

What's on tap for entertainment at 23rd Annual Home and Business Show

Friday, Feb. 22

Friday Evening:

Appearances by Garfield.

Saturday, Feb. 23

10 a.m. to 3 p.m.: Bristol Lions Club – Screening for Glaucoma & Diabetes Related Eye Disease.

11 a.m. to 4 p.m.: Elizabeth Garand – author Elizabeth's Healthy Home

Cooking.

10 a.m. to 6 p.m.: Cortlandt Hull, Classic Sketches

1 to 4 p.m.: Ken Ferris, Search for the Stars – Auditorium

1 to 3 p.m. New York Giants Michael Jennings.

11 a.m., 12 Noon, 3 p.m.: Sami the Robot.

11 a.m. – 2 p.m.,

Appearances by Garfield.

Saturday afternoon: Rocky the New Britain Rock Cats Mascot.

Sunday, Feb. 24

MAGICAL SUNDAY AFTERNOON AT THE HOME AND BUSINESS SHOW

The Leone brothers, Tony and Roland James, are

reunited on stage for a two hour magical extravaganza. Both brothers have performed at night clubs and other venues throughout the world.

10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.: Old Tyme Fiddlers Club

10 a.m. to 3 p.m.: Bristol Lions Club Screening for

Glaucoma & Diabetes Related Eye Diseases.

10 a.m. to 4 p.m.: Cortlandt Hull, Cartoon Classic Sketches.

11 a.m., 12 Noon, 2 p.m.: Sami the Robot.

Noon - 1 p.m.: Farmer Minor and Daisy the Pig

1 - 3 p.m. Tony & Sherry Leone aka "The Great

Leones" Magic Show AND Roland James (Leone) & His Amazing Birds of Paradise, Auditorium.

Sunday afternoon: Rocky the New Britain Rock Cats Mascot – Sponsored by the New Britain Rock Cats

Sunday afternoon: Sonar the Hartford Wolf Pack Mascot.

West End: Demographic changes inspires commission of study

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form the study. The study will be performed under the direction of the Planning Commission.

City Planner Alan Weiner said the study is driven by the city's need to get a better understanding of the issues facing the west end, and the changes that the neighborhood has undergone over recent years.

"Clearly, the demographics of the neighborhood have changed in the last ten years or so," Weiner said.

The area has seen the aging of its housing stock with a large portion of the homes over 70 years old, and limited business investment over recent years,

Weiner said.

A number of changes are also facing the area, with the potential for a new school in the area and the closing of O'Connell Elementary School. The city is also currently investing millions of dollars for renovations to Rockwell Park.

"There are a number of things that have happened and are happening in the west end now," Weiner said.

City Councilor Kevin McCauley, whose district encompasses the west end, said the neighborhood has undergone considerable social and economic change over recent years. He said buildings in the neighborhood, both commercial and residential, are deteriorating and affecting quality of life issues.

McCauley said that by

“There are a number of things that have happened and are happening in the west end now.”

”

Alan Weiner,
city planner

tying together all the issues, including pedestrian and vehicular traffic along Route 72 and beautifying the area, is important to accommodate and prepare for the

future growth of west end.

McCauley said the study will give a broad view for the potential of the west end. "We can highlight the positive and try to work on the negative," he said.

Weiner said the intent of the study is to give the city a better handle on what needs to be done to stabilize and strengthen the west end. "You just can't let neighborhoods like this go on declining," he said.

The study is expected to take between 12 and 15 months.

Elizabeth Grossman, chief executive officer for The Capstan Group, said the group will collect and analyze data on the neighborhood, talk with anyone involved or interested in the neighborhood, then formulate a practical plan for what needs to be

done to ensure the stability of the west end.

"It's a really important neighborhood in Bristol," Grossman said.

Weiner said engaging the public, especially residents, property owners and business owners of the west end, is crucial to the success of the study. "All points of view are welcome," said Weiner.

Weiner said it's important to receive information from the public about the neighborhood to differentiate between the reality and the perception of the neighborhood.

Weiner said, within the coming weeks, the city will begin to host public meetings about the west end study to gather public input and hope to form an advisory group of individuals with

a vested interest in the neighborhood.

As the public meetings continue, Weiner said the officials will try to define a vision of what people want to see happen in the west end.

For more information or to get involved in the study contact the Bristol Land Use at (860) 584-6225 or The Capstan Group at (203) 785-0130. Individuals can also visit The Capstan Group's website, www.cpstn.com, and click on the West End Study link to follow progress of the study or to submit comments.

Comments? Email egugliotti@BristolObserver.com.

Energy: City explores lower cost alternatives

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McCoy said the company can install solar panels on the roofs of buildings or create fields of solar panels for energy production, which can be used along side electrical energy.

Among the benefits of solar energy, McCoy explained, is a reduction in peak usage.

McCoy said peak usage of electricity, which is usually between late spring and early summer, sets the billing rate. He said solar energy's peak runs around

the same time has electricity's peak— lowering electricity usage, which in turn lowering the bill rate.

McCoy said the only costs associated with solar energy is initial installation of the panels. Depending on the size of the job, he said installation can range in costs from tens of thousands of dollars to millions of dollars.

"I applaud the mayor on taking the first step," said City Councilor Craig Minor.

While looking into alternative energies, Minor said the city should be tak-

ing a broader approach to energy conservation. He said the city could join in with the 20 percent by 2010 program, an incentive-based program for residents to conserve energy. He suggested the city could run an energy audit on the buildings it owns, or could offer tax abatements for residents who drive hybrid vehicles.

Minor said the city also could form a clean energy task force with volunteers to further explore the issue. "These are the type of discussions we should be having," he said.

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