

Newsletter: June 2009

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Upcoming Events

Harold Washington Library: Art Tour

Sat. June 13, 2 p.m.
This rare tour focuses exclusively on the impressive collection of original artwork on display throughout the library. The collection consists of over 50 works of art produced by local and internationally-known artists in all mediums - including murals, paintings, photographs, prints, and sculptures - in styles ranging from classic narrative works to naive "outsider" pieces. The collection recognizes major art movements associated with Chicago, memorializes the late Mayor Harold Washington, and celebrates Chicago's rich cultural diversity. Free to SLN members. Limited space still available. Reservations required: [Click here to RSVP](#).

Harold Washington Library: History and Architecture Tour

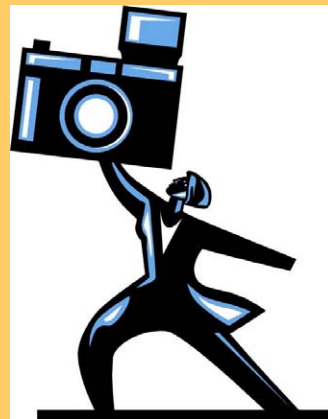
Sat. June 27, 2 p.m.
SLN will offer a repeat of the popular tour that we first offered in April. The 1.5 hr tour will cover the history and architecture

This is Lit Fest (Book Fair) weekend, and also the start of "photo season" for South Loop photographers. So grab your camera, take some fun festival shots, and read about the SLN Photo Contest in this newsletter.

This month, SLN is offering two different guided tours of the Harold Washington Library Center, which has appeared in the Guinness Book of Records as the largest public library building in the world. Because we are lucky enough to live in the South Loop, this grand building just happens to be our neighborhood library. What do you really know about this neighborhood treasure? The two tours are for SLN members only, so if you're not already a member, now is the time to join. There is limited space still available on both tours, but not for long. See *Upcoming Events* in the left column for more info.

South Loop Photo Contest

Now Open for Submissions
by Helen Kaplow, SLN VP



South Loop Neighbors invites entries to its **10th Annual Photo Contest & Show**, a juried exhibition with more than **\$1000 in cash prizes**. Photographs should exemplify the lifestyle, culture or history of the South Loop. **Deadline for photo submission is July 15**, so take your camera out for a walk today.

Greg Borzo, Photo Show Committee Chairman, says "The panel of judges for the contest has always been a professional and prestigious group, and this year will continue that tradition. The 2009 panel is not yet finalized, but I can tell you at least one of the judges, who

we are very excited about -- Ron Gordon."

Gordon is an acclaimed photographer who is known for capturing historic, preservation, and architecture photographs in a social documentary style. Borzo continues, "Ron has a special interest in the South Loop, and a personal history with it, so I think he'll make an ideal judge." Gordon has published two books of his photographs that have become South Loop staples: *Printers Row Chicago* and *Forgotten Chicago*. Any photographers looking for inspiration can visit [Ron Gordon's online gallery](#) of photos.

The prize-winning photos and 20 other finalists will be displayed at several Chicago venues, beginning with an exhibition at Chicago Community Bank in Dearborn Station during the month of August. Winners will be announced at a **special Awards Reception on Friday, Aug. 21, at 6:30 p.m. at the Chicago Community Bank in Dearborn Station**. This event is free and open to the public.

As a special feature of this 10th anniversary event, **this year's Photo Show will tour** after its August opening at the bank. Plans are already in place for the photographs to be exhibited at the **Harold Washington Chicago Public Library** in November and December, as well as at other South Loop venues. The calendar is still being created, so any business owners or managers of public space that are interested in hosting the exhibit can [contact Greg Borzo](#) to discuss.

of this storied, neoclassical building, which opened in 1991 in Chicago's South Loop. Find out about the competition to design the building. Learn about the giant owls, seed pods, and massive corn stalks that extend for four floors, adorning the outside of the structure. You are sure to walk away with a cache of nifty, behind-the-scenes facts that even you - savvy library-goer that you are - didn't know. Free to SLN members. Limited space still available. Reservations required: [Click here to RSVP](#).

These tours are **SLN members-only events**. Not a current SLN member? There is still time to join at the [SLN website](#).

Quick Links

[Join SLN or Renew Your Membership](#)

At the website, click **Join** on the right end of the menu bar.

[Bonnie's Blog](#)

SLN Board Member and regular Chicago Journal contributor, Bonnie McGrath, now writes a blog for the Journal's nifty new website. Check out her recent online essay about distributing SLN flyers with her fellow board member and buddy.

Happenings

Printers Row Park Groundbreaking Ceremony

Sat. June 6, 10 a.m.
650 S. Dearborn
Sponsored by Ald. Fioretti and the Chicago Park District.

Printers Row Lit Fest

Sat. and Sun. June 6-7
Dearborn between Polk and Congress.
Join the Chicago Tribune for the Midwest's largest literary event. This

Sponsorship opportunities for the event are also still open. Supporting the SLN Photo Contest & Show is an excellent way for local businesses to demonstrate some South Loop pride at the same time as they reach out to new customers in the neighborhood.

For more info about the SLN Photo Contest & Show, and to view and print either a **Photo Submission Form** or a **Sponsorship Form**, visit the [South Loop Neighbors website](#) and open the Photo Show article on the main page.

Sole Searching with Tiffany Bullock

Business Profile: House of Sole

by Ronald E. Childs, SLN Board Member



Who could ever have envisioned that the concept of selling high-end soles (i.e.: shoes) south of Madison St. could signal the beginnings of a lucrative entrepreneurial solo act? Well, consider the South Loop's very own fashionista of footwear, Tiffany Bullock, owner of the popular House of Sole - that's who.

Just a short bus ride down Michigan Avenue from its haughty competitors on the city's "Magnificent Mile," Ms. Bullock's unique shoe boutique, located at **1237 S. Michigan Ave.**, continues to garner thumbs-up, gold stars and praise with each fashion

writer's review.

The House of Sole stocks hip-yet-wearable, hard-to-find brands - the best works of a variety of domestic and international designers, including Cydwoq (pronounced "sidewalk"), Corso Como, and Paco Gill. Selling an array of offerings that includes everything from flats to heels, boots and beyond, the store's hallmark is wearability combined with fine materials and workmanship. Bullock believes people should be able to enjoy style without forsaking comfort, durability and quality.

Bullock calls her self-designed boutique "urban chic," and that's precisely what it is, concrete floor, fur rug, chandelier and all. House of Sole also boasts a limited selection of handmade jewelry, clothing and handbags.

So, given the tumult in the economy today, how does Bullock navigate the more conservative mindset of today's shopper? "It's just a matter of getting a client to know what [high quality] they're getting," Ms. Bullock tells the *SLN Newsletter*. "I did my research and found that the South Loop was one of the hottest zip codes in the nation."

Before tackling that research, Ms. Bullock, a Chicago native, ventured to Washington, D.C. to work as a supervisory board analyst with the Federal Reserve System. While there, with her future business plan in mind, Bullock worked part-time stints at Nordstrom's, and even McDonald's, because she had no retail experience and wanted to see for herself if she had the personality for the business. She had previously secured her educational foundation at Illinois State University, graduating with a B.S. in Finance while simultaneously serving as a sergeant in the Illinois Air National Guard.

Following her discharge from the Guard in 1994, Ms. Bullock went to work for the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago as a bank and managing examiner, earning an MBA from Northwestern University's Kellogg Graduate School of Mgmt. in the process. The one constant throughout her impressive sojourn has been Bullock's love of shoes. Upon her return to Chicago in 2006, with all of the knowledge and expertise she'd gleaned in tow, House of Sole was born.

outdoor festival offers the opportunity to hear authors speak and debate their works. It also features unique booksellers, poetry readings, exhibitors, kids activities, cooking demos, wine tastings, and much more. SLN board members will be serving as tour guides for the South Loop Planning Board's neighborhood trolley tours, so check us out. Festival hours are from 10 a.m.-6 p.m. on June 6-7.
[Click for more info.](#)

From 1909: Burnham's Plan and Rachmaninoff's 3rd,
 Fri. June 19, 6:30 p.m.
 Sat. June 20, 7:30 p.m.
 The world-premiere of *Plans* by acclaimed composer Michael Torke marks the opening of a city-wide Burnham Centennial celebration. Also on the program is Rachmaninoff's passionate Piano Concerto No. 3. Grant Park Music Festival in Millennium Park. Free to all.

Shop to Empower: House of Sole & Kai Collections
 Thurs. June 11, 6-9 p.m.
 House of Sole, 1237 S. Michigan Ave.
 Your purchase of handcrafted jewelry by the Maasai women of Kenya will help to build a young girl's future. Together we will support Mwavido, which is a nonprofit organization based in Kenya whose primary purpose is to empower Maasai women economically through art and to provide education opportunities to girls through sponsorship. Meet local artist Jessica Censotti and view her most recent sculptures and jewelry line, which is currently being crafted by the Maasai women of Kenya. A portion of the proceeds will be used to fund the building of a Mwavido rescue home

For the time-being, thankfully, the South Loop neighborhood is the beneficiary of Bullock's business acumen and sense of style, although the future is open for Bullock. "Right now I just want to be as stable as possible," she says. "If I do expand, I'd like to go up north, to maybe Uptown, Bucktown or Wicker Park."

House of Sole is an SLN Business Partner, so SLN members get regular discounts.

Development Update



Last month we announced the beginning of work on the long-awaited Printers Row Park (design plan shown to the left), only to have the start date delayed once again. But this time the delay is for what might be considered a good reason - a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the neighbors to enjoy.

So come one, come all: Alderman Fioretti and the Chicago Park District invite you to attend the **Printers Row Park groundbreaking ceremony on Saturday, June 6 at 10 a.m. at 650 S. Dearborn St.** If you have any questions, you can contact Maritza Garcia at the 2nd Ward office at 312-263-9273.

Ald. Fioretti left a phone message for SLN indicating that the neighborhood may be able to look forward to a **Polk Street streetscaping project**. The message said that there might be money available for this project working its way through the legislative process.

Terraced land in front of and below the Field Museum is being eyed for a **memorial to Daniel Burnham**, the urban planner who laid out the lakefront, Grant Park and downtown. The memorial is part of the centennial celebration of Burnham's 1909 Plan of Chicago. Sites discussed by the Burnham Memorial Competition Committee included President's Court in Grant Park, the north side of Grant Park and a median strip in the middle of Congress Parkway.

The committee settled on the area in front of the Field Museum because of the museum's connection to Burnham, its location at the gateway to Burnham Park to the south and the view it offers of the architect's accomplishments, according to Richard Wilson, an urban planner at Skidmore Owings & Merrill who is involved in the memorial effort. For more info, [read the article at Chicago Journal's website.](#)

Solidarity Drive underpass, which dips beneath the roadway at a congested point on the lakefront path is now open to bikers, runners and pedestrians. The intersection of Solidarity Drive, the east-west street that terminates at the Adler Planetarium, and the lakefront trail resulted in a congested convergence of transportation uses. During peak summer months, as many as 5,000 bikers and 4,500 pedestrians cross the strip daily, according to the city Department of Transportation. A federal grant of \$13.4 million paid for much of the projected, estimated to cost \$16.8 million.

for Maasai girls who say no to Female Genital Mutilation, "FGM." More info or RSVP at 312-834-0909.

**Spertus Institute:
Grand Sunday**

Sun. June 21, 2 p.m.
Join Spertus staff on the third Sunday of every month for special activities for grandparents and their grandkids. Tour the Open Depot, explore the Gray Children's Center, and create masterpieces in the Arts Workshop. Grandparents are encouraged to bring a small personal or historical keepsake with them and be ready to share the story behind the object during the program. Best for ages 5+ with a grandparent, but all ages welcome. No advance reservations needed. Free with museum admission.

**Soul do Brasil: Jack
Zara & Brazilian Soul**

June 26, 7-8 p.m.
SGI-USA Chicago Culture Center,
1455 S. Wabash
Imagine yourself in Rio at Carnivale when the samba schools come marching down the street. That's the feeling you can expect when these top Chicago Brazilian musicians bring their rhythms to this event. You will want to dance, so don't resist! Free Admission. Free Parking. No tickets needed. Doors open 6:30pm. For more info, call 312-913-1211.

**Henry "Skip" Gates Jr.
in Conversation with
Rick Kogan: Our
Histories, Our Stories**

Mon. June 29, 6 p.m.
Harold Washington Library, Cindy Pritzker Auditorium
CPL and the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission present a unique look at how the stories we tell shape history and how history shapes our stories.

Night owls who like checking their PO boxes in the wee hours might be disappointed to learn that the **United States Postal Service's Cardiss Collins facility, 433 W. Harrison**, will end its 24-hour operation June 6. The South Loop postal branch is the last in the country to offer a staffed counter all hours of the day and night. The new hours at Cardiss Collins will be 7:30 a.m. until midnight seven days a week. For the full story, [read the article at Chicago Journal's website](#).

Got a question about development in the South Loop? Submit your inquiry and Dennis McClendon will investigate and report his findings in the next newsletter. [Click here to Ask Dennis](#).

South Loop Writers Gather to Read

by Bonnie McGrath, SLN Board Member



There was a packed house on May 20 at Jazz Showcase. A smart eclectic crowd clinked glasses and smiled. They were more than pleased. Spellbound, actually. But there was no music in the venue that night. Only writers reading aloud. And only South Loop writers at that. It was the South Loop Writers Showcase.

Each of the participants who took turns onstage at the microphone, including the wonderful emcee, Ulrich Sandmeyer, owner of the renowned Printers Row bookstore of the same name, turned out to be not just a whiz bang on the old computer keys, but a solid entertainer as well.

First up was long-time South Loop poet, novelist, composer, and professor Regina Baiocchi, author of the story collection *Indigo Sound* and poetry collections *Urban Haiku and Other Selected Poems* and *Blues Haiku*. Regina gave a heartfelt reading from *Indigo Sound*, and with a twinkle in her eye, stopped just before the climax, urging her listeners to buy the book to see what happens. She read some selected poems, as well.

Greg Borzo, SLN board member and author of a spectacular history book, *The Chicago L*, talked about his love (and hate) of our local elevated transportation system and how his fascination started.

Poet Nina Corwin, who has organized many a poetry presentation in her stomping grounds at the old Gourmand (now Café Mediterra), read some powerful poems from her book, *Conversations With Friendly Demons and Tainted Saints*, that riveted us to our seats ... and to her.

Printers Row resident Beth Finke read a small portion from one of her books, *Hanni and Beth: Safe and Sound* in Braille. Blind since she was in her mid-20s, Beth also has written (and recited a portion of) a wonderful memoir called *Long Time, No See*. Beth did a great bit of comic sparring with Ulrich; they are great friends and have an interesting history promoting Beth's books.

Photographer Ron Gordon, who has chronicled the early days of Printers Row and was one of its first residents 30 years ago, and who has collaborated on two books with John Paulett - *Printers Row* and *Forgotten Chicago* - tantalized us South Loop neighbors with old photos from the early days on Dearborn, including one photo taken from inside the clock at Dearborn Station.

Dearborn Park resident and Art Institute professor Maud Lavin treated the audience to a powerful piece she wrote on female aggression from a not-yet-published book that will soon be added to the collection of her published works. Maud is best known in the neighborhood for her recent book, *The Oldest We've Ever Been*.

Thom Nicholson, a military veteran and an engineer, added to the diversity of the group by reading a rousing excerpt from his western-style novel, *Stagecoach Graveyard*. He also has written novels about Viet Nam and the Civil War.

Sharon Woodhouse, who runs the local publishing house, Lake Claremont Press, which publishes only books about Chicago, gave the 85-member audience hope that they too could publish a book if they come up with the right idea. For inspiration, Sharon passed out catalogs of the books she's published for many authors (and also offered many for sale), including books on such subjects as Billy Goat Tavern and Chicago's Maritime history. I bought three Lake Claremont books from Sharon. I would have patronized everyone else, but aside from Thom, who I just met that night, I know all the authors and have read all their books!

If you have South Loop news or event info to share with your neighbors, I invite you to send me the scoop at Helen@SouthLoopNeighbors.org. I hope to see you around the neighborhood!

Sincerely,
Helen Kaplow
Newsletter Editor
SLN VP, Membership

Sweet Petal: A flower shop to brighten your day

Save
10%

It's summer and time for flowers. Sweet Petal has what you crave. Are you a South Loop Neighbors member? If so, show your membership card at Sweet Petal flower shop and get 10% off all your purchases.

Sweet Petal : 537 S. Dearborn St. (312) 939 6544