. You hit the trigger on the pump handle, and gas came out. Now they were programmable. Someone (the hut person) told the machine how much gas to pump, in gallons or in dollars, that data got entered into the robot, and the robot handled gas metering from then on, even to slowing down the flow when the amount of gas selected approached so it wouldn’t spill.

Before the changes happened, friendly staff used to come out to your car, ask you how much gas you wanted, and set about pumping it for you (along with washing your windshield and checking your oil if wanted) so immediately you can see all those services were thrown out the window because Hut Person was not coming out of the hut to do anything. So right off the bat you had to get out of your car which in bad weather was a pain, especially in Winter. And it just so happened, why or how I do not know, but the owner of that station found and hired one of the most reliably sour and cranky persons I ever encountered in a customer service position to run that little hut. So between losing those services and having to deal with someone who seemed to hate dealing with customers I left off using that gas station forever.

So much for what was lost, what was gained? Back in those days the promise was that we would save money at the pump. I found some research that was done on this idea in 2022 and it turns out there indeed are some savings which are still around which the researcher estimates at 4.4 cents per gallon. As I write this in the Arctic Freeze we are experiencing in the middle of January 2024 I would gladly pay the \$0.48 I am saving on my usual fill up of 11 gallons to instead have a friendly person to pump my gas while I stay in the comfort of my warm car.

Some of us Ancient Ones might even remember when there were two price rates listed on gas station signs, one for full-service and a cheaper price for self-serve. There were full-service pumps and self-service pumps. Eventually even the dual price listings disappeared as stations consolidated into having no full-service whatsoever and self-service now reigns supreme. In fact I was saddened when the last full service station around closed, the old Sinclair station at the corner of Chambers and South Florissant Road right here in Ferguson.

Being in IT most of my adult working life, I don’t believe I can be accused of being against automation. I have written software used to automate things – most of which were a drudgery for humans to perform, and many of which were impossible to be done accurately and reliably by people. Or perhaps these are just the lies I try to tell myself so I can sleep at night. But in many of the promises being made today, as in the past, the people making the promises are not being honest with us about what we are going to lose.

In some cases such as the gas station for example the trade off in lost services is never mentioned, only the cash savings. If you have ever watched an elderly person with limited mobility go through the many complex motions necessary to fill their car tank with gasoline, you know that some of these services are not just something nice to have that most of us would use on a cold Winter’s day, but are vital irreplaceable necessities for some large segments of our population who now must forever figure out a way to live without them. This is not the way forward as a society.

What’s Fresh: February ‘24

Joia Walker - EarthDance Farm to School Educator

What’s Fresh February

It’s February and Love is in the air! We’re loving the last of our winter veggies and preparing for spring. One particular veggie that is sweet this time of year is the collard green! After the frost, collards are much sweeter because the frost turns the starch inside of the crop to sugar. This also makes the leaves more tender which makes them easier to cook and more flavorful!

So beyond the sweet flavor, what are the benefits of this winter green? Collards are high in Vitamin A and Vitamin C, which are great for the immune system. They also contain B-6 which supports healthy energy levels and Vitamin K and potassium, which support bone health.

Collard greens can be enjoyed in a variety of ways; steamed, sauteed and simmered. If you’ve ever had soul food, you may have eaten collard greens with smoked turkey. While those smokey greens are delicious, I encourage you to try them in a different way. Pick up these sweet greens at the Ferguson Winter Market on February 17, 2024 and try this recipe from Biscuits & Burlap!



Collard Greens Dip Appetizer

INGREDIENTS

- 1 pkg 15 oz. frozen, chopped collard greens
- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- 3 tablespoon shallot, diced
- 1 clove garlic, chopped
- ½ cup sour cream
- ½ cup mayonaisse
- 8 oz. Monterey Jack cheese, grated
- 1 teaspoon flour
- ½ can Rotel tomatoes, drained
- ¼ cup parmesan cheese, grated
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon pepper
- 1 teaspoon pepper sauce or other hot sauce optional

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Cook collard greens in salted water for about 15 minutes. Drain and press between paper towels to dry, removing any stems.
2. Saute’ shallot and garlic in olive oil over medium heat for 2-3 minutes.
3. Stir remaining ingredients together, adding the shallots and garlic and reserving about ¼ of the Monterey Jack cheese.
4. Place in an 8” iron skillet or small ovenproof baking dish and top with remaining cheese. Bake at 350 for 25-30 minutes.
5. If desired, top brown under broiler, watching carefully.

Keeping Pets Safe During Winter Months

By Dara Ashby

Dogs and cats are just as susceptible to hypothermia as we are. When temperatures drop below freezing, it is critical to keep them inside. Sadly, some think that a doghouse will keep a dog warm enough; it just won't. There have been far too many dogs found frozen to death in doghouses where owners thought they would be safe. If it's too cold for you, it's too cold for them. PLEASE BRING THEM INSIDE!



*If you see a dog left outside for many hours during frigid temperatures, please be their voice and call authorities: St. Louis County Animal Care & Control: 314-615-0650, after hours 314-889-2341, 636-529-8210, Humane Society Cruelty Hotline: 314-647-4400 or our local police (non-emergency) 314-522-3100. If you see a stray running loose, please try to contain (if you can do so safely) or at least try to contain before you call St. Louis County Animal Control.

Feral cats. There are unfortunately way too many feral cats in Ferguson. And some are not feral at all but were once house cats that have sadly been left behind when their families moved away. Some will hide in your car engine to try to get warm so be sure to bang on your car before starting it. Help stray cats survive in the cold by making a shelter. It's very easy to build a winter shelter for stray cats that must be left outside. St. Louis Feral Cat Outreach is also a great local resource. Website: Stlfco.org or call 314-669-5228. See their resources for building cat shelters and also for TNR (Trap Neuter Release) programs.



How to build a cat shelter:

1. Using a large Styrofoam cooler, cut a hole in the side that is big enough for the cat to go inside.
2. Fill the Styrofoam box with straw (not hay). Do not use towels because these will freeze if they get wet.
3. Place the lid on and seal with duct tape.
4. Place the shelter on a platform to keep off the ground.
5. Wrap the shelter with a large plastic trash bag and seal using duct tape.
6. Place cat nip in the shelter to entice cats to go inside. It may take a while for them to become comfortable using the shelter.
7. Provide extra food during cold months to help maintain a safe body temperature and be sure that they have fresh unfrozen water available.

Thank you for keeping your pets safe and inside during our cold winter months. Remember, if it's too cold for you, it's too cold for them.
Dara Ashby ~ Ferguson Animal Coalition



Under The Hood With Robinwood

By Bob McGartland

Why does the Battery work harder in Colder Temperatures?

Before I let another month go by, I'd like to thank everyone who was so generous by bringing in personal care items, candies, shoe boxes or made monetary donations to our annual Shoe Boxes for Seniors drive. You helped make 70 local seniors have a brighter Christmas. Thank you to everyone and may God bless your generosity.

As the mercury drops and winter sets in, many vehicle owners find themselves grappling with the effects of colder temperatures on their batteries. The science behind why a car battery works harder in the cold is rooted in the fundamental principles of chemistry and physics.

A factor contributing to the increased workload of a car battery in colder temperatures is the reduction in its overall capacity. Cold weather leads to a decrease in the battery's ability to deliver the same amount of power as it would in warmer conditions. This reduction in capacity can become particularly evident during the initial stages of starting the vehicle, commonly known as cranking. In colder weather, the engine oil also thickens, making it more challenging for the engine to turn over. The battery has to supply additional power to overcome this resistance and start the engine, placing a greater demand on its resources.

The chemical reactions in a battery are temperature-dependent. Cold temperatures slow down these reactions, affecting the battery's ability to recharge efficiently. This can be problematic for vehicles that primarily rely on short trips, as the battery may not have sufficient time to recharge fully between starts, leading to gradual depletion of its charge over time.

To mitigate the impact of colder temperatures on a vehicle's battery, several practical steps can be taken. Regularly checking the battery's health and ensuring it is in good condition is essential, especially before the winter season. Keeping the vehicle in a garage or using a battery blanket can help to maintain a slightly warmer temperature, aiding the battery's performance. Additionally, reducing the strain on the battery by minimizing electrical loads and avoiding prolonged periods of idling in extremely cold conditions can contribute to preserving its longevity. Plan on driving your vehicle at least 20 minutes every day when outside temperatures remain under 30 degrees.

In conclusion, the battery in a vehicle works harder in colder temperatures due to the slowdown of chemical reactions and a decrease in overall capacity. Understanding these factors empowers vehicle owners to take proactive measures to ensure their batteries are adequately maintained and prepared for the challenges posed by winter weather, ultimately extending the life and reliability of the vehicle's electrical system.

As always, if you have any vehicle service needs, and do not have a regular automotive service provider, Robinwood Automotive would be honored to provide your automotive service needs. Visit us at robinwoodauto.com

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Financial Focus — Check Fraud, Really?

By Joan Cleaveland (cleav73@gmail.com)

Lindenwood University – BA Business Administration

Talk to anyone under forty and chances are they have never written a check. So I was surprised to hear check fraud reports have nearly doubled from 2021 to 2022. And while I haven't seen the results from 2023 yet, it is expected to continue to rise. Seems like the traditional bank product the "check" has become the criminal's path of least resistance to rob us. Even back in the eighties we heard – "Why would anyone rob a bank with a gun when a pen is so much easier?" And while financial institutions have replaced the costly methods of human verification with sophisticated on-line tools to combat theft, the fraudsters remain a step ahead. They've found ways to pass altered checks through the system undetected until they are discovered after the fact. There is so much talk about cyber security and protection, that we may have not noticed that paper checks are still being used by many customers both large and small.

Another twist from this increase in check fraud seems to involve stealing from postal mail boxes and/or buying stolen checks on-line. Possessing a check allows the holder to "wash" off parts of the check and insert a new payee and possibly a larger amount. So when the check clears the bank it will show the original check number and may look just fine with the proper owner's signature. I read that acetone is used to wash off an amount and payee's name. Curious, I tried it on a voided check. Obviously, I am not a professional and my sample didn't look like it could pass a teller window. However, the altered check could be cashed at a check cashing service where it could then be deposited into that company's bank account going unnoticed until the drawee bank's customer would notice it showing in their account and look into it. As far as buying stolen checks on the internet, I hear the "dark web" is where to find those kinds of web sites. Even just selling the account numbers with the bank's routing number could be enough to complete fraudulent transactions by making phony checks. So whether your checks are taken from a mail box, seen on-line in a deposit or found in a compromised vendor's records – who will bear the loss?

The bank is responsible for making sure their customer's signature matches what they have on file when a check clears an account. At one time bank employees would file the checks that cleared daily into a locked cabinet just the right size for checks. On each divider the account name, number and a copy of the signature card were included. As the checks were filed a quick glance at the signature was all it took to determine if further checking was needed. It could prompt calls to a customer to verify they had written the check. As mentioned earlier the manpower and need for such detail work isn't cost effective. With this fraud the signer of the check may look correct because it wasn't washed off like the amount and payee were. This

can put the bank in a difficult situation, but under the Uniform Commercial Code the bank is obligated to only pay "properly payable" charges against a customer's account. It isn't just the account holder's signature it is also necessary for the rest of the check to be "properly payable." So, now more than ever you need to watch out for fraud to help the bank do its job.

If you have become a victim to check fraud, the most important thing you can do is to report it quickly. Your bank will likely reimburse your account, although it may take a little time depending on the amount. If you are needing assistance to deal with your bank the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency accepts complaints at www.helpwithmybank.gov. And if you have any information that may lead to the arrest and conviction for stealing U.S. Mail, you can report it to the U.S. Postal Service.

Certainly, the most important lesson for all would be to help prevent check fraud in the first place. If it becomes more difficult and the crooks are caught it may diminish check fraud, but more than likely fraudsters will move to another method. So we need to remain diligent in helping protect our banking information. Here are some things you can do:

- Use a gel pen to write out checks. Ball point pens allow the washing of a check to be successful. Gel ink doesn't lift as well.
- Always drop your mail inside the Post Office rather than outside mail boxes. And certainly never drop mail where you can see that the box is overflowing making it easy for thieves to pick off some of the top pieces of mail.
- Make sure copies of information regarding your checking account is not available to others. Dispose of old checks or statements by shredding.
- Use on-line banking to pay bills rather than checks – you'll also save on postage.
- Check your account every few days on-line to make sure nothing has posted that shouldn't have. I go one step further to actually reconcile my account against the checkbook register I still keep. If you do it every few days it is so easy and helps identify issues right away.
- If something does happen that doesn't seem right contact your bank right away.

The best way to avoid such fraud is to keep up with your financial records and bank accounts, so you'll notice a problem right away. Often, I'll hear people say banks don't make mistakes and they never reconcile their account. If you are one of those people keep in mind reporting a fraud earlier is a key to getting reimbursed rather than losing the funds for good. If you have any questions or comments please contact me at cleav73@gmail.com.

Get out your colored pencils. This is the continuation of a coloring book from Phil Berwick



A graphic story coloring strip for all ages
By Wendell Phillips Berwick



Based on a true story of Merferd at war with the "Low Downs" graffiti gang.

@treetoons You tube-The Man Behind the Merferds

Don't get lost in the Treetoon woods!

Catch up with the rest of the story
at www.Merferd.Com

Another Ferguson Musical Treasure

By Marsha DeMere Gebhart

Over the past five decades, Ferguson has been the home of at least three nationally known musicians. My generation, McCluer 1966, had/has Michael McDonald, singer, songwriter and former member of the Doobie Brothers and Steely Dan. My kids’ generation, McCluer 1999 & 2002, had/has Keyon Herrold, American jazz trumpeter, vocalist, songwriter, and producer. Most recently, since 2006, Ferguson has been the home of Brian Owens, Wanting our community to get to know and feel pride in this outstanding musician is what caused me to suggest and put together this article.

The Riverfront Times ran an extensive article about Brian on March 17, 2023. I have pulled pieces from it about the past decade of his career for this article. To learn more about his earlier experiences, starting in high school in Belleville, IL, go to the Riverfront Times website and search for Brian Owens.

Brian’s profile as a musician really started to grow in 2013, when he and his father, Thomas Owens, recorded a duet of Sam Cooke’s “A Change Is Gonna Come” to support the charity Kids Rock Cancer. A black-and-white video of the father-and-son performance exploded across the internet, surpassing 100 million views. Brian and his dad celebrated the 10th anniversary of the video on The Today Show in June 2023.

[Link to the original video: https://www.google.com/search?q=duets+with+dad&rlz=1C1JZAP_enUS903US903&oq=duets+with+D&gs_lcrp=EgZjaHJvb-WUqBwgDEAAyGqAQyBwgAEAAyGqAQyBwgBEAAyGqAQyBwgCEC4YgAQyBwgDEAAyGqAQyBwgEEAAyGqAQyBwgFEEUYOTIHCAyQABiABDIHCacQA-BiABDIHCagQABiABDIHCakQLhiABNIBCTEzMDEwajBqN6gCALACAA&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8#fpstate=ive&vld=cid:ca668649,vid:wzszvMfGoB-w,st:0](https://www.google.com/search?q=duets+with+dad&rlz=1C1JZAP_enUS903US903&oq=duets+with+D&gs_lcrp=EgZjaHJvb-WUqBwgDEAAyGqAQyBwgAEAAyGqAQyBwgBEAAyGqAQyBwgCEC4YgAQyBwgDEAAyGqAQyBwgEEAAyGqAQyBwgFEEUYOTIHCAyQABiABDIHCacQA-BiABDIHCagQABiABDIHCakQLhiABNIBCTEzMDEwajBqN6gCALACAA&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8#fpstate=ive&vld=cid:ca668649,vid:wzszvMfGoB-w,st:0)

Search YouTube for Brian Owens and you will find more videos.

After the 2014 shooting of Michael Brown, Brian organized and head-lined the Heal Ferguson Concert. The event caught the attention of Ferguson-native Michael McDonald, who invited Owens to open a 2015 show at the Sheldon. Owens later joined McDonald on an East Coast tour, joining the legend during encores on Marvin Gaye’s “What’s Going On” and the Doobie Brothers’ “Takin’ It to the Streets.”

[Link to the version of Change is Gonna Come by Brian and Michael McDonald: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X8W6YnSEVAA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X8W6YnSEVAA)

Then, when Dianne Reeves canceled her 2017 SLSO Christmas concert, Brian stepped in to save the day with just three days’ notice, performing everything in Reeves’ key.

After so many high-profile showcases, Brian said, “It isn’t about my career. It’s about the stuff that really matters. It’s not about how much money I make or how many awards I get or who knows me or who doesn’t know me. It’s about all these people whose lives I get to pour into.”

Owens means raising his own children and running Life Creative STL, the ‘ecosystem’ he started in 2016 to build community development through the arts. Life Creative empowers young people working across a wide range of artistic disciplines with financial, entrepreneurial, artistic and social support. “The young people that I have developed who are super-talented live on my street,” Owens says. “They can come over any time they need me. I’m literally here for them.” The drive to serve others runs in the family. Owens’ father chose the Christian ministry over a professional singing career. The church is where Brian learned to sing, harmonizing with his father and brothers as soon as he could talk.

Owens and his band, Deacons of Soul, took The Marvin Gaye Experience on a national tour of performing arts centers in 2017. The jaunt was lucrative enough to fund his non-profit and to pay for Owens’ next albums, released on his own record label, Ada Cole. Soul of Ferguson was dedicated to Owens’ troubled hometown and included “For You,” a duet with Michael McDonald. “The album was about how people were still hurting in Ferguson but people were still falling in love in Ferguson,” Owens says.



Dad Talk between Mike Palmer and Brian Owens at the West Ferguson Neighbors gathering at Central School in 2023.

Then came a project that Owens sees as a major breakthrough. Building on the master series of soul legends, he decided to throw a curveball: a tribute to Johnny Cash. The Cash show received an instant reaction, not

the least for Owens’ transformation of Cash classics into his own style. “With Marvin, I wanted people to come to the show and hear Marvin,” he says. “But with Cash, I sang it like me.”

He took the project into studios in Nashville and Lexington, Kentucky, and produced an album, Soul of Cash. “The Cash record [set] me up to now move into the genre that is really more definitive to who I am holistically,” Owens says. “I’m more Americana Soul than I am jazz.”

Since then, Owens has found kindred musical spirits in roots-rock band the Mighty Pines, and he collaborated on the inaugural Pines Fest with them last year, serving as the artist-in-residence on duets with the Pines, River Kittens and others. You can see a YouTube video of Brian performing with The Mighty Pines in 2021 at Earth Dance: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DqbMhO7NRjo>



With The Mighty Pines at Earth Dance 2021

Brian has a record planned to capture his new sound and one with his father. Duets with Dad will feature father and son blending voices on classics such as “Bridge Over Troubled Water” and “Try a Little Tenderness.” A docu-series to capture the making of the album is in the works. Check Brian’s website, Duets with Dad <https://www.duetswithdad.com/> where you can sign up with your email address to receive news and updates on the album and documentary, closer to when they will ‘drop’ in June.



Duets with Dad

Owens feels like he is finding a sweet spot in his journey and a career that is in service of the broader St. Louis arts community: facilitating the Life Creative STL ecosystem, staging monthly concerts as the musical director for the World Chess Hall of Fame in St. Louis, and serving as ambassador for Music at the Intersection, the annual celebration of “where music and heritage meet”, in Grand Center.

Ferguson can be proud and grateful to have Brian, wife Amanda, and family in our town. Amanda volunteers with the West Ferguson Neighbors community group and with Earth Dance Organic Farm School, up the street from their house, when not busy with their eight children. They not only bring music, but also facilitate community building.

“I love living in Ferguson and appreciate the openness and resiliency of our community.” Brian Owens, 2024.

THE SPINAL COLUMN

Healthy Habits and Resolutions - Setting Smart Health Goals

By Dr. Robin Lawrence - Get Well Family Health & Chiropractic

Have you ever felt like you were working hard but weren't making any progress toward your goals? You're not alone. Most people feel that way each year around this time. They set goals take a few action steps but never seem to accomplish very much. Often, the problem isn't a lack of motivation - it's just that you haven't set smart goals. Smart health goals can help you clarify your thoughts, focus your efforts, use your time to your advantage, and increase your chances of achieving and surpassing your expectations.

Living a healthy life requires more than just being free from pain. Setting health goals, stretching your comfort zone, and celebrating small wins are essential to a fulfilling life. As you plan your New Year's resolutions for a healthy year, plan smart goals. Smart health goals effectively provide the clarity, focus, and motivation you need for success. Setting a completion date makes you more likely to reach your goals.

- S** - Specific- Make your goals specific for more effective planning
- M**- Measurable- Define how you are making progress
- A**- Attainable- make them reasonable to accomplish
- R**- Relevant- Your goals should align with your values
- T**- Time-Based- Set a date of completion

If you struggle to follow through on your New Year's resolutions each year, try setting health-smart goals. There is no better time to begin setting goals to improve your health this year. Living a healthy life is a journey, so don't forget to celebrate each step of your progress.

Our practice is here to help guide you along the way. If you have a health challenge or an ache or pain holding you back from reaching your goals- let us know- we'll be happy to help!

How to Cultivate a Positive Mindset

Mindset is the #1 predictor of success. Your conversations with yourself often determine your growth (or lack thereof). You're probably right whether you believe you can or can't do something. Thinking that you can't do something can become a self-fulfilling prophecy that prevents you from acting and making the decisions you need to live your best life. The good news is you can change your habits, beliefs and transform your thinking. When you do, you'll be able to look at the world with a new perspective, which empowers you to become the person you know you can be. This week, consider the thought loops in your head. Be more conscientious about what you tell yourself. Identify what thoughts you can change daily to cultivate a more positive mindset.

Positive thinking can help with managing stress and improve your health.

A positive outlook can decrease your likelihood of a heart attack or cardiovascular event by over 30%.

Negative emotions may weaken your immune response.

Cultivating a positive mindset isn't just a woo-woo, granola approach to life. A positive attitude has been shown to improve your overall health and well-being. New research on the mind-body connection has proven that mental health impacts much of our physical health.

Moving Your Way to Better Health

You've heard it before, but regular exercise is good for physical and mental health. Daily exercise can help you lose weight, lower your risk of future health challenges, reduce stress, and improve your mental outlook. But, if you're like many people, over 80% to be exact- you aren't getting enough exercise each week.

As a chiropractor, we focus on three types of movement- segmental (your body's joints), regional (your neck, low back, leg, etc.), and whole body.

All three types of movement are essential for you to stay well. Full body movement is general exercise such as running or walking. Regional movement may be the stretches and smaller exercises you perform daily. Segmental motion is what we focus on here as chiropractors. To generate the benefits of regular exercise, your body needs all three types of movement.

Whole Body: Daily exercise can improve your mood and sleep and lower your risk of chronic disease.

Regional: Dynamic stretching can enhance your range of motion, biomechanics, and energy levels.

Segmental: Adjustments can positively influence the function of your nervous system, decrease aches and pains and relax your muscles.

Millions of people make New Year's resolutions to get more active each year. And each year, they seem to come up short. But this year, you have the tools and resources to succeed. You can begin moving your body towards better health this year by setting smart health goals and cultivating a positive mindset. Let us know if you notice yourself struggling to stay on track or sidelined by chronic aches and pains, let us know. We're here to help you get active, stay healthy, and reach your goals.

Increasing Your Energy

Have you found yourself tired and drained at the end of each day? Grabbing a second (or tenth) coffee or energy drink may be easy, but boosting your energy level doesn't mean you need to rely on caffeine's short-term effects. Short-term bursts of energy can often lead to a crash.

Creating smart, healthy habits each day can increase your energy level, mental focus, and endurance. Walking through a store, you'll notice dozens of products designed to increase your energy level. Many synthetic stimulants aren't very healthy, and some can even become addictive.

Instead of a daily quick fix, it's better to consider the effect of stress, exercise, and diet on your energy levels.

Stress: Being stressed out consumes a ton of energy. Discovering ways to decrease your mental stress with meditation or physical stress with chiropractic care can help increase your energy levels.

Exercise: daily exercise will help you sleep better, elevate your mood, and circulate more oxygen in your body.

Diet: Eating foods with a low glycemic index (where sugar is absorbed slowly) can help you avoid a crash after eating and keep you more energized throughout the day.

A lack of energy is often a symptom of a more significant issue. Too much stress, less than ideal food choices, and a lack of exercise are major factors in your energy level. Developing an awareness of your daily habits and making small changes can result in big changes. Avoid using caffeine as a crutch and make positive lifestyle choices instead. If you're struggling or want specific natural supplement recommendations, let us know, and we'll gladly help.



Crossword Solution from page 4

1	A	2	D	3	D		4	D	5	A	6	M		7	C	8	O		9	L	10	A	N	11	G
12	W	A	Y	S	I	D	E		13	O	F	F	E	R											
15	O	D	E		16	S	O		17	P	R		18	O	F	F	A	L							
20	L	E	D		C		21	R	O	B	E	R	T		22	R	F								
				23	S		24	D	O	T	E		E		25	S	C								
26	J	27	A	N	U	A	R	Y		28	I	29	T	S		30	P	H	O						
31	E	L		P		32	S	C	U	L	P	T	U	R	E										
34	S	O	B	E	R		36		37	E	M			W		38	I	R	K						
39	K	E	I	R	A	N		40	P		41	L	O	O	N	S									
	E		43	T	I	T	A	44	N		45	H	M	O	N	G		46	V						
	47	C	E	O		48	F	E	C	U	N	D				49	M	A							
50	C	A	R	R	O	T	S		D				52	E	53	T	A	L							
54	O	M			55	W	A	B	A	S	H		58	G	A	L	L								
59	M	E	R	C	I		61	I	G	O	R		62	O	D	I	E								
63	E	L		64	N	E	W	T	O	N		65	E	S	S	A	Y								

ATTITUDE DETERMINES ALTITUDE

By Dr. Larry A. Brown

Our view of ourselves will determine how far we go in life where we find ourselves, as well as what principles we are guided by. We must be very careful about where we place our own growth, desires, and needs in the equation of life because it will determine how we react to the need of others and how much importance we place on those of other individuals and causes compared to our own needs and desires.

If our personal desires, needs, wishes, and ideas always come first, then we become somewhat self- centered and victims to self- aggrandizement. It can have a long – term affect on the amount of joy and happiness we can achieve through others and their needs. It can also cause us to become Isolationistic i=as we journey through the life experience.

Sometimes ,we develop an attitude that we are better than others , or certainly not the same, in the prejudices we witness in other folks and those that we can see that we have developed ourselves. It affects how one reacts to the needs and thoughts of others and often determines what actions we take towards or involving them.

This kind of behavior and thought serve as limitations to what and where we allow ourselves to experience. It is very limiting and often results in our loss of beneficial opportunities.

If we allow ourselves to “ Go with the Flow “, keep open minds, and allow ourselves to have open dialogue and thought about issues, then we can make decisions that will benefit everyone including us.

We are here for many reasons and most of them are to address the needs of, and benefit of others, The sooner we can recognize this, the sooner and higher we begin to grow internally and sometimes externally also. People can see that we are unilaterally concerned and tend to support our growth. We will then become a moving force within the community and experience growth and challenges, as well as opportunities to be blessed and to bless others as well. This is referred to as “ the best of both worlds “.

Wouldn’t you rather be a blessing to yourself and others? Wouldn’t you rather grow as much as you can than limit yourself because of your attitude towards certain people or things?

You only have this opportunity now to live and accomplish what your potential might be. Why not decide to be the “Best You Can Be”, while you have the chance?

If you need some help with this or if you want to help others through us, just contact us at www.gracechapelministries.org or email us at gracechapeldevelopment@gmail.com.

Together, we can make this a better world in which to live, survive, and thrive for ourselves and those around us. Only you can control your attitude!!

Loss

By Michael Pierce



My mom was diagnosed with non-Hodgkins Lymphoma on April 13, 1994. She died November 13, 1994.

Shortly before she passed, she gave me her Claddagh ring. It’s just like the one pictured here. I put it on my finger that day, and I never took it off until one day in 2023.

I had been gaining a lot of weight in the spring of that year, and I couldn’t figure out why this was happening. I took the ring off because it was cutting into my finger. Turns out I was retaining fluid, and it put me in the hospital back in June. I was there for a week, receiving diuretics through an IV. Over the course of six days, I expelled 10 gallons of fluid (approximately 70 pounds).

A couple of months ago I decided it was time to put that ring back on my finger. It was not where I left it. I’ve searched this house high and low, to no avail. So, the ring is gone, and I’m absolutely devastated. That ring was a tangible thing, a daily reminder to try to live my life like mom lived hers. I had worn it for so long it was bent flat on the bottom. I was going to take it to a jeweler to have it made round again someday.

I wore that ring every day for almost 29 years. I inherited my Grandpa Pierce’s shaving mug and brush after he died when I was 10 years old. I use them every day. The brush started losing bristles a few years ago, so it sits on a shelf, and I use a newer brush. I inherited pocketknives from both of my grandpas. I carry one of those knives every day. I also inherited mom’s collection of antique vases, and her fancy china. The vases and china will soon be passed on to my oldest niece. I inherited a ragged quilt, made in the 1850s by her grandma, from my Grandma Taylor, and a quilt made by my Great Grandma Brown, still in perfect condition. Grandma Brown quilted all the time, so everyone in the family got one when she passed in 1976. She had stacks of handmade quilts all over her house.

Memories exist in our minds, they can exist in tangible things, and they can exist in a variety of aromas. I see mom every time I smell White Diamonds perfume. I see my dad, grandmas, aunts, and uncles when I smell sage dressing and coconut cream pie. I see my grandpas when I smell sawdust.

Tangible memories can get lost or broken, or otherwise damaged or destroyed. The same things that can happen to all of our stuff. The ring may be gone, but I keep my mom, and all those other folks, in my heart and in my memories.

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Ferguson Has A History Museum

Ferguson has a Historical Society and a History Museum. We encourage any people reading this article to join in the conversation or become a member. Contact information is at the bottom of this article.



First: We want to tell you of a wonderful event coming to the Ferguson Community Center in February: Slavery in St. Louis. Details at the end of this article.

Last month we explored the St. Louis Narrow Gauge Railroad – that “little” railroad which ran from Downtown St. Louis to Florissant. This month we will look a little further into it. Ferguson was not an incorporated area during the early years of the Railroad – it was a stop-over on the way to Florissant. This month we will look into how Ferguson became a more important location for the line.



A quote from Streets & Streetcars of St. Louis: A Sentimental Journey by Andrew D. Young states: “This line opened in 1875 as a narrow-gauge steam railroad running northwest on right-of-way from Enright through Wellston to Florissant. . .opened as a cable car line in 1886. . . bankruptcy in 1890. After reorganization as the St. Louis and Suburban in 1890, the cable and steam lines were electrified. Opened at the end of 1891, the service to Wellston was essentially a city streetcar service but beyond Wellston to Florissant it was an electric interurban railroad. A branch from Ramona (Ferguson) junction to Ferguson, close to the Wabash Railroad station, soon became the main line and the Florissant leg was reduced to shuttle car service. The St. Louis and Suburban was taken over by the city system January 1st, 1907.” (The city system became United Railways , then in the 1930’s the St. Louis Public Service System which sold out to Bi-State Development in 1963). The streetcar line running from downtown St. Louis to Ferguson became the #15 Hodiamont Line. Sometime in the late 1930’s or early 1940’s the Hodiamont line split off and the #16 City Limits line to Berkeley became the line to go to Ferguson. From Berkeley or Ferguson, one took a bus to Florissant. All streetcar service terminated in 1969 (the Hodiamont Line was the final section). We don’t currently know when streetcar service ended in Ferguson, but it was before 1969. Busses took over the job of streetcars.

The top photograph shows the “Ferguson Loop” where the cars made their turn-around. The second photograph gives a better idea of the location. The “drugs” sign was Quilman’s Drug Store (now a restaurant) The vacant area next to Spot Drive was the “Loop” – currently part of The Victorian Plaza. The building further back in the photo contained several shops. It was torn down along with the buildings ending at the railroad bridge. All are now part of the Plaza.

In the 1940’s and 1950’s, this section of “downtown” Ferguson, along Florissant Road, was quite the business center. There was Ferguson Department Store, several drug stores, at least two shoe stores, several barbers, a 5 and 10 store, a Methodist Church, a hardware store, grocery stores – and the list goes on. The fact that the streetcar and later busses came to the “Loop” made “Downtown Ferguson” quite the business center in North County. With the coming of shopping centers (Northland Shopping Center), Supermarkets (Rapps, Schnucks and Dierbergs) along with a slowing reliance on public transportation and the increasing use of private automobiles, Downtown Ferguson’s importance began to decline.

These Stories come from documents in the Ferguson Historical Society archives, along with the book “Streets & Steetcars of St. Louis: A Sentimental Journey” by Andrew D. Young (Archway Publishing)

Membership in the Ferguson Historical Society is open to anyone – the price is \$20.00 to \$50.00 a year. If you are interested in joining or have any suggestions, questions, or items to donate to the Ferguson Historical Society, please contact Jerry Benner at fjbenner@mindspring.com. You are also welcome to visit the History Museum at 1064 Smith (behind the Community Center) by e-mailing the above address. Note: we will need to schedule a date for you, so ask well in advance

“The Ferguson Historical Society is dedicated to preserving and promoting the history of Ferguson Missouri. Membership is open to all sharing our interest.”

Slavery in St. Louis

an exhibit on loan from

U.S. Grant National Historic Site

Presented by The Ferguson Historical Society

Where: Ferguson Community Center

When: February 5th thru 9th

Mon 5th: 11:00 thru 7:30 PM

Tues 6th: 11:00 thru 7:30 PM

Wed 7th: 11:00 thru 7:30 PM

Thur 8th: 11:00 thru 7:30 PM

Fri 9th: 11:00 thru 3:00 PM

Opening Reception Tuesday Feb. 6th

5:30 to 6:30 PM

Discussion Roundtable following

6:30 to 8:00 PM

Slavery In St. Louis is on loan from the Ulysses S. Grant National Historic Site, prepared by Nick Sacco, Acting Historian and Curator of the U.S. Grant National Historic Site and is presented in coordination with the Ferguson Historical Society



Recognizing Good Things in our Community

by Trish Cook

Many of our readers have heard the name “Chef Nesee”. Maybe you’ve purchased some of her delicious food or watched her give a cooking demonstration at Ferguson Farmers Market. Or maybe you caught a segment of her with Tim Ezell on Fox 2 News in the Morning? But did you know she was recently recognized for her accomplishments as a small business owner and all the wonderful things she does to help better our community?

Neshanta Larry is a two-time graduate of Better Family Life’s program that helps entrepreneurs learn what it takes to start a business and the owner and founder of That’s So Good Pop-up Buffet and Catering Services. She specializes in providing fresh, flavorful, delicious entrees at affordable prices.

In May of 2023, Chef Nesee was recognized by Spectrum for overcoming the odds with the help of local organization Better Family Life, Inc. and coming out on top with the success of her small business at the St. Louis National Small Business Recognition event at the World Wide Technology Building located in St. Louis. And most recently she given the Emerging Role Model Award by CAASTL (Community Action Agency of St. Louis County).

Throughout the year Chef Nesee is very busy building her business while also giving back, often with the help of her mom and her family, by volunteering her time and skills to help provide hot, fresh, nutritious food to the underserved and overlooked communities in our local churches through the “Taste of Gratitude” and many other events and it’s all done with love and gratitude.

“When I take a few moments to reflect at the steps it took to begin this process it has shown me that your imagination is your upcoming attraction. You create your own reality by strengthening your belief system. What’s so interesting is that I never imagined my business could exist with just one thought!” - Chef Nesee (Neshanta Larry)

Well done, Chef Nesee!



Clock-wise from top right:
Featured with Tim Ezelle on Fox2 in the morning.

As Emerging Role Model at the 8th Annual Doors of Opportunity Gala.

With Mayor Jones at Evening in the Garden at Historic 417 Adams

And proudly posing for the camera.



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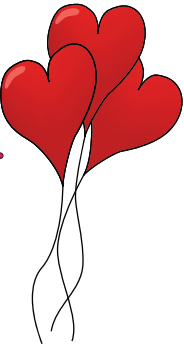


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