

Sharon,

Eugene Britt came by today to sign a copy of his picture. Danielle wants to have the picture installed at IMC. We talked for quite some time. He is the sort person who could and would like to get involved in any literacy event that might be possible on the north end. Like most black citizen he tends to be a little cynical about what might be possible but he knows the territory and the players. He is somewhat computer literate.

We jointly know many of the players. He says there are activists who are not necessarily associated with the churches who are indeed functionally active.

Eugene is aware that WEFT has a strong biblical and activist and gospel program Sunday morning but he says that the north end radio station that Vern Barkstall and two others put together before Vern passed is listened to during the day quite a bit and not just for music or gospel. He thinks the station could be encouraged. The rumor has been that the station hasn't been doing very well but that might just be on traditional terms.

WEFT was more talk oriented before it went "conservative" and "stripped" the musical genres, Jazz, Folk, Blue Grass, etc across the weekday broadcast spectrum in recognizable bands. At that time the local talk programs were shifted to the week end which has not been good for some of us because the week-end is often when activists should be out and about. It also eliminates church people as an audience on Sunday. The strip theory is that listeners will listen if they know when they can switch onto their style of music.

There has always been a little friction at WEFT because some people believe that WEFT was set up to be a community action station rather than an alternative music station. WEFT does well with its music and it does inject many community action programs into those strips but there are other WEFT watchers who see a different mission. Some of the debate has to do raising money and who will support what.

Eugene was saying that the North end station has not been stripped and that the station is more flexible and more available for open community discussion at any time. He thinks that radio station could be used more extensively for many topics.

I am not sure you want to know all this but I was listening because despite the out migration, the Boneyard Big Dig, the Section 8 in migration in from Chicago and Latino involvement, there is still an active body of north end citizens who care about things like the internet, pollution and police activities.

The latinos have risen through the mass of poverty and they have apparently moved out mostly to Shadow-wood on North Market.

There is a new school going up on Washington. I am not sure what that means

Preston Jackson (Black Sculptor) a retired School of the Art Institute Sculpture Dpt Head has been exhibiting at the Cinema Gallery. He also has a 15 ft sculptured piece permanently installed outside the Douglas Center Library. I didn't see too many black citizens at the gallery and I was there several times because I thought Jackson's portrayal

of black history was rather interesting.

MCI did a spread about the Douglas Center piece last year in the Public I. I gave Eugene a copy of that

I had Preston on the air by land line on WEFT in an attempt to advertize his presence and that was ok . But it was winter and spring break and post Xmas.

I thought the art pieces should get an airing at the Douglas center so I took detailed photos of the exhibit which I felt might be made a available at the Douglas Center library.

I haven't done that yet but that is the sort of thing that Eugene might be interested in helping with. He is employed by IDOT (the Illinois Dpt of Transportation) in summer but is off till spring arrives. To put an exhibit together might be too costly but I have the photos.

Eugene was interested in the mural report. He had obtained a copy or you sent him one. He also thinks that some record of the mural should be lodged or hung somewhere. Especially now there are twelve outdoor sculptured pieces dotted round down town Champaign.

If you happen to bump into an opportunity for the north end to pull themselves up by the boot straps I would enjoy investigating the possibilities. They do seem to have a tough time surviving. Eugene enlightened me about another real life situation that leaves one scratching one's head.

Saw you at the architecture lecture tonight but I left promptly because I was in my coveralls and not attired to meet with well dressed and dignified citizens. I have also been shoveling enough snow and ice to be rather tired.

Thanks for listening and thanks for being concerned.

david