

## Land Economics Weekend – Memphis, TN

The Memphis Land Economics Weekend kicked off Wednesday, April 20, 2016 with a pre-conference breakfast meeting at The Peabody Hotel. Memphis LAI/LEF's Immediate Past President, Ann King, President, Steve Guinn, President Elect Steve Rudesill, and Lambda Alpha International board members finalized plans for a LEW tour of a chapter city, which was Memphis.



### April 21, 2016 Arrival in Memphis, Tennessee

On Thursday, LAI members arrived at The Peabody Hotel in downtown Memphis. The South's Grand Hotel, known for its excellent service and southern charm, has welcomed royalty, presidents, and celebrities. The hotel's marble and brass lobby is home to Lansky's, the personal clothier to a king...Elvis that is. The Peabody Ducks leisurely float in the lobby's large, marble fountain, and what began as a duck-hunting joke is now a twice a day, red carpet event for the famous foul. LAI's, Steven Gragg was named Honorary Duck Master for a day, and during the LEW, he assisted The Peabody Hotel's Duck Master in returning the little quackers to their rooftop penthouse.



**AutoZone Ballpark and Development**





Thursday night's reception at AutoZone Park's Redbird Club, just a short walk from the Peabody Hotel, welcomed LAI members. AutoZone Park is home to the Memphis Redbirds, a Triple-A baseball team, and the upper-level suite gave LAI members a bird's-eye view of the fully-lit ballpark. Steven Gragg was honored as MVP with his name in lights on the Redbird's scoreboard. LAI members enjoyed a buffet of ballpark food, while the staff opened atrium windows for an impressive view of the stadium and downtown Memphis.



The Memphis Jones Trio rocked STAX and Sun Studio favorites, and LAI members hit the dance floor with their own version of “a whole lot of shaking going on.”



Then, Elvis' arrival stole the show as the icon's look-a-like, in a sequined jumpsuit, dark glasses, and heavy jewelry, hit a home run with LAI members. Endless selfies followed with members showing their gratitude with the irresistible, “Thank you... thank you very much.”





AutoZone Park's General Manager, Craig Unger, talked about the \$80 million development and its original non-profit status. Unger detailed a history of growing pains; the City of Memphis' 2013 purchase of the facility, and the current for-profit status, which includes St. Louis Cardinals ownership of the Redbirds team. Unger also talked about the recent \$6.5 million dollar park renovation and how revitalization around AutoZone Park prompted developers to purchase adjacent buildings, which are becoming retail, office, and residential space. Two hotels will be constructed near the park, underscoring the fast growing real-estate developments in downtown Memphis. Unger explained how AutoZone Park continues to draw crowds with game night promotions, Saturday night fireworks, and players who are fully engaged with fans and the community. Unger got some groans from LAI's Chicago members when he said that AutoZone Park is possibly better than Wrigley Field, but they conceded the moment to the general manager who is very proud of an impressive ballpark in the heart of downtown.



After Elvis left the building, LAI members were invited to join The Peabody rooftop party, where Memphis weekends begin on Thursdays. Some members explored Beale Street and local restaurants in search of that famous Memphis barbeque.

**Friday, April 22, 2016**

Friday began in The Peabody's Grand Ballroom. Chicken biscuits and hushpuppies were a new breakfast experience for some LAI members, but, "We are here to experience Memphis", enthusiasm led LAI member to sample the southern cuisine.



### **The Greenprint Project**

John Zeanah, Program Manager with Mid-South Regional Greenprint & Sustainability Plan, was the guest speaker. The 25-year Greenprint Project will connect Memphis/Shelby County to four neighboring counties and West Memphis, Arkansas with a projected completion date of 2024. It will also connect residents, businesses, and public transportation to the extensive, existing green spaces in Memphis/Shelby County. Funding is a collaboration with Urban Land Institute Memphis, DeSoto County Greenways, Shelby Farms Park Conservancy, Tennessee Parks and Greenways Foundation, Hyde Family Foundations, Wolf River Conservancy, and other private and public funding, including a \$2,619,999, HUD grant.



Each mile of the project costs an average of \$777,000. Currently, there are 50 miles of biking trails, but upon completion, there will be more than 500 miles of biking and walking trails; 200 miles of the lanes will be in the city. Ninety community meetings have resulted in 20 of the 22 communities impacted, adopting the plan. According to Zeanah, the goal is to have 80 percent of households and 80 percent of jobs within 1 mile of a green space. This will require creating small “pocket parks” that will promote local/sustainable food sources, transportation accessibility, and developing workforce projects.



Zeanah explained how the project is “making room for the rivers” with flood lockers that will hold excess runoff. Wetland preservation and elevation changes in low-lying areas, along Greenprint waterways, also control flooding and promotes construction for residential, business, and recreation near the creeks and rivers. Zeanah explained the power of Greenprint to revitalize a community as vacant lots are recovered, and affordable housing replaces blighted, abandoned houses.



### **St. Jude Children's Research Hospital**

After breakfast, Lambda Alpha International members boarded charter buses to explore Memphis multiple Memphis. The first stop was St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, famous for its treatment of childhood cancers and diseases. The pink stone and an image of a praying child are quickly recognizable, worldwide.

"Show me my way in life and I will build you a shrine."

-Danny Thomas' prayer to St. Jude Thaddeus



Danny Thomas got his answer, and in 1962, began building St. Jude Children's Hospital. A statue of St. Jude Thaddeus and a single building were the humble beginning of the current 2.5 million square feet of research, treatment, and administrative space. St. Jude's operating budget is \$2,000,000 dollars a day, but families never see a bill. Marlo Thomas, and siblings Tony and Terre, are still actively involved at St. Jude and continuing their father's legacy.



The LAI tour began in front of the ALSAC Pavilion and burial site of Danny and Rose Marie Thomas. Inside the hospital, small groups explored miles of hallways leading to wings dedicated to treatment of specific cancers. Each area is self-supporting with treatment, recovery, and therapy areas for patients. Hallways, brightly decorated with whimsical art lead to an atrium where a bust of Danny Thomas



is surrounded by photos of his little patients. International flags hang from the multi-level balconies, representing the native countries of doctors, researchers, and staff.



Restaurant style cafeterias offer food choices that range from organic vegetables and meats, to Starbucks coffee. Families of patients eat for free. St. Jude's chefs shop local farms for hormone free and organic foods that are sometimes prepared to "little patients" specifications. When one of those little patients asked if he could have macaroni and cheese like his grandmother's, the chef called grandma and got the recipe. These personal touches make cancer treatment less traumatic for every family member. Nearby, Ronald McDonald and Target Houses provide a homelike atmosphere for family members during their stays at St. Jude and also serves as a support system.

As the LAI groups were leaving, a little boy, with a beret covering his little bald head, waved to the group and said, "Bye." That moment summed up St. Jude's purpose and impact, and LAI members left the hospital asking how they could help.

### **Crosstown Project**

The next stop on the LEW tour was the 1927 Sears and Roebuck & Co. distribution center. Sears built 14 centers in the U.S., and the Memphis center included 53,000 square feet of retail space.



Five additions from 1927 to 1965 expanded the Sears complex to 1,500,000 square feet. Three atriums, spiral staircases and massive columns divided the building into three shipping areas where packages slid to lower levels through chutes. A precursor to the FedEx model, Sears offered 24-hour delivery of catalog orders from those 14 centers, and each one was wrapped, labeled, and tied with the signature Sears Knot.



In 1993, the decline in catalog orders caused the center to close, and it sat empty for 21-years. In 2010, rising interest in renewing the area prompted the formation of Crosstown Arts, a 501(c) 3. Thirty-one investors wanted to restore the Sears building, which was facing demolition. In 2012, commitments from 8 tenants for 600,000 square feet of space became the catalyst to begin renovation. A combination of tax credits, historic funding, HUD grants, and investors making donations in the hopes of one day recovering their money, made renovation possible.



Attorney, and LAI member, Richard Spore, and Attorney, Gil Uhlhorn spoke to LAI members about their involvement in the project and described the Crosstown negotiations as ...“one of the most complex business deals we have ever handled.” In 2014, four years of planning put the project in motion.



LAI members donned hardhats, orange vests and safety goggles to explore the multi-level center where 300 plus construction workers push to meet a January 2017 deadline. Most of the original, exterior windows have been replaced with energy efficient windows in the same design. The exterior bricks were completely tuck pointed, one brick at a time. The interior was gutted making way for a “Vertical Urban Village

attracting Silos of like-minded people.” An eclectic mix of tenants already committed to occupancy include, Christian Brothers University, ALSAC/St. Jude Fundraising arm, The Church Health Center, STEM High Schools, Southern School of Optometry, Methodist LeBonheur Healthcare, and University of Tennessee Health Sciences; these will join three major tenants, all who are waiting for the call to move in.





Elon Musk's brother, Kimbal Musk, has committed to opening a restaurant at Crosstown, but he is taking it one step farther. He will build 100 gardens at local high schools and buy their produce for his restaurant. Twenty-five resident artists will live rent-free and receive free meals as they decorate the interior of the building, completing the blend of art, education, and health under one roof.





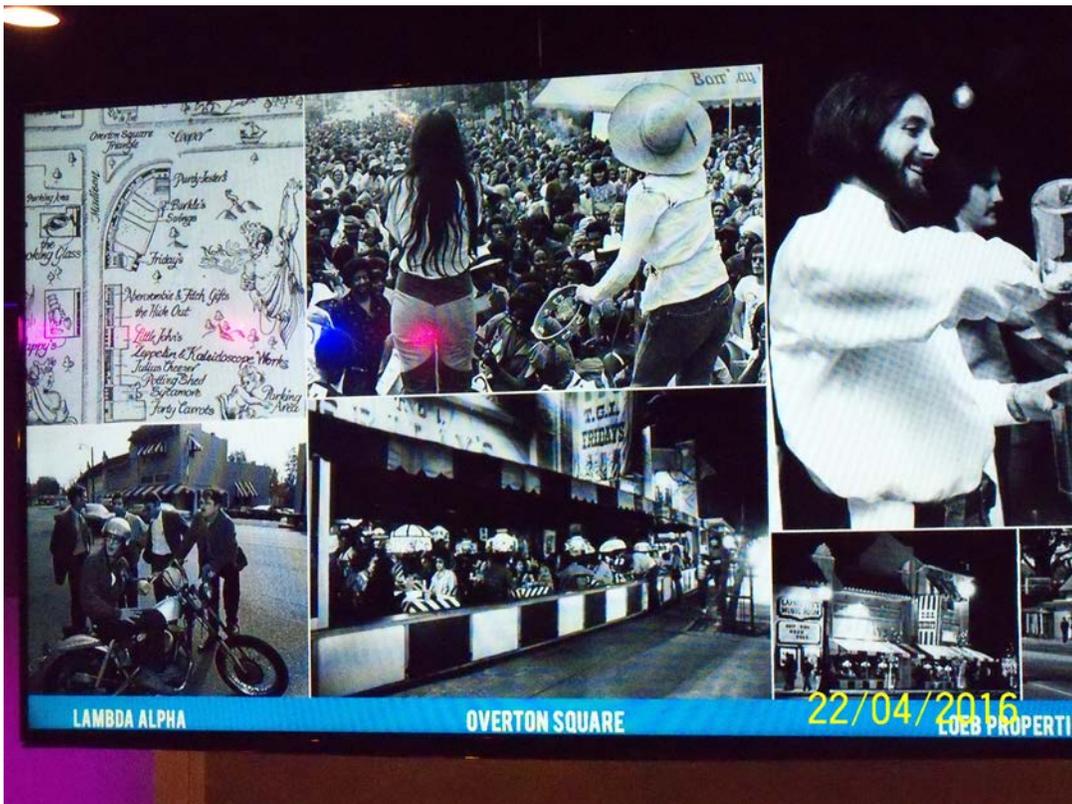
LAI member, architect and engineer, Tony Bologna explained how layers of apartments will be built facing the interior atriums, and of the 250 available, only 105 are left. The vertical, urban village will include a juice bar, bakery, farmers market, roof-top gardens, and a 1,280 capacity parking garage. All of this innovation is taking place in one of the most impoverished areas of Memphis. The plan is to revitalize the Crosstown area, prompt businesses to open, offer more job opportunities to current residents, and create a unique, self-sustaining community. Similar renovations of Sears centers have been successful in Atlanta and North Carolina. The projected opening of the Memphis, Crosstown Project is January 2017.

### **Lafayette's Music Room - Lunch**

After LAI members' vigorous Crosstown hike, Lafayette's Music Room, in Midtown Memphis' Overton Square, served a much-appreciated, refreshing lunch. Lambda Alpha International member, Bob Loeb, spoke about the Overton Square of his youth, and how Lafayette's Music Room drew acts like Styx, Billy Joel, KISS, and Leon Russell, in the 1970s. The 1990s saw a slowdown of businesses in the 10 acre Midtown district, and by 2000, businesses were closing, and others relocating.



In 2012, Bob Loeb, President of the Memphis, fourth generation Loeb Properties, and his brother, Louis, decided to make a \$7 million dollar commitment to revitalizing the “more dead than alive” Overton Square. Lafayette’s General Manager, Allen Boggs, and other businessmen also believed in the possibilities and were on board.







Today, Overton Square is alive and filling vacant buildings with retail shops and restaurants that are drawing crowds. Surrounding areas are also alive with arts, music, and the possibility that Overton Square will become even more than its 1970s heyday. Loeb is unabashedly proud of the now bustling area where the next generation is building their own memories of Overton Square.

### **STAX Museum of American Soul Music**

No LEW trip to Memphis would be complete without a music tour, and STAX Museum of American Soul Music at Soulsville USA was on the list. LAI members enjoyed a documentary about Satellite Records founders Jim Stewart and sister, Estelle Axton's 1960 venture, which led to opening STAX recording studio and a distribution partnership with Atlantic Records. STAX recorded the Mar-Keys, Booker T. and The MGs, Rufus Thomas, and Otis Redding, who changed the music world.



LAI members heard the saga of STAX's 1975 bankruptcy, and how in 1981, the once famous studio became an empty lot. In the late 1990s, former STAX employees formed the Soulsville Foundation to preserve Memphis' music history and to offer educational opportunities to children in one of the most impoverished Memphis neighborhoods. In 2003, STAX Museum of American Soul Music opened with an authentic replica of the original recording studio. STAX Music Academy followed, and in 2005, Soulsville Charter School welcomed its first students with free tuition and a music centered curriculum. Today, the school has 600 students with a 100 percent graduation and college acceptance rate.



The museum tour introduced LAI members to STAX music, artists, and Isaac Hayes' gold-trimmed Cadillac. In the recording studio, visitors had the unique opportunity to meet former Mar-Keys and Memphis Horns band member, Floyd Newman. Newman was the first to hire a young, Isaac Hayes as a backup piano player. He later introduced Hayes to producer, Al Bell who recorded *Hot Buttered Soul*, and the rest is history. The LAI group had many questions about Hayes, Memphis music, and the 1970s STAX explosion. Newman answered questions and summed up the era's music by saying that STAX was where there was no racial divides and blues, church, and country came together.



## Sun Studio

Another music stop was Sun Studio where Memphian, Sam Phillips made Elvis' first recording. The tiny studio is awash with memorabilia and photos of Johnny Cash, Carl Perkins, Jerry Lee Lewis, Elvis, and others who came to Memphis to record. Large photos of the famous faces grace the outside of the tiny studio where LAI members posed for pictures.



"THERE WERE SOME GREAT RECORDS IN THERE, NO QUESTION ABOUT IT. BUT

# SAM PHILLIPS

HE RECORDED

ELVIS & JERRY LEE

CARL PERKINS & JOHNNY CASH

RADICAL EYES THAT SHOOK THE VERY ESSENCE OF HUMANITY.

REVOLUTION IN STYLE AND SCOPE.

RADICAL TO THE BONE  
SONGS THAT CUT YOU TO THE BONE.

RENEGADES IN ALL DEGREES, DOING SONGS  
THAT WOULD NEVER DECAY, AND STILL RESOUND TO THIS DAY.

OH YEAH I'D RATHER HAVE  
SAM PHILLIPS' BLESSING ANY DAY."

-BOB DYLAN

22/04/2016

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LAI members were surprised to learn that Bruno Mars' *Uptown Funk* - 3 time 2016 Grammy winner, Record of the Year, and Super Bowl 50's halftime song was recorded in Memphis by Boo Mitchell at Royal Studios. *Uptown Funk* spent 14 weeks at the top of the charts and is keeping Memphis Music at the top of its game. It was perfect timing for LAI members to visit Graceland and hear how Elvis is keeping Memphis tourism at the top of its game.

**Elvis Presley Enterprises – Graceland Development**



LAI member, Greg Marcom, of the Reaves Firm, gave a brief history of Elvis’ purchase of Graceland and 14 acres outside the city. LAI members would also see Lauderdale Courts, and a two-bedroom apartment in downtown Memphis, where Elvis previously lived and for the first time, had a bedroom of his own. After Elvis’ career rocketed, Gladys and Vernon Presley moved to Graceland and were living a dream in the spacious home and grounds. After Elvis’ death and burial at Graceland, the half million dollar per year maintenance was more than the estate could afford. Elvis’ former wife, Pricilla Presley, was the executor for daughter, Lisa Marie’s inheritance, and in 1982, Pricilla made the decision to open the house to visitors. Since then, more than 20 million visitors have visited Graceland, and Memphis never imagined the impact on local tourism.



Marcum talked about how Elvis Presley Enterprises was formed to brand Elvis’ name and revenues. The LAI group saw evidence of EPE’s success in people arriving

for tours of Graceland, tours of Elvis' two planes, and the future business developments along Elvis Presley Boulevard. Marcum's firm is spearheading Graceland's Welcome Center expansion to 200,000 square feet that will include an interactive experience in The Entertainer museum, a tour of Elvis' cars, and a venue for live music. The Guest House, a 450 room hotel similar in style to the Graceland mansion, is being built nearby and is currently taking reservations. Guests will enjoy rooms with an Elvis décor and resort amenities, all within a short walk to Graceland for guided tours.



## Tennessee Brewery

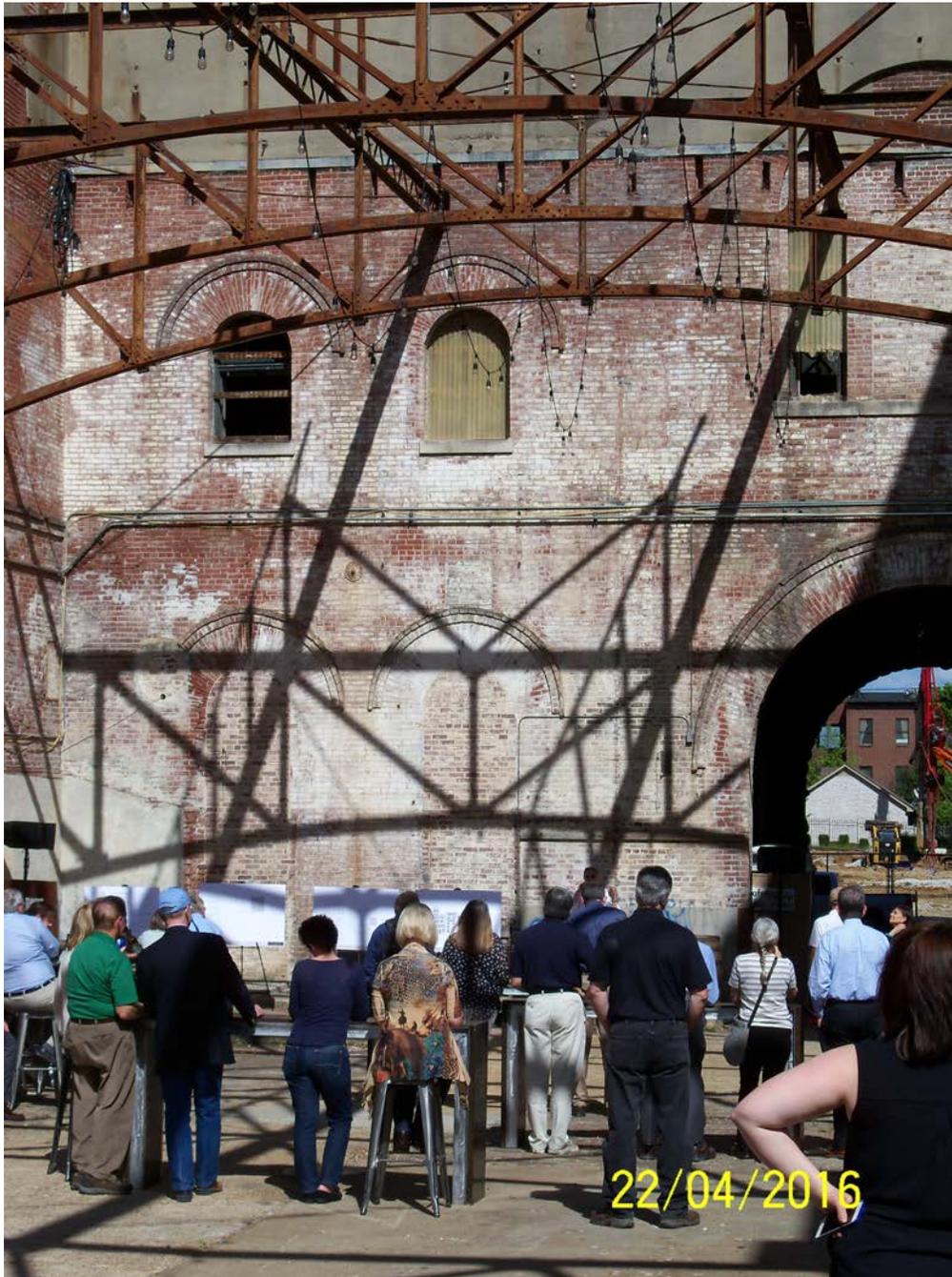
After a quick tour of Memphis' music history, it was back on buses and off to view the historic Tennessee Brewery building. Guests walked through a tall archway and brick paved entrance, which led to a courtyard connecting the six-story brewery to an adjoining wash house. Each level had large arched windows and decorative iron railings on each stairway. While guests enjoyed beer and wine, LAI member and contractor, Montgomery Martin gave a brief history of the 1890 brewery overlooking the Mississippi River. What began as The Memphis Brewing Company was bought by Tennessee Brewing Company and expanded to one of the largest breweries of its day.



Facing demolition in 2014, Memphians threw what seemed to be the brewery's last party. Each weekend, the expansive courtyard became a beautifully decorated beer garden. Memphians were invited to Untapped and Revival Brewery nights to sample beers and explore the building that deserved to be saved. The plan worked! Local businessman, Billy Orgel purchased the building for \$825,000 and is redeveloping



the project at a cost of \$22.9 million dollars. Renovations include apartments, a gym, and a parking garage. Construction has begun with stucco removal that has revealed the original brick structure. Adjacent buildings are also being considered for renovation, creating a domino effect in revitalization for downtown Memphis.



At 5:00 pm, LAI members returned to The Peabody Hotel and lined the red carpet. Honorary Duck Master, Steve Gragg assisted with the ducks' return to their rooftop penthouse. Gragg made LAI members proud.



**FedEx Hub Visit**

After a few hours of rest and dinner, LAI members bravely embarking on the 10:30 pm FedEx Hub tour. CEO, Fred Smith’s overnight shipping idea has created the largest shipping corporation in the world. FedEx planes create a parade in the night sky as they land, packages are quickly offloaded, and the Hub comes alive with sorting and re-routing. Each night, approximately 1.5 million packages pass through the logistic marvel known as the “Matrix.” LAI members knew the Hub would be impressive but admitted to being in awe of FedEx’s multi-level machine that makes sure packages will absolutely arrive the next day.



Day 3 – April 23, 2016

After enjoying a “Grab and Go” breakfast at the hotel, the LEW weekend continued with more music tours of Memphis. Backbeat Tour buses lined up in front of the Peabody Hotel and each bus had its own guitar playing guide. LAI members created new twists on old favorites with their rattles and tambourines and the LAI “sing along.” The buses were rockin’ and rollin’. Elvis would have been proud.



The tour included a singing/talking tour of Memphis music whose who and their favorite places. Lauderdale Apartments was where Elvis, his parents and grandmother lived after moving from Mississippi to Memphis. An overnight stay in Elvis’ old bedroom is a popular attraction. The Overton Shell is an outdoor music venue where Elvis played his first concert. The Shell still hosts concerts and invites local musicians to perform. LAI members got the tour of STAX and Sun Studios, but the riding tour introduced them to Phillips Studio, where Sam Phillips recorded Ike Turner, Howling Wolf, Roy Orbison and many more. Sam opened Phillips Studio down the street from Sun Studio, after he sold Elvis’ contract to Colonel Tom Parker. The tour was a great way to see Memphis and learn more about its music history. Next stop, lunch.

**The Terrace at The River Inn**

LAI members had lunch at The Terrace at Harbor Town's, The River Inn. Harbor Town is an upscale residential development that reflects a New Orleans architectural style. The Mississippi River flows nearby and miles of green space provides scenic walking, running, and biking. Lunch was served on Terrace Grill's balcony and the view of the Mississippi was spectacular.





Buses returned to The Peabody Hotel where LAI members chose between tours of the National Civil Rights Museum, the full tour of Graceland Mansion, Bass Pro Shop in the renovated Memphis Pyramid, or just independently explore Memphis. The Bass Pro Shop tour included a ride to the top of the Pyramid for a stunning view of the Mississippi River.





**National Civil Rights Museum – Lorraine Motel**





Dr. Martin Luther King was shot on the Lorraine Motel's balcony on April 4, 1968, outside room 306. The hotel is now part of the National Civil Rights Museum dedicated to preserving the history of the Civil Rights Movement.

### **Graceland Mansion**

More than 600,000 tourists visit Graceland each year. A vigil held each year on August 16 draws record crowds to remember Elvis' death. Tourists visiting Graceland span the globe. Most want to see where the King of Rock and Roll lived and all are curious as to how he died. The upstairs at Graceland is heavily guarded and fans can pass by the steps, but no one has successfully breached the upstairs security in 30 years.





## Awards Banquet - final LEW event

The Land Economics Weekend's final gathering began with cocktails in the Skyway Ballroom, which opens onto The Peabody Hotel rooftop. LAI members enjoyed a spectacular view of the city and brilliant sunset over the Mississippi River. Swingtime Explosion filled the ballroom with a big band sound that brought LAI guests to the dance floor. Dr. Shelia Harris, LAI National Treasurer, serenaded the group with a rendition of Peggy Lee's *Fever* that received a standing ovation.











At the end of a luxurious dinner, Ann King, Past President of the Memphis Chapter of Lambda Alpha International, was honored for her tenure and organizing the LEW weekend in Memphis. Five new LAI inductees, Michelle Alexander, Robert Fogelman II, Jim McCullough, Mike Palazzolo, and Bart Thomas were sworn in, and

three, 2016-2017 student scholarship winners Jackson Dudley, Harley McLean, and Trey Stafford III were also welcomed to the LAI, Memphis Chapter. Steve Gragg received the MVP Award and others were honored for their contributions in land economics development.





Dr. Jim Fawcett presented the Skyline Award to Kemp Conrad, LAI member and Chairman of the Memphis City Council. The Skyline Award was presented to the City of Memphis for the redevelopment of the Pyramid Sports Arena into a towering Bass Pro Shop retail store and hotel.



Lambda Alpha International presented a Lifetime Achievement Award to Richard T. Wood III, Executive Vice President of Financial Federal. Wood was recognized for his accomplishments and years of service as a LAI member. He joins former recipients from Belz, Turley, and McNeill land development enterprises.



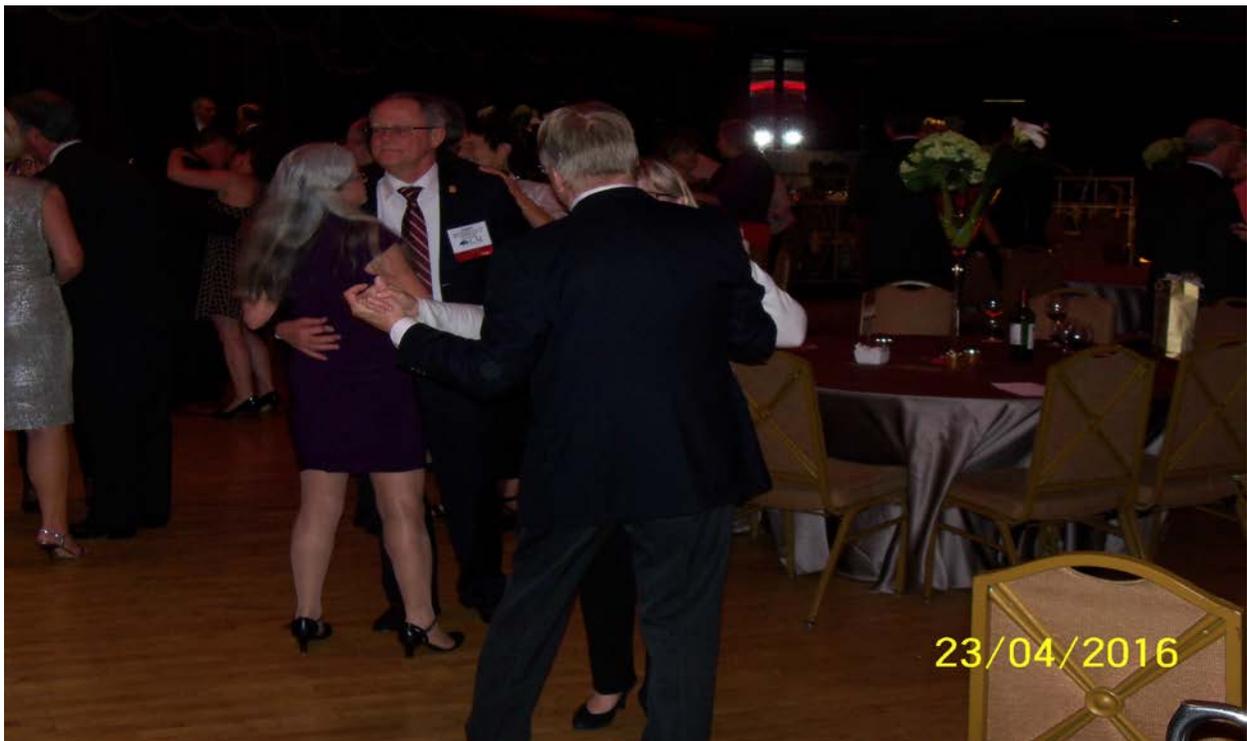
Serendipitously, nearby AutoZone Park set off its game night fireworks as if on cue from the LEW organizers, celebrating the evening's many honorees.



23/04/2016



LAI members enjoyed music, dancing, and fellowship as the Land Economics Weekend in Memphis came to an end.



LAI guest departed on Sunday, April 24, 2016. The Memphis chapter of Lambda Alpha International hopes the visit, tourist sites, and local developments made a positive, lasting impression. Y'all come back soon!