

WEST PLAZA

NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION



Mark Your Calendar ☒

Upcoming General Meeting

Tuesday, January 19 , 7-8 p.m.

Swinney Dual Language

Elementary School

1106 West 47th Street

- ✓ **Election: 2010 Officers & Board**
- ✓ **Guest Speaker: Michael J. Oliver**
- ✓ **Renew your membership for 2010**
- ✓ **Drawing for \$25 Gift Card**

At the first meeting of the new year, we will elect four officers, five at-large board members, and an alternate board member.

Nominations at the November meeting included the following:

Rie Clark
Craig Cotton (Membership)
Joe Montanari (President)
Annie McCormack
Brad McCormack (Secretary)
Matt Nugent
Kevin Pinkowski
Julie Tenenbaum
John Toms
Marlene Toms (Treasurer)

Nominations are still open if you want to join the dynamic and active board to help guide the neighborhood association in 2010.

Contact Joe Montanari (816-531-0570) for more information.

The guest speaker will be Michael J. Oliver, who will tell us about the recent renovation and the many activities and offerings of the

Westport Roanoke Community Center, our local center on the red brick road at 3601 Roanoke.

Please attend to cast your vote for WPNA's leadership for the coming year. And it's that time of year again, so bring your checkbook so you can renew your membership! ■

Westwood Park Construction

by Kevin Pinkowski

By now, many of you may have probably noticed that a significant amount of construction is taking place in Westwood Park. This is the first phase of the Westwood Park master plan that has been churning through the city system for more than five years.

This project started many years ago with several town hall-type meetings where the city took input from the neighbors about the kinds of changes they wanted to see in Westwood Park. Through a long process, many meetings – some of which got tense at times over one subject or another – and many years, the city came up with a master plan.

As you will see in a few more months, the first phase of the construction involves a new shelter at the top of what has come to be known as the sledding hill (in the southwest corner of the park), a new walkable loop path around the park (which will be handicap accessible), a new water fountain in the middle of the park, as well as new

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Meet Your Neighbor – Ed O'Donnell

by Kevin Pinkowski

If you are a regular reader of this newsletter, you are familiar with Ed O'Donnell's name, as he has been a contributing writer for the past several years, and most recently has served as the Gardener-in-Chief of our West Plaza Garden at 46th and Jarboe. Ed also helped lead the charge to hang the banners on poles along 43rd Street and 45th Street a couple years ago.

Ed has lived on the 4300 block of Genessee since 1992. Prior to that, he lived near the neighborhood on West 46th Street. Ed has served on the WPNA board for the last four years and will be stepping down in January of 2010, though he is keeping his gardening post. While the garden is currently hibernating for the winter, you should go check out the fruits of his labor in the spring.

Ed is originally from St. Genevieve, MO (just outside of St. Louis). He started working in Kansas City with Burns and McDonnell, an engineering company on Ward Parkway, as a drafter. He now walks to work at Bob D. Campbell Engineers, a structural engineering firm on the 4300 block of Belleview. In addition to enjoying his commute to work, Ed likes the West Plaza neighborhood because it's clean, safe, affordable, centrally located, and close to his church, Guardian Angels. Over the last 18+ years, Ed feels that the neighborhood has stayed the same in many ways, but he has seen an influx of younger people and families, and it has gotten quieter. (Some readers may remember a hoppin' joint that used to be on Westport Road, west of Sheehan's Irish Imports, called "Lucille's" that attracted quite a large crowd, and with it some significant noise.)

In addition to gardening and learning about native plants (he's a member of the Missouri Native Plant Society), Ed enjoys photography, home repairs, wine tasting, and

yoga, among other hobbies. You might see him working among the flower beds in his yard, or walking home from yoga class with his yoga mat. He sheepishly admitted that you could probably recognize him by the increasing amount of gray in his beard. If you see him, thank him for his dedicated service on the board and in the garden! ■

The Purple Bins are Here! Glass Recycling Returns to KC

Ripple Glass, Inc., a new local company, has placed glass collection containers throughout the metro area, making it easier to recycle glass in midtown. The program collects clear, brown, green, and blue food and beverage containers, which can be combined in the same collection bin. Ripple Glass is opening a processing facility in Kansas City to handle the glass that is collected, and the local Owens Corning fiberglass plant will be a primary end market for the glass. There are several locations in the midtown area: Boulevard Brewing, 2501 Southwest Boulevard; Hallmark, 2501 McGee; the parking lot at 51st and Main, and the midtown Home Depot. You can also visit rippleglasskc.com to find additional locations. ■

Westwood Park (continued from p. 1)

landscaping. An additional phase is scheduled for some time in the future, which will involve a new shelter in the northeast corner of the park.

This project is the fruit of the labor of many, many individuals from the neighborhood, not the least of whom is Paul Minto, a former president of the West Plaza Neighborhood Association. Thanks to all those who participated in the process of forming the future of our park. We're seeing that hard work pay off. ■

A Brief History of Westport's

Allen Library

by Joe Montanari

When John Calvin McCoy first platted the Town of Westport in 1834, the City of Kansas City did not even exist. Instead, there was little more than a notch in the riverbank (at the foot of Grand Avenue today), where steam-powered paddle wheelers docked. Called Westport Landing, this dock gave Westporters a tremendous advantage over their rivals in Independence. These two frontier towns were locked in a fierce competition for the business of supplying wagons, teams of oxen, harness, and provisions for the vast waves of pioneers heading west to strike it rich in California's gold fields, or to stake out a farm in the rich land of Oregon Territory. Leaving New York, Philadelphia, and other points in the east, an estimated 300,000 pioneers rode steamboats down the Ohio River to the Mississippi, then upstream to St. Louis, where they continued up the Missouri as far west as they could go. By disembarking at Westport instead of Independence, they could chop 25 miles of bone-rattling wagon travel off their trip. The establishment of the Westport Landing put Westport in the right place at the right time.

Trouble was, the boat dock was seven miles from the trailhead, and it was uphill all the way from the riverbank to the top of what is now the 31st Street ridge. To overcome this obstacle, an enterprising Westport businessman named Nehemiah Holmes proposed building a horse-drawn trolley from the river to the town, sort of a nineteenth-century light rail. The project was funded by a special tax levy. When the Westport and Kansas City Horse Railway was completed, Westporters were surprised to learn that they had the rather princely sum of \$7,500 left over, and immediately, a debate ensued over what to do with the extra money.

Realizing that the money would soon be squandered on some scheme or another, Judge Arthur E. Allen stepped into the fray. Hurrying to Jefferson City, he implored the state legislature to pass a statute mandating that the money be spent "for a public library for the citizens of Westport and for no other purpose." Nehemiah Holmes' widow contributed another \$12,500 to the library fund when she sold her interest in the trolley.

Named in Judge Allen's honor, the Allen Library was completed in 1898. It was a stately limestone building with turreted corners, containing over 3,000 books, an impressive number for the time. By 1904, the rapidly growing city of Kansas City had expanded southward and annexed the old Town of Westport, whereupon the Allen Library became the first branch library in the Kansas City Public Library system. ■

The 1990's controversy over the Allen Library will be detailed in the March-April issue.

Fuller Center for Housing

by Craig Cotton

In 2005 Millard Fuller, the founder of Habitat for Humanity, withdrew from that organization and with his wife founded the Millard Fuller Center for Housing. The Center now has 53 covenant partners in the United States and partners in 14 foreign countries. One of those covenant partners – the Fuller Center for Housing of Greater Kansas City – is led by an acquaintance of mine, Graham Houston. The group's projects currently center in the Northland and historic Northeast sections of our metropolitan area.

Two of their current programs are compelling. In the Greater Building Box Program, the Kansas City group works with the Northland Neighborhood, Inc. to repair and modify existing homes to enable elderly citizens to remain in familiar surroundings. Secondly, they developed a close partnership with an

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DOING VEHICLE-RELATED CRIME

In the Words of a Thief

Thank you to Master Patrol Officer Jim Schriever, who sent this notice in the form of a pdf to his email list. If you would like him to send you a pdf file containing three of these notices in card form (suitable for putting on car windshields), contact him at James.Schriever@kcpd.org.

“If I Were A Thief... I could break into your vehicle and steal your things, or the vehicle itself, in about the time it would take me to put this card under your windshield wiper. Your stuff could be gone that fast! But you can do some things to stop me, or simply convince me to victimize someone else.”

ALWAYS LOCK YOUR VEHICLE WITH THE WINDOWS ROLLED UP.

“Almost half the thefts I pull are from an unlocked vehicle. If a target is too hard – I will move on.”

DO NOT LEAVE ITEMS OF VALUE IN PLAIN VIEW INSIDE YOUR VEHICLE.

“I look for things like cell phones, radios, briefcases, laptops, purses, packages, CDs, GPS devices, and other stuff that means quick cash for me. Even loose change could attract me. You better take anything that looks valuable with you.”

KNOW WHEN AND WHERE TO PLACE VALUABLES IN YOUR TRUNK.

“I could be watching you arrive at your parking destination – so if you use your trunk, do so well before you park.”

IF YOU HAVE AN ANTI-THEFT DEVICE, USE IT.

“I like to work fast and quietly; so I do not like an alarm being set, or a steering wheel “club” being put in place correctly.”

DO NOT LEAVE YOUR KEYS IN YOUR UNOCCUPIED VEHICLE.

“Even in a second – I could hop in your ride and be gone. I like to hang at convenience stores, and I do not care if your kids have to go for a ride too.”

REMOVE GPS UNITS/ELECTRONICS AS WELL AS THEIR INDICATORS (MOUNTS, CHARGERS, ETC.)

“Knowing people will simply place the device in the console or glove box, if I see indicators, I will still break in and take my chances. Once I have your GPS, I know where you live and frequent. Then I can find your house and use your garage door opener to get in.”

For safety tips and up-to-date information on current scams and criminal activity in Kansas City, join the email list of Master Patrol Officer James Schriever:
James.Schriever@kcpd.org.

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2010 WPNA Calendar

General Membership Meetings (7-8 p.m.)

Tuesday, January 19
Tuesday, March 16
Tuesday, July 20
Tuesday, September 21
Tuesday, November 16

Annual Picnic & Spring Cleanup Saturday, May 15

***Neighborhood Yard Sales** Saturday, June 5

****Free-for-All** Saturday, June 12

Dance in the Park: TBA

Fall Cleanup: TBA

* Will be held on the same day as Westwood Park's sales.

**NEW EVENT! Bring all your yard sale leftovers to Swinney School. The event is open to all, and everything is free to all who attend!

Scoop that Poop!

A bone of contention between dog owners and property owners is often as basic as what happens to the poop when a dog does what a dog does during his walk. As the human on the other end of the leash, it may be tempting to ignore what the dog is doing while you innocently look the other way, but you'd better believe that the owner of the property he's doing it on is not going to be happy about it.

Not only is dog waste not a pretty sight or smell, but it's also a breeder of germs and disease. Dog feces play a significant role in water pollution, especially in cities, and the bacteria that makes its way into streams, lakes, and the water table can make people sick. Yet about 40% of Americans don't clean up after their dogs!

GRAB IT, BAG IT AND BIN IT.

Grab it. Keep a supply of plastic bags near your dog's lead so you don't forget to take a poop scoop with you on every walk.

Bag it. Put your hand into the bag and grab the pile, with the bag protecting your hand. Carefully turn the plastic bag inside out and your dog's mess will then be "bagged."

Bin it. Dispose of your bag in a public litter bin or take it home and place it in your own trash barrel.

If you're squeamish about bagging the poop, you can use two bags – one inside the other – instead of one. Using two bags has an insulating effect so that you don't feel the heat from the poop as much. It also works to keep down the smell, and if there's a hole in one of them, chances are there won't be a hole in the other in the same spot.

If you can't bring yourself to handle the poop, even through a plastic bag, purchase a commercially made "pooper scooper." These usually consist of a handle on one end of a long arm, with a double-sided shovel on the other end.

Cleaning up your dog's mess is not the most pleasant part of being a dog owner, but it is necessary. Please do the responsible thing and take care of your dog's poop. Your neighbors will thank you. ■

Fuller Center for Housing

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unincorporated but energetic group called the Christian Carpenters, who have been building houses for the needy for several years. Together, the two organizations will break ground soon on a "universal design" house, to be the future home of a wheelchair-bound woman. She has helped the two groups plan many practical features that would be of use to anyone similarly handicapped.

For more information, visit Fullercenter.org. ■



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✂ ✂ ✂-----SPECIAL CUT OUT AND SAVE PAGE ✂ ✂ ✂-----

Curbside Recycling in Kansas City

by Mary Ellen Vincent

Recently I've been confused about what kinds of plastics are recyclable in Kansas City, so I did some investigation. I learned that the curbside recycling program and the drop-off centers accept different kinds of plastic. The drop-off centers accept a more limited number of plastics (#1, 2, 5, & 6 food containers) than the curbside program does. Below is a reminder of what you can put in the **curbside bins**.

ACCEPTABLE RECYCLABLE MATERIALS

- Newspaper
- Advertising inserts
- Office paper
- Chipboard/grayboard (e.g., cereal boxes)
- Telephone books
- Carrier stock
- Envelopes
- Manila file folders
- Junk mail
- Magazines
- Catalogs
- Aluminum cans
- Corrugated cartons
- Steel (tin) food and beverage cans
- #1-7 plastics (except styrofoam)
- Yogurt or margarine tubs
- Deli or salad bar "clamshells"



UNACCEPTABLE MATERIALS

No glass jars or bottles are accepted curbside! Glass can be taken to various recycling drop-off centers around the metro area. Visit www.deffenbaughinc.com for a list of drop-off locations. (Also see the article about Ripple Glass on page 2 of this newsletter.)

Other unacceptable materials include:

- Automotive product bottles
- Blueprints
- Carbon paper
- Construction paper
- Drink pouches
- Egg cartons
- Film canisters
- Foil
- Frozen food containers
- Frozen juice containers or straws
- Gift wrap
- Hanging folders
- Hardback books
- Microwave trays
- Motor oil bottles
- Paper plates or cups
- Paper towels
- Paperback books
- Photographs
- Plastic bags
- Plastic cereal box or cake box liner bags
- Plastic lids or 6-pack holders
- Scrap metal
- Shredded paper
- Tissue paper
- Trash
- Vitamin or prescription bottles
- Wax cardboard

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Submit suggestions for newsletter articles or association activities to Julie at her email address. You must include your name and your contact information for your suggestion to be considered. Articles may be edited for length, accuracy, and grammar. The submitter's name will be used only if permission is granted.

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Please fill out the information below and return along with your check to:

West Plaza Neighborhood Association ▪ P.O. Box 32826 ▪ Kansas City, MO 64171-7826 ▪ www.westplaza.org

Check One: New Renewal

Check One: Household (\$12) Senior (\$7) Business (\$25)

Name _____

Address _____

Zip _____ Phone _____

*e-mail _____

Business Member Contact Name: _____

I would like to help the neighborhood with:

Picnic Property Maintenance/Zoning

Yard Sale Neighborhood Clean-up

Crime Prevention Meeting Refreshments

Newsletter Distribution Gardening

[January-February 2010 Newsletter]

*Bi-monthly newsletters are sent via email. Also, emails are sent periodically to announce neighborhood meetings, events, and safety alerts. We will not share your email address with any other individual or entity.

WPNA Business Members

A \$25 Business Membership includes your name and contact information in each WPNA newsletter. *New member this month.

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