



South Lakeview Neighbors

Forty Years of Service

1505 West Oakdale Avenue, Chicago, IL 60657

(312)409-SLN6

BOUNDARIES: DIVERSEY TO BELMONT - RAVENSWOOD TO RACINE

Membership Dues (per person) \$5.00 - Seniors (those over 60) \$3.00

September 1 through June 30

SEPTEMBER 2004

Next Meeting: September 14, 2004



7:00 Coffee and Refreshments
7:30 Alderman Matlak

A FEW WORDS FROM OUR (NEW) PRESIDENT

As is tradition, the President opens each newsletter with a few words, an observation or an opinion. Over the years, the content and style of this column has been as varied as the presidents that wrote them. Not wanting to break with tradition, I will make an attempt at this column.

SLN has been in existence as an active community organization for 40 years. WOW – the changes the neighborhood has seen. The highs of when Lincoln, Ashland and Belmont was the busiest shopping district in the city after State Street, the lows of urban flight to the suburbs, and now the renaissance of city living, SLN has seen it all. Throughout this time, the neighbors have remained committed to each other and to this community. The neighbors have kept South Lakeview a great place to live and work.

Over the years the focus of our community organization has changed. We have watched out for each other when the area was having some bad times and we've worked together to protect the "family" feel of the neighborhood as redevelopment began. Throughout the years, we have worked closely with our various aldermen (Simpson, Hansen, Gabinski and Matlak) and have appreciated the support of each of them. By working together, South Lakeview has remained a vibrant place to live and continues to grow.

Now that the major re-zoning issues are behind us and many new faces are moving in, it's time to look at what direction SLN should take for the future. Over the next few months, I will be looking to you, the members, for suggestions and ideas about our meetings, agenda items and goals. Please let me, the directors and board know your feelings. Lets us know what you like, dislike, want to keep the same or change. This is your organization. Let's keep it as strong and vibrant as the community.

AT THE JUNE MEETING

Installation of Officers

The slate for the 2004-2005 season was unanimously approved by the membership. Most importantly, SLN welcomes back Dan Amati (president for two terms in the late 1990's) to the position of President. A list of this year's officers is included below. Thank you to the following retiring officers who have served over the last few years. Your continued support of SLN will be greatly appreciated: Perry Castrovillari – 1st Vice President; Mickey Flocca – Director and former Editor and Corresponding Secretary; Bob Maddox – Director; and Michelle Rappaport – Director

Season Ending Party

Those in attendance at the June meeting were treated to another great spread before, during and after the meeting. A great time was had by all. We appreciate the dedication of members who attend the meetings every month. Here is a list of the businesses who donated food for the party:

S&G Restaurant – Greek salad

Art of Pizza – 5 pizzas

Jack's Bar and Grill – spicy sandwiches

The Lennox Lounge – alcohol

Tri-Products Printing – hot wings

Joe Semerling, attorney at law – home made cookies

Please show your support for these generous businesses.

SEPTEMBER MEETING PREVIEW

Alderman Matlak will provide his annual state of the ward. He'll answer any and all questions. In addition, we are attempting to have the Deputy Registrar from the Election Commission at the meeting for those who would like to register to vote. We will also have available the mail-in election registration forms for people to use.

Neighborhood Development and Review Committee ("NDRC")

While SLN was taking a summer break, the NDRC was still involved with zoning and development issues.

1: *Vacant lot at 1708 W. Diversey.* This lot near the Starbucks, (what isn't near Starbucks anymore!) came about in a development done in 1998 by SLN. In that deal, SLN agreed to a zoning change in exchange for the developer leaving one city lot vacant for common open space. This lot is under a "restrictive covenant" controlled by SLN. During the summer a developer approached Alderman Matlak to propose a 3 unit apartment building on the site. The Alderman referred the issue to the NDRC. After reviewing the documents, the NDRC voted to uphold the restrictive covenant and leave the

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lot vacant. Some preliminary discussion has begun to somehow convert this lot to a city-owned mini park.

2: *There have been several inquiries by developers and home owners to increase their current zoning from R-3 to R-4 or R-4 to R-5 to build large houses. These requests have not been for slight variations above their current zoning but have been for houses “maxing out” the possible size of the building under the new zoning. The NDRC is opposed to spot zone changes, which can negatively affect the overall look of a block and dwarf houses on either side of the development. We believe that sufficient size houses can be built under current zoning. The NDRC has scheduled a private meeting with Alderman Matlak to discuss this issue.*

AROUND THE NEIGHBORHOOD

- 1) The Ash Manor Building at Diversey and Ashland was successfully demolished during the summer making way for the Lakeside Bank project.
- 2) Construction has begun on the triangular building at Lincoln/Barry/Greenview. Viewing from the north, this building will block the view of the 7 story Senior Building on Belmont. Were you affected by the intersection being blocked this summer?
- 3) Senior Housing on Belmont – I ran into the owners of the Sound Studio on Greenview and they informed me that the construction did not affect their business much this summer. Good luck to the sound studio in the future.
- 4) The triangular building at Lincoln/Southport/Wellington, formerly housing H&R Block, is now a Bank One branch. Hi Ricky’s on Southport, by the Music Box Theater, is also now a Bank One office. The corner of Cooney Funeral Home is now a Washington Mutual Loan site. Couple these with the Lakeside Bank to be built on Diversey, and we are seriously thinking of changing our name to the South Lakeview Neighbor Banking and Coffee Association.
- 5) We are sorry to report the closing of The Prego Restaurant on Ashland and George St. SLN members enjoyed many meals over the last few years.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- St. Alphonsus Oktoberfest – September 24 (Friday evening 6-9) and September 25 (noon to 11).
- Muskiefest – Will’s Northwoods Inn 3030 N. Racine - September 25.
- Southport Trick or Treat – Sunday, Oct. 24, 12-3pm, Belmont to Byron
- Lincoln Ave. Halloween Walk – October 31, 2-5pm, starting at Wishbone

Bureaucracy Reminder: it’s the change of season again, and you may be thinking about having a season ending garage or yard sale. **STOP!!** Make sure you get a city permit before doing so. Permits can be obtained at the Alderman’s office (773-384-3011).

Speaking of the Alderman.... His offices will move at the end of August from 2148 N. Damen to 1820 W. Webster, Suite

#102. His phone numbers will remain the same: 773-384-3011 (Ward Office) and 312-744-6567 or 744-6824 (City Hall Office)

Springfield Corner by State Senator John Cullerton

Editor’s Note: Sen. Cullerton (D) would like to keep people informed on the events in Springfield. He graciously provided the following update for our newsletter:

Creating a fiscally responsible budget while protecting vital services for our needy citizens is no easy matter when faced with a staggering \$2.3 billion budget deficit. As I am sure you are aware, the budget negotiations were the longest in Illinois history, but the end result is a budget that maintains critical support for the residents of our district and Illinois, while balancing the budget (*Editors Note: that statement is open to debate*). Some other important products of this year’s legislative cycle are:

Property Tax Cap

Thousands of Cook County home owners, including myself, were recently hit with 40%, 60% 80% or more increases in the assessed values of their homes. These massive increases in property taxes are forcing long-term residents out of the vibrant communities they call home. To fix this critical problem, the Neighborhood Homeowner Exemption Plan, which I cosponsored, was introduced. This bill caps increases in the assessed value of property so that they will not increase by more than 7% in one year. **Signed into Law**

Horse Slaughter Amendment

Two horse rendering facilities sought to reopen their doors this year. To stop this, I sponsored House Bill 649, which makes it illegal to import or export, possess, buy, sell, or accept any horse with the intent of slaughtering that horse for human consumption. **Passed the Senate, failed in the House**

Teacher’s Health Insurance

When Chicago teachers alerted me to their quadrupling health insurance costs, I worked with them to create legislation (House Bill 1269) to end these skyrocketing increases. HB1269, of which I was the chief sponsor, changed the rules governing their pensions, allowing \$15 million to be freed up, bringing Chicago teacher’s health insurance costs back down to earth. (*Editor’s Note: \$15 million from where, and who do the rest of us pass the buck to for our increasing insurance costs?*) **Signed into Law**

Please join me and Representative John Fritchey at our Town Hall meeting September 20th at 7pm at the Lincoln Belmont Branch of the Chicago Public Library, 1659 W. Melrose. If I can be of assistance to you please feel free to contact me, or my office, at 773-883-0770 or at statesencullerton@msn.com.

ADS & MEMBERSHIP

The S.L.N. membership year begins with the September meeting. Remember to pay your membership due by mail to SLN, 1505 W. Oakdale 60657, or you can pay at the first meeting (\$5 per person, \$3 for seniors. Additional contributions are greatly appreciated).

To all of our advertisers- The members, officers, and board members would like to thank you for your support. We have ad space available for future issues. Please supply the artwork. Call Anne at 773 477-8840.

We are looking for a **volunteer** to assist Jim (or act as a backup) with coffee and cookie pre-meeting preparation. Please email the editor or contact SLN. Thanks

In Sympathy

Mrs. Jacobs on the death of her sister
The family of Marge Nolan
The family of Helen Kuhn
The family of Clement Englemann

South Lakeview Playlot Celebrates Its Fourth Birthday

by KK Cleland and Karen Muchin

Wasn't it just yesterday that we rededicated the playlot at the corner of Wolfram and Lakewood streets? Believe it or not, this wonderful space is nearing its fourth birthday! And not surprising, this neighborhood has exploded. The number of families that enjoy the park each day is remarkable. On any given day, the playlot can go from a quiet and empty retreat, to a very busy and noisy chorus of children and neighbors. Most importantly, however, this space has brought the neighborhood together to create a safe and useful space for all to enjoy.

As you may have noticed, the park received a nice addition last summer with the two planter pedestals located near the entrance on Wolfram Street (thanks to the tremendous help received from Susan and Paul Zucker). The planters not only serve as an appealing gateway to the park, but they provide an elegant way to acknowledge the many underwriters and patrons of the renovation. Everyone who donated at the "Landscaping Underwriter" level and above should find their name permanently installed on this monument.

The Playlot Committee continually observes the space and watches how it is used. We are quite pleased and continue to receive much positive feedback and praise. Our park renovation has served as a model to other neighborhood groups hoping to make a similar transformation of their park spaces.

The Playlot Committee is up and running in full force, and very excited to share some upcoming plans:

- *Sunday October 24, 2004*, 11 am to 1 pm - SAVE THIS DATE for the 3rd Annual Halloween Party and Parade. It's a very festive event, attended each year by hundreds of neighbors for fun, games and food, culminating in an awesome parade by all costume-wearers (kids and adults alike).
- *Early February 2005* - First Annual Winterfest
- *Spring/Summer 2005* - A community gardening project is being designed so that neighbors and friends of all ages can get their fingers dirty, pull weeds, plant flowers, collect worms, do nature art projects ... and just have fun!
- *Spring/Summer 2005* - A "Thursday Night in the Park" program is being created to provide activities for the neighborhood on a consistent basis (same place, same time, every week) including concerts, magicians, talent night, and whatever anyone can think of!

We are also finishing the installation of all brick pavers that have been purchased to date, and will be providing opportunities for new pavers to be bought and installed in the garden area.

Questions, or want to get involved in the Playlot Committee? Please call KK Cleland (773-935-9215) or Karen Muchin (773-327-5203). Immediate volunteer needs include (1) helping to plan the Halloween Party, (2) maintaining the database, (3) serving as Finance Manager, and (4) selling brick pavers.

A planning meeting will take place for the Halloween Party Wed Sept 15 from 8PM-9PM at QUE RICO. Please attend if you are interested in participating.

We look forward to seeing you at the South Lakeview Playlot Park soon!

TIP TIME ...



(by Perry Castrovillari)

Hello everyone! Hard to believe that the summer is almost over! It has come to my attention that there are a lot of break-ins going on in our area, mostly garages. Now is the time to be more vigilant. Make sure the garage door is completely down before driving away. This is the most common problem; when I walk my dog I end up closing 2 to 3 garage doors in my alley alone. There are a few steps to keeping your garage door in good working order.

1. Clean the dirt around the bottom of the track. (It can angle the door making it go back up.)
2. Make sure there are no spider webs around your safety sensors. This can stop them from working properly.
3. Lubricate the wheels and track with garage door lubricant or WD40.

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Officers:

President:	Dan Amati
1st Vice President:	Bill Haderlein
2nd Vice President:	Lisa Lettiere
Recording Secretary:	Marge Fahrenbach
Treasurer:	Ann Sychowski
Corresponding Secretary:	Ernie Toth
Kitchen Managers:	Jim Volkober
Newsletter Editor:	Richard Lettiere
Web Master:	OPEN

Directors:

Bill Bauman	Julie Breen
Bob Heacox	Joe Semerling
Andrea Rosen	Bob Taugner
Doug Liphardt	

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please call Ann at (773) 477-8840.**

4. Make sure the bolts and nuts are tight.
5. Check your springs and cables. (Your door should have a cable going thru the spring so if it breaks the spring does not go flying.)
6. Check the down pressure on your opener. (It should not smash a roll of paper towels).
7. Make sure your service door is secure and lubricate the locks and cylinders.
8. Make sure the windows are locked and covered.
9. Make sure the rubber seal on the bottom of the door is in good shape; replace if needed.
10. Keep trash and garbage away from the outside of your doors.
11. Make sure the rubber trim that the door goes against is not torn or hard. (This can make the door go back up if it hits a bad spot.)
12. When you get home, do not unlock your car door till the garage door has gone down completely! Someone can stick a foot in the sensors and open the door to get to you!
13. Have a sensor light that goes on when there is motion and make sure the bulbs are not removed. You should have a switch on the inside of your garage so you can turn the power off at night to make sure the door cannot be opened with a controller.

listened to some of these young school teachers (with advanced degrees), I wouldn't have to shell out annual tuition for my daughter's kindergarten which exceeds the amount I paid for my masters. Anyway, I digress. On to the food.

Declan's is, of course, a bar, so we had bar food. Burger, fries, you get the picture. Allison had a plate of mini burgers which were very tasty. I had a Guinness, and another Guinness. I was tempted to follow up that appetizer selection with a Shepard's pie, or some fish and chips, but instead I stuck to a nicely cooked burger with outstanding fries. Lisa had the turkey burger with chipotle mayonnaise. She enjoyed it. All in all, we are apparently a burger family.

Finally, go on Sunday for brunch. It features a traditional Irish breakfast, plus omelets, French toast, biscuits and gravy, and then, Guinness.

Declan's is located at 3001 N. Ashland Avenue. 773 248-0990.



DECLAN'S – AN IRISH BAR IN A CITY FULL OF IRISH BARS

(By Richard Lettiere)

Before we get to this month's review, a word about a restaurant closing that I am mourning over. Prego, that wonderfully classy and reasonably priced paeon to culinary excellence, has closed. I think the location killed the restaurant, since Ashland Avenue, even with the trees and flowers, is still a pretty ugly stretch of highway (what's the speed limit, 85?). Southport it ain't. I salute the owners for trying to do something different, and will miss the great food, service, and décor.

Now to this month's review. Another place on Ashland, but hopefully it will not meet the same fate. Declan's opened a few months ago, and the owners have really fixed up the outside of the building. It is painted distinctive blue, green, and red, and looks like the sort of pub you would come across in London or, of course, Ireland. There is also a lot of outdoor seating. Now all we need is a real summer (do we get a do-over for this pathetic run of weather that we've had this summer. Where are we, San Francisco?) to enjoy the patio.

My loyal crew, beautiful wife Lisa (I'm trying to earn future points to offset my inevitable future foul-ups) and new kindergartener Allison accompanied me on a Monday evening to sample Declan's food and (of course) beers. We were served by one of the two owners of Declan's, who is also a Chicago public school teacher (she gave up a banking career to become a teacher, no wonder she needs to be surrounded by booze!). She was extremely friendly and, in addition to being a wonderful hostess, provided much insight into the present state of the Chicago public school system. Note to Mayor Daley (who allegedly reads this newsletter): perhaps if you