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The West Ender

By and for the West End Neighborhood

December 2005

Ann Listokin on West End Birds

Chimney Swifts
Chaetura pelagica



The West End is prime real estate for chimney swifts and they love living here. It abounds in their favorite structure – chimneys – their preferred nesting spot. Otherwise, these smallish black birds live in the air: eating insects, bathing, and even mating on the wing. They resemble bats in their fluttering flight, and are often called “flying cigars.” When summer is over, they collect for migration, and that is when a truly stupendous phenomenon occurs. West End birds plus migrators chose an industrial downtown chimney each year as their collection point. This fall it was the eleven-story chimney of Stevens Center. At sunset they gather in that area, their voices twittering and jingling like little bells. This last September the Audubon Society estimated birds at the Stevens Center roost at an incredible 3,600. The swifts wheel around the chimney in huge arcs, sometimes an enormous ellipse, sometimes a circle. After about fifteen minutes, one or two, or three or four, leave the formation and drop down into the chimney. Then some more will leave the formation and drop down in. As the sky darkens, more and more leave the flying mass and disappear, until many are plunging down the chimney. At a certain mysterious point, the twittering calls stop, there are no more swifts in the sky, and the thousands of swifts are all inside the chimney. What I wouldn't give to look down that chimney with a flashlight. We witnesses of this phenomenon are silent, with a stunned feeling that we have seen an incredible aspect of Nature and the enormous power of instinctive behavior.


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 May you and yours have a joyous and meaningful holiday season!

Your West Ender staff
 This month we meet on the first Tuesday of the month at 7pm at the *The Cicero Tise House*
 952 West Fourth Street
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 336.462.0850

- In this Issue:**
- November Meeting Minutes
 - President's Message
 - HRC Schedule for December
 - News to Note
 - Listokin on West End Birds: what may be in the chimney when it's not Santa...
 - St. Paul's Parking Improvements

President Steve Joiner opened the meeting at 7:00 pm asking for new members. Chris Fink, a neighbor, introduced himself and stated that this was his first meeting although he had been a member for a while.

Treasurer Jack Campbell then gave his report. It seems that the cost of the ARTSfest was \$1,500. Kathleen Ramich, one of the founders of ARTSfest, then spoke about how successful this year's ARTSfest was to the artists, the community and particularly to the West End Association. Steve Joiner concurred, then added how successful the ARTSfest was for the community and more specifically the music groups who had so graciously donated their time and effort and had been rewarded with new business connections from the ARTSfest.

The Historic Resources Commission report was asked for and Jack Smith commented that additional work on the Augsburg churches' annex building on Broad Street had been brought up at the last HRC meeting. The HRC did not approve the request for the addition of new aluminum windows and asked the Augsburg organization to come up with alternatives that would be more historically correct for the building and the neighborhood.

The HRC draft on the new West End Overlay District is ready. George Bryan had a copy of the 131-page draft. He mentioned that it is available online by going to www.cityofws.org and clicking on the Planning Department, then clicking on the HRC internet link, and finally clicking on the Draft Overlay Guidelines. Questions were asked about availability of the draft as well as the need for a summary of the differences from the current edition that exists. It was stressed that the differences are important to make. It was pointed out also that the new draft would need a table of contents.

Sue Hutson announced that the next meeting for the Western Crime Initiative would be held on November 14th at the Medical Center. This includes the West End, Holly Avenue, the Medical Center, and Old Salem, among others. While on the topic of crime, George Bryan and Steve Joiner mentioned that the peeping tom was caught. It was also stated that there are no new campers in Grace Court. It was also stated that a suspect had been apprehended in regards to recent rape cases in Winston-Salem. There apparently has been some DNA confirmation as to his identity. *(story continued on page three)*

St. Paul's beautifies parking
 St. Paul's has really beautified the neighborhood with their newest change. The Education and Administration area was well done and classy inside and out. As part of that, Catherine Hendren led the effort to rebuild and landscape the parking lot. Many will remember the view as visitors came down 5th Street - chain link fences, parking spaces divided by a highway railing and asphalt. Go by and take a look at the improvements - no fence, trees and shrubs, and terraced spaces. Thank you, St. Paul's, for your continued partnership with your West End neighbors. – *George Bryan*



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President's Column

Home! Land! Security! We All Have a Neighborhood Role

Recently, unfortunately, we had a rash of car break-ins and even some attempted home break-ins. When it happens on your street you sure take notice but you really need to do a bit more than that - you need to take action, that is, report the crime! These folks did, but that's not always true. If you don't report the crime you can't complain much about the responsiveness of the police. When things get reported, crime stops, moves on, or at least subsides somewhat, which is perhaps all we can hope for in an urban community such as ours. Yes, we may have to live with it but we shouldn't have to feel it's a price we simply must pay for our proximity to downtown. There may not be remedies but there sure are preventative measures that can be taken to ease the pain. *Never* take for granted that a suspicious character doing surreptitious things has already been reported – how would you like it if some watchful neighbor assumed that stranger lurking in your backyard is there with your permission? It's a lot better to err on the side of caution. Several of the police officers that patrol our streets have told me over and over again, "when in doubt, call it in." They say they'll gladly take a dozen redundant calls rather than have to take someone's statement after a break-in. It never ceases to amaze me that people just fail to report, thinking "there's no use, they'll never catch them, that bicycle is gone for good". Well, if that's what you think, think again, perhaps they *will* find the culprit, but more importantly your civic duty is to report, thus alerting the authorities that there's a bad actor out there. Often knowing the "MO," the *modus operandi* of a burglar working the area, is what leads to that person's apprehension, for criminal types tend to repeat their crimes pretty much the same way (imaginative and intelligent they are not - after all, they're bad guys!) and such patterns can be used against them. I personally know two of my neighbors that had substantial thefts from their property and never reported those larcenies. And, as if to reinforce my point, one of those folks had the same thing done to them again a few weeks later! The second time the miscreant managed to hit another neighbor as well, imagine that! Folks, we need to be ever vigilant, but not vigilantes. And for gosh sakes, if you arrive at your home and see the door has been broken in don't go in, back up and call the police. Your family will appreciate your lack of heroism and your community might just have a chance to head off that next B&E. (that's "breaking and entering" for the non -*Law and Order* watching crowd) Yes, it's your *home* but this West End *land* we all enjoy, and we all want all the *security* we can get. Let's be careful out there – and keep a watchful eye! – *Steve Joiner, WEA President*

DID you know?
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This Month at the HRC
Historic Resources Commission,
Wednesday, Dec. 7, 2005 at 4:00 P.M.; City Hall South Public Meeting Room, Room 530;
100 East First Street, Winston-Salem

This group meets monthly to review applications for repair work and alterations in Forsyth County's local historic districts. You can always check their website at www.ForsythCountHRC.org or call them at the Planning Department at 727-2087 for the latest information or for questions about your property.

COA Applications: Kirt A. Watkins, Applicant; (former) Ligon Electric Warehouse, 930 West Fourth Street (Inventory #156). Request: Installation of Signage. Case#: W014-05

WEA November Meeting Minutes (cont.)

YMCA expansion plans: it appears that the YMCA is going forward with their expansion plans. They are checking for developers who could develop the land on the corner. It seems that a mutually beneficial dialogue has developed between the YMCA and Steve Joiner and the West End Association.

Steve Joiner then brought up the homes tour of 2006. He said we need two or three volunteer co-chairs in place by January at the latest as it takes a great deal of planning and work.

One resident brought up the topic of speeding cars on the 600 block of Spring Street. He asked if there is anything the WEA could do to help them out. Steve pointed out there are other streets with the same problem and that further study must be done on this subject in the near future.

Lastly, Jeff Smith apologized that tonight's scheduled speaker could not make it for the meeting. He said he would be available for our December meeting. Steve said that would fit in with our schedule and would not be a problem.

The meeting was adjourned shortly after 8:30 pm. - *Jack Smith, Acting WEA Secretary*

News to Note:

- Congrats to former WEA President **Wanda Merschel**, who was re-elected November 8 to the Winston-Salem City Council representing the Northwest Ward and West End.
- **West End Art Gallery** celebrates its First Anniversary in December with a Holiday Exhibit featuring new work by artists in jewelry, ornaments, ceramics, paintings, photography, and sculpture. **An opening reception** will be held Saturday, **December 3, 2005, from 5:30 - 8:30 pm** with a live performance by local band Rain Check! and special guest musician, Grammy Award Nominee, Craig Smith. Cocktail attire is optional. The exhibit will be on display through January 7, 2006.

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