

**Approximate boundaries:**

**N**-N. Pleasant St; **S**-W. McKinley Ave;  
**E**-Milwaukee River; **W**-Dr. M.L.K. Dr

# NORTH SIDE *Schlitz Park*

## NEIGHBORHOOD DESCRIPTION

Schlitz Park is not a residential neighborhood. Many of the buildings of the former Schlitz Brewery have been transformed into offices for corporations and businesses. Intermingled with the old cream city brick buildings are a few modern office buildings.

Most of the streets are on a rectangular grid, but a few streets are at a diagonal following the bend of the Milwaukee River. There is little if any green space in the neighborhood.

## HISTORY

The Schlitz Park neighborhood was named after the Joseph Schlitz Brewing Company that once occupied the entire area.

### Early populations

The earliest population of today's Schlitz Park included interconnected brewing families that played major roles in the development of the Joseph Schlitz Brewing Company and other Milwaukee breweries.

The first brewery in the Schlitz Park neighborhood was founded by August Krug in 1848. Born Georg August Krug in Bavaria to parents Georg Anton Krug and Anna Maria Ludwig, Krug married Anna Maria Wiesmann Hartig. The couple immigrated to the United States and settled in Milwaukee where they established the brewery in today's Schlitz Park neighborhood. The couple had no children.

Working as a bookkeeper for Krug's brewery was Joseph Schlitz, another German immigrant. When August Krug died in 1858, he left his entire fortune to his wife, Anna Maria. With no heirs, the management of the brewery fell upon Joseph Schlitz, who had risen in status within the company. Two years after assuming management, he married Krug's widow, Anna Maria. With the marriage, Schlitz became co-owner of the brewery and renamed it the Joseph Schlitz Brewery. He expanded the brewery's market when he donated hundreds of barrels of beer to Chicagoans following the Great Chicago Fire of 1871, and was able to establish a Chicago distribution point to replace all the lost burnt breweries.

But Joseph and Anna Maria Schlitz also had no children. Enter August Uihlein, the nephew of deceased August Krug. August and his brother Henry Uihlein were born in Baden, Germany and were sons of Krug's sister. In 1850 when August Krug was still alive, Uihlein's grandfather, Georg Krug, took his oldest grandson August on a trip to the United States where he could visit the brewery of his son. On the trip their ship caught fire. Krug and Uihlein managed to hold on to a wooden box until saved by American sailors. Uihlein remained behind in the United States, attending the German English Academy and St. Louis University, where he also took up employment in a St. Louis brewery. He later returned to Milwaukee and went to work for the firm that was then renamed the Joseph Schlitz Brewery.

When Joseph Schlitz died in 1875, Uihlein and his brother became owners of the corporation. August was most involved in management. Under him, the brewery—now back in the Krug family--



Today's neighborhood-  
Buildings on Galena & 3rd St.

continued to expand. Upon his death, his sons Erwin, Joseph, and Robert, assumed ownership. One of his daughters, Ida Uihlein, married Frederick Pabst, who later became president and chairman of the board of the Pabst Brewing Company, linking two of Milwaukee's most prominent brewing families.

Under the Uihleins, the Schlitz Brewing Company flourished for a century. By 1902, Schlitz surpassed Pabst as the largest brewery in the United States. It again rose to number one following the end of Prohibition. Into the 1970s Schlitz and Anheuser-Busch competed for the top brewery spot in America.

During these years, the street that bordered the Schlitz complex also flourished.

### *North 3rd Street*

North 3rd (today's Dr. Martin Luther King Drive) is on the western border of the Schlitz Park neighborhood and eastern border of the Haymarket neighborhood. The list of businesses in 1956 are between McKinley Boulevard and Walnut Street. See summary and notes that follow.

<i>Addresses on N. 3rd St. in 1956</i>	<i>Names of businesses and organizations from Milwaukee City Directory</i>
1301	Love's Service Center Gas Station
1317	American News Company, Wisconsin News Division
1319	The Carr Organization Letter Shop Western Electric Company Jack Carr Inc. Printers Graphix Display Silk Screening E. Welnsel & Brothers Cloth Manufacturers
1321	Moser Paper Company
1325	Milwaukee Commercial Photography Company
1331	Wisconsin Pottery Company
1347	Marge & Marty's Tavern
1401	American Plumbing Supply Company
1415	American Home Masters Carpet Contractors
1417	Apartments
1419	American Plumbing Supply (show rooms)
1425	Trocadero Club Tavern
1431	Pleasant Hill Spiritual Church
1433	A.A. Vacuum Cleaner Company
1435	E. Fuchs Wholesale Hardware
1437	Gaenslen Brothers Leather Company Wholesaler
1441	W.L. Deckert Company Belting
1443	Estelle's Hide-Away Restaurant
1447	Bailey's Lounge Tavern

<i>Addresses on N. 3rd St. in 1956</i>	<i>Names of businesses and organizations from Milwaukee City Directory</i>
1449	Eubank's Used Furniture
1451	Quality Electric Service Contractors
1455	Frank & Ann's Tavern
1501-17	American Plumbing Supply Company Fourth Street Playground
1516	Joseph Schlitz Brewing Company (Malt House)
1601	Joseph Schlitz Brewing Company (city sis. office)
1627-37	David White Company Parking Lot
1655	Max's Tavern

#### **Notes from census and other public records:**

- Because census records are only publicly accessible up to 1940, not much could be found on the merchants.
- Technically, because most of the above businesses were on the west side of N. 3rd, they were in the Haymarket neighborhood. But employees at the Schlitz Brewery had easy access to them.
- There were five taverns on this short stretch of 3rd St. Some of them might have been tied houses—taverns with contracts with breweries that stipulate exclusive use of their products.
- The American News company was a magazine, newspaper, book, and comic book distribution company that spread all over the United States. In 1957, just a year after this listing, the company abruptly closed, forcing many comic book, magazine, and book publishers out of business.
- The American Plumbing Supply Company operated on N. 3rd until 1979.
- W.L. Deckert Company is now located on N. 64th St.
- The Gaenslen Brothers Leather Company had been established by two German immigrant brothers. It was then run by Herbert Gaenslen, son of Charles Gaenslen. Herbert had two sons, Michael and Dan, who later took over the business. It is today dissolved, but it stayed in business for nearly 92 years.

#### *Late 20th century in Schlitz Park*

The Joseph Schlitz Brewing Company remained a very strong corporation well into the 1970s and was a major source of Milwaukee employment. The Schlitz brand was labeled “the beer that made Milwaukee famous.”

Management and ownership of Schlitz Brewery fell briefly to August Uihlein's grandson, Robert Uihlein Jr., in the late 20th century. See his profile below.

## **Schlitz Park profile (late 20th century)**

*(Information from U.S. Census and other public records)*

### **Robert Uihlein, Jr.**

Robert Uihlein, Jr. only led the Joseph Schlitz Brewing Company for six years. But it was during his reign that the brewery began to experience decline.

Robert (b. 1916) grew up in a home on Lake Drive with as many servants as household members. He graduated from Harvard University and later from the University of Wisconsin Law School (*see his photo from the University of Wisconsin yearbook in 1940*).

Like his ancestors he had a great interest in horses, and especially in polo. He played the game and served on the board of Governors for the U.S. Polo Association for 25 years. He made Milwaukee a national polo center with two teams, the Milwaukee Polo Club which he captained and the Good Hope Farms club, which his son Robert III captained.

Before taking the reins of the Schlitz Brewery, he used his family money to sponsor the annual Fourth of July Circus Parades, and became a part owner of the Milwaukee Braves. He served on multiple boards, including Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance, First Wisconsin National Bank, Wisconsin Electric Power, and became a trustee for Marquette University and the Milwaukee Boys' Club. He served as Director of the Greater Milwaukee Committee.

Robert Jr. became president of Schlitz Brewery in 1971. In an effort to meet increasing production demands and decrease costs, he changed the brewing process for Schlitz beer. He replaced some of the malted barley with corn syrup and added a silica gel to prevent the product from forming a haze. The changes resulted in a beer that lost much of the flavor and consistency and spoiled quickly. The company also faced concerns that the artificial additive of the silica gel would have to be disclosed, hence switched to an agent called "Chill-garde" which could be filtered out at the end and hence did not have to be disclosed. However, the additive reacted badly with another ingredient, forcing the company to recall 10 million bottles of beer and costing over 1 million dollars in 1976.

The year that the brewery took all the losses, Robert Jr. developed leukemia. Despite his healthy appearance at 6'4" and 215 pounds, he died in November of 1976 at only 60 years of age. He was buried with his Uihlein ancestors at Forest Home Cemetery.



Following the debacles of the brewing formula changes, Schlitz Brewery attempted a number of ad campaigns to bring the brand back. They failed. This was followed by a crippling strike in 1981 involving close to 700 production workers. The company ultimately accepted a purchase offer by the Stroh Brewery Company in Detroit. The Schlitz Brewery complex in the Schlitz Park neighborhood was eventually abandoned.

Eventually a combination of tax increment financing and other government support transformed the old complex into a mixed-use development called Schlitz Park (which later bestowed the neighborhood its name).

## Current populations (as of 2021)

Today, Schlitz Park has no residents, but attracts thousands of residents outside the neighborhood each week. The complex today is beautiful with flexible spaces with exposed cream city brick, high ceilings, natural light, free parking, river walk access, and great views of the city. It now houses an office community, places to dine, and a fitness center.

## INTERESTING FEATURES

- **Manpower Group**, at 100 W. Manpower Place in the Schlitz complex, a world leader in innovative workforce solutions.
- **The Brown Bottle**, at 221 W. Galena in Schlitz Park, one of a number of dining options in the complex.
- **The Greater Milwaukee Foundation**, at 101 W. Pleasant in Schlitz Park, a grant making organization to Milwaukee, Waukesha, Ozaukee, and Washington counties supporting health and human services, art, education, and economic development.
- **Spectrum**, in the Schlitz complex, offering TV, internet, and voicemail access.

## RECURRING NEARBY OUTINGS (Health conditions permitting)

In the following section the website addresses have been eliminated due to technical problems with the various ways different web browsers display PDF files. Website information on these events is available through the book *Milwaukee Area Outings on the Cheap*. See below.

SKYLINE MUSIC SERIES			
When?	Where?	Description and contact info	Admission
Early Jul. thru late Aug., Tues. 5:30	Kadish Park, south of North Ave., west of Bremen St.	A great evening of music in Riverwest, topped off with one of the most dramatic views of the city.	Free

RIVERWEST SECRET GARDEN TOUR			
When?	Where?	Description and contact info	Admission
Mid Jul., Sun. 12-4pm	Garden Park, Locust and Bremen Sts.	Tour of 14 Riverwest gardens.	unk

RIVERWEST GARDENERS MARKET			
When?	Where?	Description and contact info	Admission
Mid-June-mid-Oct., Sun. 10am-3pm	2700 N. Pierce St.	Fresh produce from Wisconsin farmers, baked goods, arts, crafts.	Free

RIVERWEST ART WALK			
When?	Where?	Description and contact info	Admission
Early Oct., Sat. all day	Get tickets and maps at Art Bar (722 E. Burleigh St.), Jazz Gallery (926 E. Center St.), and Riverwest Food Co-op (733 E. Clarke St.)	A walk that features artist studios, beautiful gardens, and various sanctuaries.	unk

### LOCUST STREET FESTIVAL OF MUSIC AND ART

When?	Where?	Description and contact info	Admission
Mid Jun., Sun. 11am-8pm	Locust St. between Humboldt & Holton	Featuring six live music venues and a variety of food, artists and vendors with up to 30,000 people.	Free

### FREE FAMILY SWIM

When?	Where?	Description and contact info	Admission
Late Jun.-early Aug., Tue. & Thu. 1:05-2:15pm	Riverside H.S., 1615 E. Locust St., enter door #5; 906-4959	Swimming. Children 7 and under must be accompanied by adult. Swim caps can be purchased at site. 393-2502	Families, free

### BRONZEVILLE WEEK

When?	Where?	Description and contact info	Admission
Aug., 2 <sup>nd</sup> week	MLK Dr., between Garfield Ave. and Center St.	Cultural and arts festival, with a run/walk run, health screenings, trolley rides, arts night, poetry readings.	Free

### CENTER STREET DAYS

When?	Where?	Description and contact info	Admission
Early Aug., Sat. all day	Center St. between Humboldt Ave. & Holton St.	Music, food, arts, crafts, cart race, car show.	Free

### FREE FAMILY SWIM

When?	Where?	Description and contact info	Admission
Wed. 6:50-7:50pm	Gaenslen Elementary, 1250 E. Burleigh St., north door #4	Swimming. Children 7 and under must be accompanied by adult. Swim caps can be purchased at site. 267-5734.	Families, free

### ART BAR

When?	Where?	Description and contact info	Admission
3pm-2am	722 E. Burleigh St.	Permanent and temporary art exhibits.	Adults free

### BRADY ST. FESTIVAL

When?	Where?	Description and contact info	Admission
Late Jul., Sat. 11am-12am	Brady St.	Music, food, arts, crafts.	Free

### BRADY STREET PET PARADE

When?	Where?	Description and contact info	Admission
October	Brady St.	Brady Street Pet Parade.	Free

## FESTIVUS ON BRADY

When?	Where?	Description and contact info	Admission
Early Dec., Sat. 9:30pm-1:30am.	Brady St.	Opportunity to air grievances and participate in feats of strength to win Festivus pole, per Festivus Seinfeld episode in 1997.	Free

## WALKING TOUR—BRADY STREET

When?	Where?	Description and contact info	Admission
Late May-mid Oct. Sat.'s 1:30pm	Check website	Tour through the neighborhood on a half-mile stroll and learn about the area's Polish and Italian roots, the counter culture of the '60s and '70s and the area's recent urban renaissance.	Check website

Most of these outings are provided courtesy of MECAH Publishing. To access the book that provides nearly 600 outings—all priced under \$10—for the entire Greater Milwaukee area, go to <http://mecahmilwaukee.com/NonFiction.html>

## PHOTOS



Today's neighborhood-The view from Riverwalk Way looking west



Today's neighborhood-  
Spectrum main office



Today's neighborhood-Buildings on Galena & 3rd St.

For more information on Milwaukee neighborhoods, refer to John Gurda's *Milwaukee, City of Neighborhoods* and Jill Florence Lackey's and Rick Petrie's *Germans in Milwaukee: A neighborhood history*.



Today's neighborhood-  
Manpower Headquarters



Today's neighborhood-Cherry St & S. 2nd St.

Do you have great photos of this neighborhood? Are you a resident with an interesting quote about this neighborhood? Do you have recurring outings, additions, corrections, or general comments about this neighborhood? Please email your input to: [JFLanthropologist@currently.com](mailto:JFLanthropologist@currently.com)



[www.urban-anthropology.org](http://www.urban-anthropology.org)