

November 2006

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Articles, editorials, or calendar items should be dropped off at 401 E. 4th Street or emailed to Voice@EastRow.org. Submissions must be signed to be considered for publication. The editors reserve the right to edit or reject submissions due to length, content or appropriateness.

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**Deadline for submissions is
the 15th of each month.**

Send articles to:

Voice@EastRow.org

Next Meeting:

Joint meeting for Gateway and
Mansion Hill neighborhoods
Tuesday, Nov. 7, 7:30 p.m.,
St. Mark Lutheran Church,
Corner of Monroe & Eighth Sts.

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Volume 7

Issue 11

Tall Stacks Tour Brought Stories, Memories

by Mary Beth Crocker

You never know what you'll experience if your home is featured on a neighborhood tour. Ask East Row residents who opened their homes for the 2006 Historic Homes Tour during Tall Stacks on October 7-8, and they'll most likely remember the lavish praise and appreciation they received from visitors who traveled to the area from as far away as England. But a few have great stories, too, from a bogus marriage proposal to a telephone call from the great grandson of an original homeowner.

A "lovely young woman" from London was thrilled to discover that homeowner Chad Reynolds was single, and nearly proposed marriage to him, muses Rita Reynolds, Chad's mother. Actually, at first glance, the Londoner fell in love with Chad's home at 825 Overton, originally the First Temple Society of Spiritualists and now one of the most unique single-family homes in the neighborhood.

"She walked up to me and said, 'Hi, my name is Sara and I want to be your daughter-in-law. This is Kathy, the mother of the bride, and this is Julie, the maid of honor,'" says Rita. "It was so cute."

"We met so many great people and we have many great memories from their visit," continues Rita. "They were so kind, considerate, and asked tons of questions. It was wonderful."

Curtis Heuser, another homeowner, received a call from 79-year-old Charles Whiting of Lawrenceburg, Ind., who had read a story about Curtis' home in *The Cincinnati Enquirer*. It turns out that Whiting is a great grandson of William Hudson Harton, the Queen Anne home's namesake who built it at 734 Park Avenue around 1892. Curtis knew that Harton, the father of four children, was a veteran of the Civil War, but didn't know that he served two terms as mayor of Newport. In addition, information provided on the tour ticket indicated that Harton managed the Green Line Trolley Co. However, according to Whiting, the manager was not his great grandfather, but actually his grandfather. (Hudson's son had the same name as his father.) "So you are living in the mayor's mansion, young man," Whiting explained to Curtis, adding that family documents show the home's value in 1902 was an astounding \$5,000.

Curtis was curious. What did Whiting remember most about the house? "My great grandma was always complaining — with her husband — about the beer truck that delivered in front of the house instead of the rear."

These two homes were among nine showcased on the East Row Tour, which was blessed with absolutely perfect weather. However, the final count was down this year and only 488 tickets were sold during the two days. Even so, many visitors told organizers that this was one of the best historic homes tours they'd ever experienced.

In addition, there were plenty of compliments for the wine tasting that followed the tour on Sunday evening. Fifty-one tickets were sold for the event, which was at The Sanctuary, located in the historic former Central Christian Church at Sixth and Monroe streets.

Compliments should be given to Chairperson Martine Rose, all committee members, homeowners, sponsors, volunteers and others including employees with the City of Newport who gave their time and expertise to the tour. 🍷

Garden Club Notes

by Carla Ballard

There will be a November meeting on November 21, the Tuesday before Thanksgiving. The October meeting was a great one with Gia Giammarinaro, Hamilton County Parks naturalist telling us all about Mushrooms. We'll have officer elections in November, and plan for the annual Christmas party in December. 🍷

Act III – Historic District Expansion

by Julie Smith-Morrow and John Morrow

It was a dark and stormy night as we sprinted with open umbrellas through the rain to the October 16, 2006 Special Call Meeting of the Newport Board of Commissioners. This evening's 6:00 p.m. meeting was set to consider one agenda item only – the second and final reading of an ordinance to expand the East Row Historic District to include the 500-700 blocks of Washington Avenue and the 200 block of East Fourth Street.

We were on "Morrow Time" so we joined the meeting at approximately 6:02 p.m. We rushed in pink cheeked and out of breath, folded our umbrellas, and then heard "I bet that was the shortest meeting on record!" The City Manager, Mayor, and Commissioners (J. Peluso, Knepshield, Fennell and Hall), along with the Historic Preservation Officer (Emily Jarzen), other City staff and a handful of attendees, laughed as they observed our angst, but then happily related that the Commissioners had just unanimously approved the ordinance.

This action by the Board of Commissioners marks the riotously successful conclusion of Act III of the East Row Historic District Expansion. With Ms. Jarzen in a starring role, and City Manager Fromme and City Solicitor Schulken in lead roles, the Commissioners had earlier supported historic preservation by voting unanimously to include the 900 blocks of Park Avenue and Monroe Street and the north 300 block and entire 500 blocks of East Second Street in the local historic district. Please join us in our standing ovation for this Newport City cast! 🐾



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Scott Crisler: Vocation, Avocation, and Southern Charm

by Nancy Stephens

With traces of his South Carolina, Georgia and Texas origins muting the flat Midwestern accents that surround him, Scott Crisler's words are infused with passion when he speaks of his music. Inspired by his mother who played piano and organ in church and a grandfather who played the harmonica, Scott's musical talents emerged amongst the ghost stores and folklore that abound in Murrell's Inlet, South Carolina, a place Scott describes as being "in my soul." Nostalgia for the romance of the South is evident in his CD, *House on Fire*. Recently it was reviewed in *CityBeat* as having an "...enjoyable versatility...with practically every track sounding different from the last." Scott has written all the songs on this CD.

"My brother," explains Scott, "...played in a band and I listened faithfully. He taught me to play the guitar; then I had formal lessons. I really picked up the guitar so I could write my own songs. Improvising and creating is what compels me to play. Many musicians have influenced me, but the first time I heard Jimi Hendrix's music, I was just blown away."

The profession Scott pursues, that of an attorney with a large Fourth Street law firm, seems a dichotomy when compared to his after hours interest. Nevertheless, it is apparent that the litigation and defense work Scott performs draw on his creativity and facility with words that his other passion requires. "This duality in my life," claims Scott, "balances me out." Other facets of his personality contribute to this balance. Scott rehabbed a house in the East Row and finds time to garden. That creative side has been displayed on two occasions on the East Row garden walks.

Scott continues to compose and play. Recently his band The Electric Souls played at the Seventh Street Gift Shop and at Together. Always a favorite at the Monroe Street Block Party, the band performed recently at Newport on the Levee and at the Mid Point Music Festival on Main Street in Cincinnati. The lyrics to "The Ghost of Mansion Hill" reveal his affinity for the historic East Row which he describes as a wonderful place full of convivial neighbors and friends..."looks like the gardens are full tonight, stary eyes are feeling right, come on over and sit a spell..."

Married to local attorney Brenda Bonecutter, Scott and Brenda are expecting their first child in February. 🐾

November Events at the Library

by Kiki Dreyer Burke

The Campbell County Public Library will be closed Thanksgiving Day (Thursday, November 23), but will be open during regular hours Friday, Saturday and Sunday of Thanksgiving weekend.

The Friends of the Library are having a Book Sale November 16-18. Great books are priced from 25 cents to \$2.

Children ages 6-11 are invited to Learnin' the Ropes at 4 p.m. Tuesday, November 7. Come to a rope-spinning demonstration and listen to cowboy stories and songs.

New for adults is a Writer's Group. This monthly writing group

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meets at 7 p.m. the second Thursday of the month (November 9), rotating among all the Library's branches. This month the group meets at Newport. Come share your writing talents and listen to others.

There are also programs to make Cigar Box Purses (3:30 p.m. Saturday, November 11) or learn about the History of Animation and watch cartoons to see the changes over the years (6:30 p.m. Monday, November 13). Those programs are for teens and adults.

There's always neat stuff to do at the Library. 🐾

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Curtis Heuser: Artist of The Month

by Bruce Murray

Visitors to the East Row for the Historic Homes Tour had a special treat when they visited the home on Park Street. Curtis Heuser, one of the Midwest's Premier Decorative Artists has plied his craft on the walls of his own home, calling his home, "Living Murals", the same name for his web site. Curtis creates murals in the interiors of homes.

A 1985 Graduate from Northern Kentucky University, Curtis began working as a free lance artist in 1987, and began experimenting in hand applied faux finishes and murals in 1989. Since then his work has been featured in *Cincinnati Magazine*, *Design Magazine*, *The Cincinnati Post* and *The Cincinnati Enquirer*. He has also appeared on the nationally syndicated "Around the House" with Jay Shatz, and most recently on HGTV's "Before and After Show". He was honored many times while at NKU, including the designation "Outstanding Graduate in Fine Arts"

Curtis focuses on custom hand painted trompe l'oeil murals on walls, ceilings, floors and furniture. Each of his works is personal, designed together with the homeowner. The works fit the spaces, have appropriate themes, and are as much an expression of the homeowner as the artist. When working with the homeowner Curtis insures that he has good rapport with the owners and that they can "live together" during the project which may take weeks.

His home is the best example of his work. Walls, cabinetry, ceilings, and even windows are tastefully decorated with his work. One must look closely to determine that the wallpaper and other finishes have actually been painted onto the surfaces. His web site, livingmurals.com has beautiful pictures of his work in several different room settings. There is also information about commissioning a work. You can see some of his beautiful work at livingmurals.com. 🐾

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Local Songwriter Nominated for Music Awards

by Susan Ankenbauer

Chris Collier, a local singer/songwriter, who lives in the East Row Historic District, has been nominated for Best Singer/Songwriter for the 10th Annual Cincinnati Entertainment Awards, sponsored by *CityBeat*. She was also nominated in 2002 for Best Folk Singer. She has released 4 CDs over the years, the latest being *Over Twenty*, which was very well-received by local critics. Her CD release party was at York St Cafe last April and she recently played the Midpoint Music Festival in Cincinnati. Chris has just returned from playing concerts in Michigan and can be seen and heard locally at Starbuck's in Hyde Park the 3rd Friday of every month, as well as with her band at York St. Cafe on December 1. Somehow she manages to balance her music with teaching at Clark Montessori in Cincinnati.

The CEA Award Ceremony will be held at the Taft Theater in Cincinnati on November 19. Winners will be determined by voting in *CityBeat* or on line at www.citybeat.com/cea/

You can visit the Chris Collier web site, and hear some of her music at www.chriscollier.com. Her CD is available at local stores including Barnes & Noble at Newport on the Levee. 🐾

Burglaries Hit the East Row

by Bruce Murray

They were all caught in action but there seems to be a rash of recent burglaries in the East Row. Recent break ins have been reported on Linden, Nelson, Overton, and 4th St., and due to good police work and courageous owners, all those who broke into house have been apprehended.

There is advice for those who want to prevent break ins: If you have an alarm, set it. And display the alarm sign in your yard. Always, lock your doors both day and night. Make sure your house looks occupied, even though at least two of the break ins occurred while the owner was home. Program the police number into your phone. And most of all, report any suspicious activity.

The Newport Police Dept. also has information available on how to secure you homes to help avoid burglaries. For more information contact Capt. Howard Niemeier at 292-3611. 🐾

Upcoming Events
Friday, November 10 - Linda Tabler
(Sept. Artist of the Month) Exhibit opens at York St. International

Tuesday, November 21
East Row Garden Club Meeting - Levee Perk, 6:30

Friday, December 8
A Holiday Hop, Great Holiday Shopping Spirits and Christmas Fare
(See ad in next month's Voice)



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Dorothy Craig, Traded Hollywood for Home

by Bruce Murray

Dorothy Craig is a small woman with a touch of elegance and a big smile. She has lived in Newport for more than 80 years and once had an opportunity to go to Hollywood. She chose to get married and continue to live in Newport, a decision she would make again if she had the chance.

Dorothy's father was secretary to the mayor of Newport but also was a dancer and Master of Ceremonies at The Glen Rendezvous, a club in Newport. Dorothy danced at the Rendezvous for the first time when she was three years old, took dancing lessons and as a teen danced with her sister Miriam as "The Davis Sisters". When she was 16, she met 12 year old Doris Kappelhoff in dancing school and they became good friends. Doris joined the sisters and began touring as dancers. Doris and Dorothy often danced as a duo, called "Miss Betty Darling" and "Susie Sourpuss". They danced in many Midwest cities including one night in Lima OH when a young unknown Milton Berle as MC introduced them. Dorothy also danced in the "Pony Chorus Revue" and as the shortest member of the troupe, led the dancers on stage for each performance.

One night while they were performing at the Old Kentucky Inn in Covington, an agent asked them to audition to perform in Hollywood. They did and were accepted but Dorothy was in love. She decided to stay here and marry. The happy marriage lasted and she and her husband lived on Lexington Ave., and had eight children. The agent wouldn't take the group without Dorothy and her sister Miriam also married and moved to Detroit where she became a blues singer. However, Doris Kappelhoff did go to Hollywood and made history as Doris Day. They kept in touch over the years and when Doris came to town, the Gibson Card company always let Dorothy have a 2-1/2 hour lunch hour to visit. And once, Doris Day autographed pictures for all of Dorothy's colleagues at work.

A disappointment to Dorothy is having lost all her memorabilia in a fire, so she has no programs, pictures or other mementos of her career as a dancer. However, she has many great memories and a friendship with Doris Day that has endured over the years.

During the 50s and 60s, Newport's "notorious" period, Dorothy and daughter Bev Maline remember the East Row as a good place to

live. People were able to leave doors unlocked and be out at night without worry. Times changed but Dorothy always enjoyed living in the East Row. And Dorothy says that the best decision she made was to stay in Newport and raise a family rather than to go to Hollywood. 🐾



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"The Naked Vine" Web site finds Good Inexpensive Wines

by Bruce Murray

Many of us attended the wine tasting after the Christmas Home tour last year and the Historic Homes tour during Tall Stacks and want to find information about other good wines. We try local stores but there are just too many choices! But now there could be some help.

If you've ever been overwhelmed by the sheer number of wine choices in the aisles of Party Source or stumped trying to find the right bottle to bring to a party, dinner, or other gathering, then a new web site may provide some guidance. "The Naked Vine" written by East Row resident Mike Rosenberg, focuses on "wines that are easy to drink, easy to get to know, and generally easy to find."

"My goal isn't to be Wine Spectator," said Rosenberg, "My goal is to help people make sense of all the choices out there. A good friend once said that it's easy to find a good \$50 bottle, but the real challenge is in finding a good \$10 bottle. That's where I hope to find my niche. I want to give a reader some solid options, some food ideas, and hopefully be educational and fun at the same time. I've imposed an upper limit of \$15 per bottle, and most of my selections are under \$10."

Each entry on The Naked Vine includes at least three tastings, food pairings, and advice for both the novice wine drinker and those with more serious palates. Rosenberg said he thinks there's a demand for his type of writing. "I think a lot of people want to know more about wine, but they don't know where to start, and it's easy to get intimidated. Trying different wines is about having fun – and that's what I try to communicate to my readers."

The Naked Vine can be found at thenakedvine.blogspot.com and Rosenberg can be contacted at thenakedvine@yahoo.com 🐾

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