

Newsletter: August 2009

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Upcoming SLN Events

South Loop Photo Show Awards Party
 Fri. Aug. 21, 6:30 p.m.
 South Loop Neighbors invites you to its 10th Annual Photo Show, a juried exhibition with cash prizes. Photos depict the lifestyle, culture or history of the South Loop. The prize-winning photos and 15 other finalists are on display at Chicago Community Bank in Dearborn Station, 47 W. Polk St., during the month of August. Contest winners will be announced at a special reception on Friday, Aug. 21, at 6:30 p.m. at the Chicago Community Bank. All are encouraged to come and enjoy the show and party (including live music!). The event is free and open to the public.

Quick Links

Join SLN or Renew Your Membership
 At the website, click **Join** on the right end of the menu bar.

Discounts at Local Businesses
 What's in your wallet? If you carry an SLN membership card, you should remember to pull it out and use it. Free coffee here, 10% off your burger there, discount on your yoga class or massage, even savings on electronics and entertainment: it all adds up. Remember to check the SLN website every now and then to see the latest additions to the list of **SLN Business Partners**. (Look for the article on the homepage.) New Partners: Shell Auto Care, Best Buy, and Jazz Showcase. And more coming soon!

Happenings

Farmers Market in Printers Row
 Every Saturday, 7 a.m.-2 p.m. thru Oct. 31.
 The Saturday Market was forced to relocate due to the long-awaited renovation of Printers Row Park. The Market is now on Federal St., just north of Polk St. Therefore, Federal St. will be closed to traffic and off limits to parking from 5 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturdays. Come support the local market!

Operation Backpack: School Supplies Collection
 for Volunteers of America, a not-for-profit agency. There are 12,000 children in Chicago that need school supplies for school this fall. Volunteers of America is collecting and will distribute backpacks and the supplies that fill them: pencils, pens, crayons, markers, notebooks, paper, calculators, dictionaries and thesaurus. They will have a collection box at Chicago Community Bank in Dearborn Station through August 10th. Please contribute. [Click for more info.](#)

80th Annual Bud Billiken Parade
 Sat. Aug 8, 10 a.m.
 The theme for this year's festivities is "Education: Yes We Can, a Salute to President Barack Obama." The parade kicks off at 35th and King Drive. It then heads south to 51st and King. Come out and show your support for our City and our President. Join in the excitement and entertainment of more than 320 floats, marching bands and much more. [Click for more info.](#)

Free Reiki Share
 Thurs. Aug. 13, 6-8 p.m.
 Curious about Reiki? Join Equilibrium Wellness Center in Dearborn Station, 47 W. Polk, for a free mini-treatment and experience the extraordinary power of this healing energy. It's so relaxing, one hour of Reiki is equivalent to four hours of sleep at the deepest level. Come find out why Reiki is the fastest growing alternative therapy in America. Includes a brief lecture by Equilibrium Director and Reiki Master Teacher Bernadette Doran explaining how Reiki energy medicine works and all the challenges it can help, including stress, chronic disease, prenatal, surgical preparation and recovery, cancer, and much more. Free and open to the public. Please call 312-786-1882 to register.

Battle of Fort Dearborn Park Dedication Ceremony
 Sat. Aug. 15, 10-11 a.m.
 18th Street at Calumet. Remember, the first star on Chicago's flag represents Fort Dearborn. Now a park is being named to commemorate its history. Native Americans, battle descendants, War of 1812 reenactors, historians, National Guardsmen, Park District reps, residents of the Prairie District Neighborhood Alliance, and 2nd Ward Alderman Bob Fioretti will assemble to dedicate and name the park, "Battle of Fort Dearborn Park," and to place an historic marker that will commemorate the site for its significance in Chicago's early history.

Network After Hours, sponsored by Near South Planning Board:
 Thurs. Aug. 27, 5-7 p.m.
 M. Lounge, 1520 S. Wabash
 Members: Free
 Non-members: \$10
 RSVP by Aug. 25: 312-987-1980 or [email Marisela](#).

SGI - Chicago Peace Concert
 Fri. Aug. 28, 7 p.m.
 1455 S. Wabash
 This concert series, sponsored by Soka Gakkai Buddhism, presents music on the last Friday of every month, free and open to the public. This month features Jazz musician, George Goetschel. 312-913-1211.

Hyde Park Jazz Festival
 Sat. Sept. 26, 11 a.m. Sat - 2 a.m. Sun
 15 hours of free jazz entertainment in 12 creative and unusual venues in Hyde Park. For more info and line-up of musicians, check out the Hyde Park Jazz Festival [website](#).

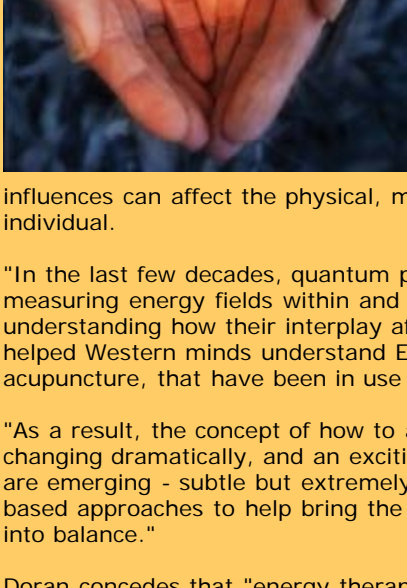
The Near South Youth Association recently held its first community meeting at the new Park District Facility / Vietnam Memorial Museum at 18th and Indiana. The NSYA has been established to act as a not-for-profit organization to support and advocate advancement for youth athletic, arts, and other general positive activities and facilities for all Near South youth. Among other events, they are planning a Near South Youth Olympics to take place Sat Sept. 26 at Dunbar Track. For more info, [email Scott Hanlon](#).

They say this July was Chicago's coolest in 85 years. All the better in which to enjoy our many outdoor events. In July, SLN went to SummerDance and hosted four historical walking tours around the 'hood. It's been lovely. But surely, the heat and humidity will hit this month, just in time for our big indoor, air-conditioned August event - our 10th Annual Photo Show Awards Party, on Friday, Aug 21st (mark your calendars now) at Chicago Community Bank in Dearborn Station. It will be a true gala event. Look for your email invitation in the coming weeks.

And how is the summer treating your car? We've added a new SLN Business Partner who is offering some great ways to show your car some summer loving. See the coupon at the end of this newsletter.

Energy Therapy: Is It the Future?

Business Profile: EQUILIBRIUM Energy + Education
 by Helen Kaplow, SLN VP



Located on the second floor of Dearborn Station, at 47 W. Polk St., **EQUILIBRIUM Energy + Education** is a one-of-a-kind wellness center dedicated to leading-edge, energy-based therapies, classes and workshops.

Director Bernadette Doran explains, "We now know that the body is not just a physical machine but a dynamic energy system, constantly affected by and responding to a variety of influences, from personal stress to environmental pollution. All these influences can affect the physical, mental and emotional health of the individual."

"In the last few decades, quantum physicists have developed ways of measuring energy fields within and around the human body, and understanding how their interplay affects us. This research has also helped Western minds understand Eastern energy-based practices, like acupuncture, that have been in use for thousands of years."

"As a result, the concept of how to achieve personal wellness is changing dramatically, and an exciting range of energy-based therapies are emerging - subtle but extremely powerful, non-invasive, research-based approaches to help bring the individual gently, quickly and easily into balance."

But she concedes that "energy therapy" is hardly a commonplace term. Doran believes it is the future of healthcare. Doran says her wellness center aims to demystify these therapies, share research that quantifies and documents their specific effects, and offer affordable treatments and classes that can help people achieve equilibrium in body, mind, heart and soul.

The list of therapies at EQUILIBRIUM Energy + Education is extensive, including Reiki, Holographic Memory Resolution®, sound and other vibrational therapies, art therapies, breath work, color and light therapies including Colorpuncture and Aura-Soma, and more.

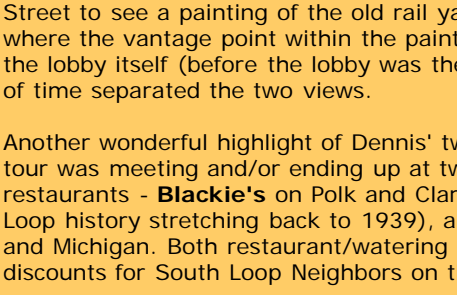
Note: Equilibrium is an SLN Business Partner, so SLN members receive the following discounts when they show their membership card: 20% off your first therapy appointment, then continuing 10% off therapies; 50% off your first Kundalini yoga class; and 10% off all books, CDs and greeting cards.

And if you're still wondering what energy therapy means, Doran invites you to ponder this quote from Albert Einstein, when asked to describe radio: "You see, wire telegraph is a kind of a very, very long cat. You pull his tail in New York and his head is meowing in Los Angeles. Do you understand this? And radio operates exactly the same way: You send signals here, they receive them there. The only difference is that there is no cat."

phone: 312-786-1882 [click for website](#)

Neighbors Walk and Dance in July

by Bonnie McGrath, SLN Board Member



If you looked out your window in the last couple of weeks, you may have noticed a large group of "tourists" listening intently to their guide on the quiet streets of Dearborn Park, Printers Row, or Wabash Avenue's "Restaurant Row." But it wasn't an out-of-town tour group at all. Anyone you may have seen tagging after

SLN President (and Chicago historian) Dennis McClendon, was a South Loop resident and/or business owner and lover of all things South Loop.

Dennis devoted four evenings in July (each sold-out) to giving South Loop Neighbors and their friends (80 people in all) walking tours devoted to the history, architecture, and lore of the South Loop - from Printers Row to Restaurant Row. In this **South Loop Story Tour**, Dennis described bygone eras on the streets: vice, movies, automobile showrooms, railroading, printing houses, and law enforcement, as well as other activities that have taken place on our streets far back into the 19th century. The South Loop has had it all at one time or another, including being the location for many an episode of the now-defunct TV show, *ER* (a connection that strikes quite close to my home).

One of the tour highlights: entering Dennis' condo building lobby on 9th Street to see a painting of the old rail yards (now Dearborn Park), where the vantage point within the painting was one and the same as the lobby itself (before the lobby was there, of course!). Only decades of time separated the two views.

Another wonderful highlight of Dennis' two-hour long, one-mile wide tour was meeting and/or ending up at two favorite South Loop restaurants - **Blackie's** on Polk and Clark (with it's own, storied South Loop history stretching back to 1939), and **Grace O'Malley's** at 14th and Michigan. Both restaurant/watering holes came up with special discounts for South Loop Neighbors on those four, special tour nights.

Other South Loopers may have noticed another gathering of old and new South Loop Neighbors on July 9th at Chicago's **SummerDance in Grant Park** at Harrison Street. A nice group of members met up with plenty of snacks and libations, grabbed a table and chatted and sipped, while viewing and dancing to the sights and sounds of **Funkadesi**, a band that none other than President Barack Obama himself has commented on publicly and quite favorably. While none of us was about to get a spot on *Dancing With the Stars*, we sure did have a great time getting to know each other and eating our pot luck of wonderful snacks, from cherries and blueberries to taco dip.

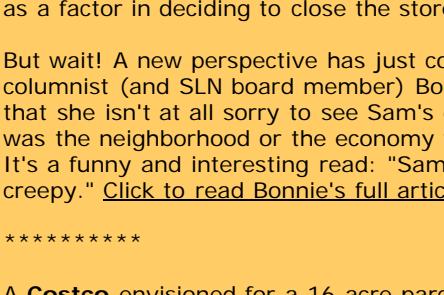
The good news? No one reading this has truly missed out. SLN plans to engage Dennis again for more history tours and lectures in the coming months. And the SummerDance Festival continues through August 23rd, so there's still time to enjoy the music this summer.

Development Update

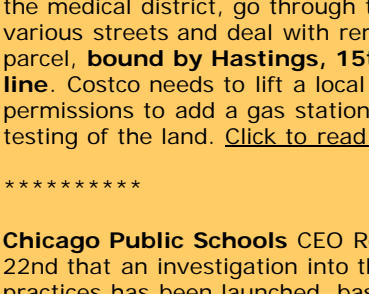
by Helen Kaplow, SLN VP



According to *Crain's*, Chicago restaurateur Jerry Kleiner will run an **upscale bar** *inside* the 16-screen **Kerasotes movie theater** that's set to open in November or December of this year in the new **Roosevelt Collection** mixed-use development near the intersection of **Clark Street and Roosevelt Road**. Mr. Kleiner, the creator of Carnivale, Red Light and Gioco restaurants, has been consulting Kerasotes executives on development of the lounge, tentatively dubbed StarBar, and has now agreed to manage the operation. The concept, featuring mezzanine-level seating and skybox views of the city skyline to the north, will ideally attract a more adult crowd to the theater, or at least that's the hope of the Kerasotes family. It's expensive," says Mr. Kerasotes. "It'll be one of the most expensive movie theaters in Chicago, if not the country." [Click to read the full story at Crain's Chicago Business.](#)



Finally, **Zaha Hadid's Burnham Plan Centennial Pavilion** in Millennium Park will be opening to the public the first week in August - some six weeks late, but likely worth the wait. As of last week, the Hadid structure - one of a pair intended to symbolize "Chicago's bold thinking about the future" - was still encased in a construction tent, like a giant insect stuck in its cocoon. The *Chicago Reader* says, "Late is fate at Millennium Park, which opened four years after the millennium turned." So this delay is not surprising, but still disappointing. But go now, while you can, and see the new beautiful thing before they take it down. [Click here for the full story.](#)



Prairie Avenue Books, a retail anchor at **418 S. Wabash** and touchstone institution for architects in Chicago and around the globe, will close this September unless a buyer scoops up the entire business from longtime owners Marilyn and Wilbert Hasbrouck. [Click to read the full story at the Chicago Journal.](#)

More bad news: The *Chicago Tribune* reports that **Sam's Wines and Spirits** plans to close its South Loop store, on the **corner of Roosevelt and Wabash**, after operating it for less than two years. The store is scheduled to close on August 9th. According to the *Trib*, "the Chicago-based liquor retailer cited the housing crisis and the high rate of vacant condos in the once burgeoning South Loop neighborhood as a factor in deciding to close the store." Bummer.

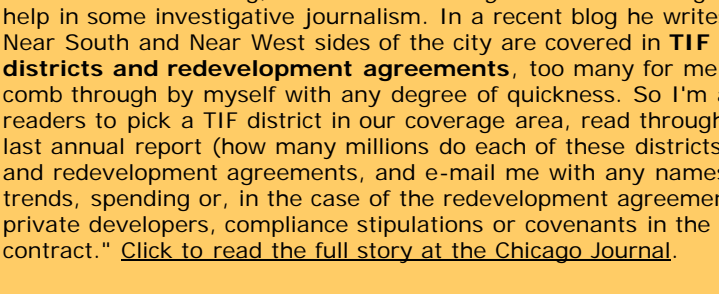
But wait! A new perspective has just come in. *Chicago Journal* columnist (and SLN board member) Bonnie McGrath writes on her blog that she isn't at all sorry to see Sam's go and disputes the claim that it was the neighborhood or the economy that caused the store's closing. It's a funny and interesting read: "Sam's was dirty, cold, crummy and creepy." [Click to read Bonnie's full article.](#)

A **Costco** envisioned for a 16-acre parcel in the Illinois Medical District faces a complex approval process that likely means any ribbon cutting is at least two years away, representatives from the retailing behemoth said at a hearing in mid-July. The firm must satisfy zoning required by the medical district, go through the city's development process, vacate various streets and deal with removing parking meters from within the parcel, **bound by Hastings, 15th, Ashland and a CTA elevated line**. **Costco** needs to lift a local moratorium on liquor sales, get permissions to add a gas station and conduct its own environmental testing of the land. [Click to read the full story at the Chicago Journal.](#)

Chicago Public Schools CEO Ron Huberman announced on July 22nd that an investigation into the District's **selective enrollment** practices has been launched, based on information that existing policies may not have been followed. Huberman has also directed an auditing firm be retained to review the current process and report whether additional controls are recommended. There are three highly competitive, selective enrollment schools located on the Near South and Near West sides: **Jones College Prep, Whitely Chicago and Skinner Elementary**. [Click to read more at CBS 2 Chicago.](#)

In responding to early claims that clout played a role in magnet school applications in the city, Mayor Richard M. Daley said Chicagoans should be glad that students are competing to get into Chicago Public Schools. "**Thank God people are trying to get in.**" Daley said. "It's a good thing."

Then, just this week, federal investigators have gotten involved, moving the situation into scandal mode. Daley is pushing a different quote now. [Click to read the latest from the Tribune.](#)



The American Institute of Architects (AIA) Chicago Foundation announced Chicago-based firm **David Woodhouse Architects** as the winner of the international **Burnham Memorial Competition** (winning design shown above). The architectural contest, launched in February 2009, seeks to build a lasting and notable memorial that will inspire and educate the public, and honor the memory and importance of Daniel Burnham and his 1909 Plan of Chicago. The memorial will be built on a site in front of the **Field Museum in Chicago's Grant Park**, and completion is scheduled for late 2010.

Last month, the **Buckingham Phase 2**, a proposed **37-story dorm** with more than 1,200 beds, on the **southeast corner of Wabash and Van Buren**, got the go-ahead from the Chicago Plan Commission. This month, members of the city council's Committee on Zoning deferred an application to change the zoning underlying the location, which is currently a parking lot. "The alderman wanted to have another community meeting," said attorney Jack George, who is representing the partnership, between L & H Real Estate Group and Brownstone Realty, that is seeking the zoning permission. The proposed dorm has no affiliation with any of the Loop's universities or colleges. To date, no community meeting about the project has been held. Also, there are no concrete plans for building immediately, due to market conditions.

Yet another dorm is being planned for the South Loop. *Crain's Chicago Business* writes, "Condominium developer Keith Giles has turned to student housing for his next big project in the South Loop, a neighborhood that already has more condos than it needs. Mr. Giles confirms that he and his partner, Jerry Karlik, plan to build a **21-story tower** that would house **860 students** on a site at **1136-40 S. Wabash Ave**. The developers have agreed to buy the roughly 20,000-square-foot property from the city for \$8 million." [Click to read more.](#)

Why go to the beach when you could spend August combing through obscure legal documents? The city council unanimously passed the **TIF Sunshine Ordinance** this April, a bill that required the city to post more information about Tax Increment Financing districts that now cover a substantial swath of Chicago. On July 30th, the Department of Community Development [posted the data](#), including the most recent TIF district annual reports, redevelopment agreements and other files, which are all in PDF format.

Now Micah Maidenberg, Editor of the *Chicago Journal* is asking for your help in some investigative journalism. In a recent blog he writes, "The Near South and Near West sides of the city are covered in **TIF districts and redevelopment agreements**, too many for me to comb through by myself with any degree of quickness. So I'm asking readers to pick a TIF district in our coverage area, read through the last annual report (how many millions do each of these districts hold?) and redevelopment agreements, and e-mail me with any names, trends, spending or, in the case of the redevelopment agreements with private developers, compliance stipulations or covenants in the contract." [Click to read the full story at the Chicago Journal.](#)

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

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