

# Forest Park News

A Publication of the Forest Park Civic Association

What's Inside • April 2008

## Bing Arts Center Progress Update

Brian Hale

The Bing Arts Center's opening is approaching (not as fast as we would like, but it is coming). We aren't close enough yet to schedule a date but we are hopeful that public celebratory gatherings in the building will be possible sometime in June. An exhibition of movie posters from 1963 to 1975 will be on display during the Bing Arts Center's premiere festivities! While exploring the attic/crawl space above the auditorium, Terry Stone discovered a box full of them. Other artists are being lined up for exhibits to be scheduled once we are open.

A new heating and air conditioning system has been installed and is operational (a couple of small lengths of ductwork still remain to be installed). New electric service is in place, and lights and outlets will be installed over the next couple of weeks. The bathrooms have been completely gutted (anyone who ever used the old ones will be pleased about that), and rough plumbing for new toilets and sinks is in. The newly refurbished restrooms will include fully accessible facilities in the men's and women's rooms when they are completed sometime in April.

The storefronts have been replaced (the new window glass won't be put in place until a week or so before opening). The insides of the outer facing walls have been framed and are ready for wiring and insulation. A small kitchen is being prepared for use behind the concession area. New signs are being readied for installation on the marquee. The ceiling and lights under

the marquee will be fixed and/or replaced next month. Suspended ceilings will be installed in the restrooms, utility room, kitchen, and office. The left gallery space (formerly a storefront) is getting a sink and an enclosed rear work area to equip it for teaching in addition to exhibition.

*You can check on progress and find out more about the project by visiting [www.bingartscenter.org](http://www.bingartscenter.org).*

You can check on progress and find out more about the project by visiting [www.bingartscenter.org](http://www.bingartscenter.org).

As with any construction or renovation project, costs have a tendency to increase rapidly beyond projections. We are doing our best to prepare a first-rate, multi-use arts center for the community. Funds are dwindling and financial contributions would be extremely useful at this point. Please consider helping if you are able. Tax exempt donations can be mailed to: The "X" Main Street Corporation, Bing Arts Center, P.O. Box 80553, Springfield, MA 01138.

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## FPCA Scholarships Available

The Forest Park Civic Association will be awarding three \$500 scholarships to graduating high school students who reside in Forest Park. The criteria used will be academic achievement, involvement in extracurricular activities, and service to the community.

Applications will be available from high school Guidance offices, the Vietnamese American Civic Association, and on the Association's website at [www.forestparkca.com](http://www.forestparkca.com). The deadline is May 15, 2008.

For more information, please contact Sandra Collins at 746-5916.

## Neighborhood Cleanup Day

Let's be honest. After the winter, there is lots of trash on the streets. Some of us clean it up, others don't. So, those of us who do are going to get out on April 12<sup>th</sup> and have a neighborhood cleanup day. We can't do all of it, but what we do accomplish is more than if we did nothing. Rain day will be the 13<sup>th</sup>.

Meet at the Forest Park Library on Saturday, April 12<sup>th</sup> at 9 AM. Bring a broom, rake, or shovel, work gloves, and kids who are old enough to help. We'll supply trash bags.

As my grandmother used to say, "If everyone does a little, no one has to do a lot."

If you patronize a business and their property isn't clean, say something. Let them know that you want to use businesses who obviously care about their surroundings. Perhaps the message will sink in.

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### AT-LARGE

Check us out on the web:  
[www.forestparkca.com](http://www.forestparkca.com)

Our email address is  
[admin@forestparkca.com](mailto:admin@forestparkca.com)

Email board members using the first name and  
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## President's Letter

# Notes, News and New Initiatives

Brian Sears

I was recently asked by *The Republican* to write my vision for Springfield and basically "Why Springfield/Forest Park" in 500 words or less. The good part is I already had most of it written and a lot more of it in my mind because it really bothers me when people who choose to live outside of Forest Park and/or Springfield feel so free to bad mouth and trash my neighborhood, our neighborhood. As much as that bothers me, it drives me even crazier when people that live in Forest Park add fuel to the fire by talking bad about

the neighborhood. I especially hate the statements that someone is stuck here because they can't afford to leave.

To that, I say HOGWASH. Life is too short to and too good of a thing to stay in a situation because you feel "stuck."

Without trying to convince a negative person that life is actually good and that Springfield is wonderful – I will just give you a sneak peek at my attempt to fit Why Springfield/Forest Park into 500 words or less...

Springfield, specifically Forest Park, is a great place to live, work, and play.

*Live* - The "City of Homes" is truly showcased here in Forest Park. Not only are the homes in the Forest Park Heights Historic District loaded with character and style, but the majority of the nearly 3,000 single family homes and 2,400 multi-family homes also are loaded with character. As a Realtor®, I can tell you that the housing market in Forest Park continues to remain affordable. For the year ended December 31, 2007, the median price of a single family home in Forest Park was \$149,900. The Forest

Park neighborhood is filled with sidewalks that connect all of the wonderful neighbors to each other. In addition, we are blessed with a number of streets that have terraces and parks that beautify our neighborhood. Geographically, Forest Park has an advantage for commuters, as we are ideally located to getting on and off I-91. Finally, the Forest Park neighborhood is blessed with a 735 acre park that I would compare with any municipal park in the United States.

*Work* - Springfield is the heart of the

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*Springfield has seen a big increase in private development within the city adding to our restaurants, hotels, and entertainment options. You don't have to look beyond the riverfront to see the amount of faith that many have in Springfield.*

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Pioneer Valley economic life. Springfield employs not only the majority of its own residents but also provides the employment for many of the neighboring cities and towns. Our medical facilities not only employ many of the people in the Greater Springfield area, but they also

provide excellent health care to the residents as well. The Affiliated Chambers of Commerce of Greater Springfield do a wonderful job promoting Springfield and promoting the many wonderful things that the City has to offer. We also have access to wonderful education with a community college and five colleges either in Springfield or one town from Springfield.

*Play* - The gem of our neighbor is the 735 acre Forest Park. The park has baseball fields, regular and clay tennis courts, a skating rink, outdoor pool, basketball courts, beach volleyball court, soccer and football fields, multiple duck ponds, gardens, a zoo, picnic areas, the Barney Carriage House, and so much more. We have a supermarket, fresh fruit store, and

*Continued on the back page...*

# Farmers' Market

The fabulous farmers' market at the X re-opens for the 11<sup>th</sup> year on Tuesday, May 6<sup>th</sup> at 12:30 PM in Trinity Church's parking lot on Sumner Avenue. Depending on the spring, we may have asparagus the first week; some years we do, others we don't. We will certainly have salad greens as many farmers are extending their growing season by putting black plastic on the ground and covering the rows with metal hoops covered in black plastic. The soil warms up faster this way. There is also some greenhouse produce early in the season.

Of course there will be plants for your garden, honey, dairy products, grass fed beef, bread, and more the first week.

Our vendors did well last year, and we hope that this year brings them even more success. Spread the word about this wonderful market. Buy locally grown/raised/made products. Everyone benefits.

Belle Rita Novak  
Market Manager

## The FPCA Invites You To Join!

Send a \$15 check payable to FPCA along with this form to:  
FPCA Membership  
P.O. Box 80709  
Springfield, MA 01138-0708

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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Your interests:

Zoning     The "X"     Programs

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Other \_\_\_\_\_

# New Businesses in the Neighborhood

## New Restaurant Opens 3hree Reopens! In Neighborhood

Belle Rita Novak

Abudanza, which means abundance in Italian, recently opened for lunch and dinner six days a week at 513 Belmont Avenue next to Trends beauty salon. Featuring American and European cuisine, they will also cater parties on Sundays.

A friend and I ate there recently and were very pleased with our meals. The portions were generous and the flavor was excellent. Our meals came with mixed green salads with a choice of dressings, and bread was available upon request. And if you like, you can bring your own bottle of wine.

Every evening there are specials in addition to regular menu items.

Welcome to our neighborhood Abudanza. We wish you well!



*Please make it a point to let the association president know of any neighborhood businesses you feel should be mentioned in the newsletter.*

Belle Rita Novak

Under new management, the 3hree Cafe at 684 Belmont Avenue has re-opened. This popular café, which opened originally in May of last year, is now open Wednesday through Sunday from 7AM to 3 PM for breakfast and lunch. Everything is homemade, literally, from soup to dessert.

The menu has some of the same items on it that it had when "The Guys" owned it, and there are many new ones as well. The prices are a little more moderate than before.

We welcome Cathie Albrecht to our neighborhood and look forward to seeing our friends and neighbors there also.

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

April 12th FPCA Clean Up Day  
May 3rd Keep Springfield Beautiful Day  
May 4th May Board Meeting (TBA)  
June 1st June's Board Meeting (TBA)  
June 14th Illumination Night  
on Maplewood Terrace

### President's Letter *continued*

a Farmers' Market that multiple neighborhoods utilize. We have a number of excellent restaurants that provide breakfast, lunch, and dinner options. One of the City's public golf courses, Franconia Golf Course, is located in Forest Park. In addition, Springfield has seen a big increase in private development within the city adding to our restaurants, hotels, and entertainment options. You don't have to look beyond the riverfront to see the amount of faith that many have

in Springfield. The new Basketball Hall of Fame not only resulted in five new restaurants (Max's, Uno's, Pazzo's, Onyx, and soon Sam's Sports Bar) but a new hotel and a state of the art fitness center. Beyond restaurants and hotels, Springfield remains the center of the arts for the Pioneer Valley with the Quadrangle (free to all residents), Symphony Hall, City Stage, and more.

In closing, I invite each one of you to go to [www.ValleyVisitor.com](http://www.ValleyVisitor.com) and click on the video that showcases our wonder-

ful area or [www.USAirwaysMag.com](http://www.USAirwaysMag.com) and click on the Profiles Section and read what they had to say about Springfield. When watching the video and reading the article, take note how many of the activities and wonderful things are located right here in Springfield.

Brian Sears.  
*President*

*Join*

The Forest Park Civic Association

(You can sign up on page 3 or on-line at [www.ForestParkCA.com](http://www.ForestParkCA.com).)