



# THE DEARBORN EXPRESS

SPONSORED BY THE  
SOUTH LOOP REFERRAL GROUP



SERVING PRINTERS ROW AND  
DEARBORN PARK

AL HIPPENSTEEL, EDITOR [thedearbornepress@gmail.com](mailto:thedearbornepress@gmail.com)

## LEAVING THE STATION

**Roy Svenson**, Branch Manager of Chicago Community Bank, now Metro Bank, located in the old Dearborn Station, has retired as of Jan. 1, 2013. Roy is known for being “Mr. South Loop.” Roy has tirelessly promoted relationships by bringing people together for a mutually positive impact. He sat on a number of boards and seemingly, knows everybody. A few years ago, the Chicago City Council named a “day” after Roy by proclamation. When First Chicago Bank vacated the location in 1999, Argo Savings Bank opened a branch in Dearborn Station and brought in Roy to run the operation. When Argo sold several of its branches to Chicago Community Bank, Roy stayed on to continue on as Branch Manager. Several farewell events were planned to give us an opportunity to express our appreciation to Roy and all that he has done. The South Loop Referral Group hosted a breakfast at Blackies. A reception was held at the bank on Dec 21<sup>st</sup> for customers and friends. At the reception a limited edition print was unveiled showing a historic view from the south of trains approaching and leaving Dearborn Station. Roy is donating it to the bank to be displayed on the wall near the entrance. Despite Roy living in Hoffman Estates, he promises to return and keep a presence in



the community. Our sincere hope is that Roy will find new channels for his energy in retirement while keeping the ties to the South Loop.



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### INDEX

South Loop Neighbors.....	p 2
Greener South Loop .....	p 4
Opinion .....	p 5
New City .....	p 6
Maxwell Ulrich .....	p 7-9
Real Estate .....	p10

Remember



Sandy Hook

## PAULINHO GARCIA & GRAZYNA AUGUSCIK DUO At the JAZZ SHOWCASE

Grazyna Auguscik, six-time winner of the Best Jazz Vocalist award by the European Jazz Forum, and her musical partner of more than a decade, guitarist Paulinho Garcia.

Hailed by music critics as "one of the hottest jazz talents," the Polish-born singer, composer, and arranger has built an international reputation with her evocative vocals and genre-blurring style. "Auguscik and her ensemble sound like nothing else you ever heard; they are out of this world," wrote Howard Reich of the Chicago Tribune.



TICKETS ON SALE AT [JAZZSHOWCASE](#), 806 S. Plymouth Court in the Dearborn Station

## South Loop Neighbors

South Loop Neighbors is a non-profit membership based organization dedicated to enhancing the quality of life in South Loop's neighborhoods and preserving the area's landmark districts.

South Loop Neighbors represents South Loop residents who are concerned about:

- Ensuring high-quality, reasonably-sized real estate development as well as infrastructure improvements that respect the unique character of our community
- Preserving and protecting the area's Landmark Districts, including Printing House Row and Historic Michigan Boulevard
- Promoting quality education, recreation, services, retail, community activities, and events
- Maintaining a socially, culturally, and economically diverse neighborhood
- Developing strong relationships with key city officials to ensure they respect, hear, and act on the concerns and ideas of the South Loop community. South Loop Neighbors serves members and residents within the area bounded by Congress Parkway to approximately 25th Street and from the Chicago River to Lake Michigan. S. Clark Street, 5th Floor, CPS Central Administration Building



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Artist Rendering of the suspect from the South Loop attack at 14th and Clark on January 16th The woman was sexually attacked outside her house as she arrived home. The perpetrator then entered the house and demanded money from the husband at gunpoint.



The attacker is described as black, between the ages of 30 and 33, between 5-foot-6 and 5-foot-8 and weighing between 165 and 185 pounds. The man had black hair, brown eyes and a medium complexion. He was wearing a black ski

## THE DEARBORN EXPRESS

This publication is sponsored by the South Loop Referral Group, a professional and business networking group. It is our mission to provide the Printers Row area with current news and to promote local businesses and organizations. This publication will be distributed through email to individuals who wish to receive it. It is our hope that we will be able to expand our features and publish twice a month by April. If you have any questions or would like to contribute information for news or to our bulletin board, please email us at : Al Hippensteel, editor

[thedearbornexpress@gmail.com](mailto:thedearbornexpress@gmail.com)

# Loopy Yarns



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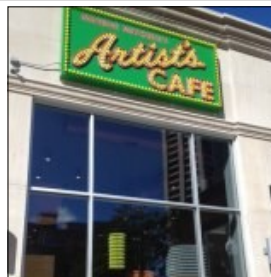
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# South Loop Referral Group

meets every other Friday at 7:30 am  
at Dearborn Station Atrium

South Loop Referral Group is a professional organization, made up of individuals with a high level of skill and passion for serving their community. The members all live and work in the south loop area; which means they are well known locally with many resources and testimonials. A referral groups goal is to have only one representative from each category. The quality of their work and the care they provide makes them truly unique, and whether you are looking for a printer, a banker or a contractor, you can be sure whomever you hire from our group, will be attentive, on time, and competitively priced.

The group also serves as a rainmaker, encouraging local business development and supporting a thriving professional community in Chicago's South Loop neighborhood through motivation, communication, and education.

## Alliance for a Greener South Loop Annouces this Years Winners

Congratulations and Thank You to each and every one of our award winners for their contributions to a greener South Loop. This year, for the first time, we have pictures from the event posted on our Facebook page: Alliance-for-a-Greener-South-Loop. Check em out!

- **Institutions:**

- Greenest: **Roosevelt University**, 425 S. Wabash
- Greener: **Old St. Mary's School**, 1474 S. Michigan
- 

- **Businesses:** Stop by these businesses to share your congratulations and show your support of greener practices that make a difference!

- Greenest: **Overflow Coffee Bar**, 1550 S. State St.
- Greener: **Urban Re-mix**, 1468 S. Michigan
- Green: **Well Future Pharmacy**, 1442 S. Michigan
- 

- **Buildings:**

- Greenest: **Dearborn Tower Condominium Association**, 1530 S. Dearborn St.
- Greener: **State Place Condominium Association**, 1101 S. State St.
- Green: **Transportation Building Condominium Association**, 600 S. Dearborn St. 2012
- 

- **Green Heroes:**

- **Alex Borgen** (graduate student, Columbia College Chicago)
- **Maria Lawrence** (director, South Loop Early Childhood Center)
- 



The Alliance for a Greener South Loop works to make the South Loop a greener place to live, work, and play. South Loop individuals, businesses, buildings, institutions, and city agencies work together so that we all "tread more lightly."

# OPINION

## THE BEDDING EXPERTS, Dreams not exactly coming true.

Ever since the cleaners across the street from my house at Roosevelt and State [closed its doors in the summer of 2011](#), I had hoped for a really interesting little business to take its place. It was always so sad to see the empty glassed-in store.

Recently, brown paper went up on the windows and I thought happy days would be here again. When the paper came down, the place was all open and clean and ready for something neat, I thought. One friend posted on my Facebook page that she thought it was going to be a yogurt store called [Forever Yogurt](#).

That sounded sort of interesting. I love all that newfangled yogurt everyone's serving these days with probiotics and fresh fruit and chocolate and all.

But suddenly fluorescent lights went on and white cardboard signs went up that said "Bedding Experts." And the place got filled up with all kinds of beds, dressed in all kinds of bedding.

So that's my new neighbor, [The Bedding Experts](#). I'm not exactly sure what to make of this development. It's kind of icky. It won't attract bad people. Or create trash or smells or anything. It won't be open late and make noise. It's just going to be all lit up selling all kinds of beds. An odd business for that little place at Roosevelt and State. It's a little perplexing. And a little discomfiting. And not too interesting. Unless you need a new bed--and how often does that happen?

But a place that serves yogurt--where you can go in a few times a week and choose a size, a flavor and a fruit or a nut. That's interesting!

*Bonnie McGrath* Visit my blog: <http://www.chicagonow.com/mom-think-poignant>



## *New Building at State and 9th gets Fioretti's Support*

Ald. Fioretti might want to know how his positive stance on the 40-story tower proposed for 9th and State Streets has further estranged him from his constituents in Dearborn Park who have previously requested that he curtail out-of-control development in the South Loop.

Thanks for ignoring our comments, Mr. Fioretti, Why are height restrictions on developments OK for the Near West side, where you reside, but not for the Near South Side where we live?

And, by the way, I just saw an article about how the city of Toronto, Canada, has a building race to the sky, resulting in massive traffic jams, no sunlight reaching the sidewalk, changing the livable aspects of the city. I used to hear Chicago visitors compliment the city on the greenness and the light--guess our aldermen are more interested in their own financial development than in their constituents quality of life. Unfortunately, it is we the neighbors who suffer the consequences of unbridled development.

Thanks again, Alderman Fioretti.

[Miriam Scott](#)

# NEWCITY

... Covering Chicago from a Printers Row vantage for twenty-seven years"

## [The Players 2013: The 50 People Who Really Perform in Chicago](#)



### 31 Onye Ozuzu

#### Chair, Department of Dance, Columbia College

Academic appointments rarely create much of a stir, but Columbia College's recent well-publicized budget upheavals, which have precipitated the downsizing or demise of some longstanding public-facing cultural entities, has made this appointment far more noteworthy than might otherwise be expected. For Ozuzu's domain includes the vital arts presenter The Dance Center of Columbia College which, under the fifteen-year leadership of executive director Phil Reynolds, has become one of the nation's strongest proponents of challenging contemporary dance. Ozuzu, who came to Chicago via a similar position at the University of Colorado, is also an accomplished performer and choreographer, specializing in African-based contemporary techniques, a field likely to generate tremendous interest in these parts.

visit [NewcityStage.com](http://NewcityStage.com) to see who the other forty-nine Players are.

## School Proposals

A proposal to build a \$90 million "Central City High School" has been proposed by "Connecting4Communities" to serve students in the neighborhood. Although several alderman are interested in the proposal, Ald. Bob Fioretti believes that the old Jones College Prep should be turned into a high school. Since the proposal, the Mayor and CPS announced that the old Jones High School will not be torn down but used to expand the capacity of the new Jones College Prep. Also, a proposal has been made for a private school to be built behind the Roosevelt Collection by Lincoln Park based British School. See more info at [www.dnainfo.com/Chicago](http://www.dnainfo.com/Chicago).



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# A Neighborhood Reminiscent of a Printer's Past

BY MAXWELL ULRICH

December 10, 2012

CHICAGO – The diversity of Chicago is best represented through the multitude of neighborhoods that serve as outlets for culture. Printer's Row is an area with a rich history and a unique tight knit community unlike any other.

"Its very art historical around here", said **Susan Rice**, 66, art teacher at Whitney Young high school and resident of Printer's Row of 12 years. "I think [the neighborhood provides] an atmosphere of being connected, caring about each other and the old buildings."

Rice continued to speak about efforts residents have made to preserve the neighborhood, such as putting a pocket park on Dearborn Street.

Upon becoming a resident, Rice noticed the kind manner of the other inhabitants in the neighborhood. "If it took me longer than average to walk the dog, it's because people were stopping and talking to me," said Rice. The pooch population is high in Printer's Row, as dog walkers never seem to escape from view.

Printer's Row is a small neighborhood in Chicago's south Loop. The area is between Clark Street and State Street to the west and east, and Congress Parkway and Polk Street to the north and south. What Printer's Row lacks in size, it makes up for in charm.

Walking south down Dearborn Street offers the view of the iconic clock tower of Dearborn Station, Chicago's oldest existing train station. The dial serves as a reminder to how transportation once defined the neighborhood.

Printer's Row used to be the front door of Chicago for passengers travelling by train to the city until Dearborn station closed in 1971. According to southloophistory.org, "In 1899, the station was host to 25 railroad lines, 122 trains, and approximately 17,000 passengers per day."

"All development follows transportation," said **Jeffery Thomas**, 36 year Owner of **Blackie's bar**, family owned since 1939. Located on the corner of Clark and Polk, Thomas has been around the bar since 1959, when he was 4 years old playing in the intersection. "I



caught my first spanking when me and my cousin Frankie got caught throwing pebbles at the street cars that drove by," said Thomas.

**Blackie's** is a bar that has gained a notable reputation as a celebrity hotspot, resulting from the proximity to Dearborn station.

"In 1939, when my grandfather and great grandfather opened, this was a huge Hollywood hangout," said Thomas. He explained how celebrities such as Frank Sinatra, the Three Stooges, and Elizabeth Taylor were all patrons to Blackie's.

"Dearborn Street Station was the connection to Los Angeles, if you were a star coming to Chicago, the most prestigious way to get here was on the Sante Fe Super Chief," said Thomas.

Large printing businesses flooded the neighborhood as transportation flourished. "The printers came into this area because they were close to the train track, to move paper product in and out," said **Jerry Bieszk**, 65, leasing agent at Castle Keepers Realty at 729 south Dearborn Street.

Resident of Printer's Row for just over two years, **Bieszk** attested to the variety of people interested in living in Printer's Row. "We've got anywhere from young [people] trying to rent, all the way up to senior citizens who dumped the place out in the suburbs...coming here wanting to rent a loft," said **Bieszk**.

Loft spaces in Printer's Row have been created through the conversion of the old printing buildings into residential space in the 1970's. Edifices such as the Donahue and Franklin building are adorned with floor to ceiling windows, and a distinct reddish brown color of the original brick used to construct the buildings.

"The reason for such tall windows in the buildings was to give light [for] work on the printing presses," said Bieszk. He shared a story of how he still had the remnants of an old footing to a printing press in his apartment.

Looking for more space, the printing companies exported their business to the suburbs in the 1960's, leaving the buildings vacant.

As Printer's Row was converted into a residential area, businesses started to notice the potential of the neighborhood.

Located in the Rowe Building, Sandmeyer's Bookstore is the last literary stronghold remaining in the neighborhood that was once widely known for the publishing industry.

"[Printer's Row] is a very supportive community," said **Ellen Sandmeyer**, 61, co-owner of **Sandmeyer's bookstore**. Sandmeyer opened the bookstore with her husband in May of 1982.

She explained how upon moving in, a large majority of the business space was unoccupied. "My husband could tell this was a neighborhood that would eventually be a good one, so we opened here very early on in the renaissance of the neighborhood," said Sandmeyer.

Simply stepping into **Sandmeyer's** is a rich experience, as the floor creaks with every step, testifying to the history of the building. The bookstore offers a multitude of manuscripts, able to satisfy a wide variety of readers. "We love books, and we love that we can talk about books with people that come in," said Sandmeyer.

The independently owned **Sandmeyer's** is active in the community through cooperating with programs such as book drives like Bread for the Head. According to Sandmeyer, "[The book drive] brings free books to kids in some really depressed neighborhoods."

Various patrons commonly express their love for the mom and pop bookstore. Sandmeyer described how the community came together to celebrate the bookstore's 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary by having a party at a local club called the **Jazz Showcase**. "It made us realize how many people do feel connected to the bookstore, and we certainly feel connected to them," said Sandmeyer.

Although being involved in the community for over 30 years, Sandmeyer has only just moved to the neighborhood with her husband. They have been residents for a year.

After the printing business moved out of the neighborhood, Printer's Row suffered. Although a residential initiative was being implemented, businesses were not moving into the area and many of the historic buildings served no use.

"This was an area of ill repute years ago," said **Roy Svenson**, 66, Vice President and Branch Manager of Chicago Community Bank in Dearborn Station. "There wasn't enough people down here early on to support anything," said Svenson.

Organizations have focused on improving Printer's Row through community effort. "There is an amazing number of talented people, willing to devote time to better and build the community," said Svenson.

Grace Place, the Episcopal Church located on 637 south Dearborn Street, focuses on enhancing the lives of those less fortunate in Printer's Row.

"We worship, we educate ourselves about what faith is, and then we try to enact that in the world," said **Reverend Edward W. Curtis**, Rector of Grace Place. "Enacting [faith] means reaching out to the last, the lost, and the least."

Curtis has been involved with Grace Place, and has resided in the neighborhood for the past 21 years. He explained how upon his arrival, Printer's Row was unrecognizable.

"There were holes in the sidewalk that you could fall into...and there were a lot of homeless folks here," said Curtis.



*Sandmeyer's Bookstore*

*Photo Credit: Maxwell Ulrich*



Grace Place works in conjunction with Chicago's Methodist Temple to offer relief on a weekly basis for those who are struggling. "We have this breakfast every Saturday morning for about 200 homeless people," said Curtis. "It takes 20 to 30 volunteers 52 weeks a year, it's a big deal."

**Grace Place** partners with other congregations and non-profits throughout the city to combat suffering. The church operates as a community center, offering space to non-profits dedicated to improving social justice within the city.

Living across the street from Grace Place for the past 21 years, Curtis has a good grasp on the community of Printer's Row. He mentioned how residents prefer to walk and use public transportation, and how college students add to the flavor of the community.

Curtis views Printer's Row apart from the hustle and bustle of the city. "Its like a village, I don't feel like I'm in Chicago unless I walk past Roosevelt or Congress," said Curtis.

Printer's Row is currently in a transitional phase, and unfortunately is struggling, as space remains vacant.

Over recent years, college students from institutions such as Roosevelt University and Columbia College have flooded the south Loop. Some believe that this creates a disjointed community, while others embrace the change.

"I think you've got to realize that this is a college neighborhood," said Svenson. "[Colleges] bring life...its fun to watch people grow." Svenson maintains that the community still faces the challenge how to coincide with the college community.

Thomas however, believes that the incursion of college students is partly responsible for plaguing business prosperity. "Before the internet hotel sites, student housing, and the removal of all of these parking lots, retailers down here were doing quite well," said Thomas. "In an environment when businesses are closing left and right, we are surviving and I'm grateful for that."

Tough times have not forced residents to give up on being warm with one another.

**Nick Donatelli**, 30, is an employee at Printer's Row Wine Shop. A former resident of Printer's Row, Donatelli shared an amusing exchange he had with a neighbor.

One afternoon, Donatelli was reading a book on a bench outside of his home. His neighbor interrupted him, and asked if

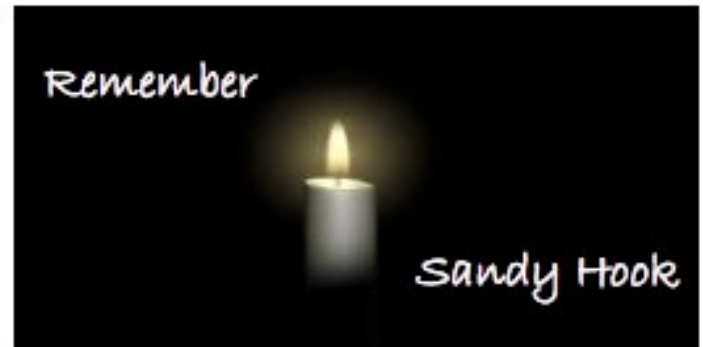
he wanted a beer.

Originally from New York, the gesture caught Donatelli by surprise. "I didn't mean to, but I totally stunk faced him," said Donatelli. "I was so unaccustomed to that kind of genuine hospitality amongst neighbors."

**Donatelli's** encounter illustrates the positive outlook of the members of Printer's Row. Buildings of the neighborhood boast an eventful past, but they're hardly the only allure of the area. Printer's Row is no stranger to change; one can only guess the next transition as the small neighborhood strives to become more prosperous. No matter what happens, one thing is for sure. The community will remain.

For this story and more, check out my blog at:

[maxwelljournal.wordpress.com](http://maxwelljournal.wordpress.com)



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Next issue is in March