

# The West End

By and for the  
West End Neighborhood

September 1993

MANY OF US WERE STUNNED, ASTONISHED, BEDAZZLED.

Others, perhaps those of stronger faith, were less surprised. Among them, the Reverend Jeff Smith (the West End Weather Committee Chairman) could be found pulling weeds in the beer garden, sporting a pleased, Mona Lisa smile. Yes, we're talking about the Festival in Grace Court, 1993.

*The September meeting of the West End Association began its agenda with an impassioned lament about the "crime wave" which plagues our neighborhood. The jeremiad came from Bob Utley, a 13-year resident of the community. Bob urged the Association to monitor all the crimes that occur here to see that the offenders are properly charged, prosecuted and sentenced.*

It's difficult to select THE ingredient that made this year's Little Street Scene such a lovely success. The gorgeous weather was probably the most obvious, but lots of folks heaped lavish praise on the uncannily appropriate music, selected and presented by Charlie Culbreth on flute and Joanne Inkman on keyboard.

*Bob's complaint kicked off another agonized roundtable discussion about the difficulty of formulating a rational, effective citizen response to what seems essentially to be a lunatic breakdown in the larger culture (no, perhaps an "Anti-Culture" would be more appropriate) around us. Yes, around us and, some would add, including us. I told you it was agonized.*

The park was comfortably peopled with little kids and grown kids, many West Enders and many more from other neighborhoods all over town. These folks did the sort of stuff that our culture (right word, this time) recollects with nostalgia but is rarely able to bring back to authentic life. West End chicken, dogs, snacks, drinks and Blue Ridge ice cream went down almost as easy as the music. And the sidewalk art combined the best of de Kooning, Picasso, and Mrs. Henderson's kindergarten class.

*The group promised, for openers, to follow up on the Mock burglaries. (A week after the meeting, a lost young man named Harold Star pleaded guilty to reduced charges and received 12 years in prison. He'll probably be out by Thanksgiving '94, maybe as soon as next July 4th. Do we give thanks? To what extent do we let freedom ring? Yes, it is true -- we do need more prison beds for violent and repeat offenders. Yes, it is also true -- it costs you and me more to jail Mr. Star for a year than to send him to Yale.*

Here's who else made the Festival a glorious occasion -- the exhibitionists, or whatever is it you call those people willing to expose their private arts in public: Leslie Hiatt, Cindy Poindexter and Elaine Lewis, Janice Eagle, Billye Keith Jones, Keith Brown, Ann Van Every and

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Susie Jackson, Heidi LeVasseur, Phyllis Szesze and Janet Bradbury, Beverly LaRowe Amick, Mike Bosworth, Nancy Kubale, Jack Hernon, Mergie MacKenzie, Betty Hartman, Elaine Gwin, Julia Wilson, Larry Brown, the Garden Path, the West End Garden Club, and the "No Trash -- just Treasures" Yard Sale.

*The answers are going to take a lot of courage, commitment, toughness and time.*

The beauty of it is that ordinary people came to this Festival, where they seemed to be at home in Grace Court, without complacency, with gratitude and an easy generosity of spirit.

**SO WHAT ELSE IS NEWS?**

Stuart McCormick, a 5-year resident and local architect, brought his plans for some external changes to the buildings on his property, seeking feedback and approval of the Board. He also plans to get advice from the the Historic District Commission, to insure that his plans are in harmony with the Design Review Guidelines for our Historic District.

The Board approved the submission to the YMCA Nominating Committee the names of John Merschel (who runs Baity Tires) and Barbara Garrison (who runs the Mickle House B&B on 5th Street).

Wanda Merschel, Billye Keith Jones and Missy Vaughan (the "We-Know-Where-You-Sleep Trio") rounded up stragglers to volunteer at the Festival.

The City Transit Authority is sponsoring a "Downtown Dine Around" Trolley on September 29 and 30 and October 1 and 2, from 6:00 to 9:40. Jump on the trolley at Summit and 4th and get Thee to "numerous dining, cultural, and entertainment opportunities in the downtown area." It'll cost you a buck. (A DWI will cost you a thousand bucks.)

Bill Wise reported that, with help from Wachovia management, we are making some progress on the parking problem. He also reported on some Burke Street commercial developments, esp. a proposed coffee house and cafe which also wants a liquor license. Wise also reported that the "Friends of Miller Park" is having a struggle with the City's tendency to over-pave. He'll participate in the debate, as a veteran of the Hanes Park wars.


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\*\*\*\*\*

Notice: the October Meeting of the West End Association will take place at the YMCA (that's an M), on Tuesday, October 4th, at 7:30 p.m. The November meeting will be on Tuesday the 2nd, tentatively at the Gibson's house at 1315 Brookstown.

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"WHAT IS SO RARE AS A DAY IN JUNE?"

-- William, the Bard of Avon

"TRY SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 1993, the day of the Third Annual Festival in Grace Court. Sorry you missed it. But pull up a chair, Willy-boy, and I'll tell you all about it. For openers, it was cool. The fiery orb that runs down Hyperion's frontage road withheld its scorching rays, and sweet dews graced the Grace grasses like pearls on Hecate's attache case. My friend, Mabel, called me up about 6:15 that morning and, well, you know Mabel . . ."

-- Wendy, the West End Windbag

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