

WEST PLAZA

NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION



Next General Membership Meeting

The next General Membership Meeting of WPNA will be **Tuesday January 18th, 2005, 7:00 p.m.** at the Swinney Elementary School Cafeteria in the southeast corner of 1108 West 47th Street. In this meeting, we will elect new officers and board members (see the next article) and discuss the events for the year. One thing we want to do is to start working on all the events for the year, including setting up working committees and getting some volunteers. If you will be able to help out with some of our activities, we'd appreciate your showing up at the meeting and letting us know that you are available.

The events for 2005 and volunteers needed are:

- Each odd numbered month (January, March...November) we distribute the newsletter by hand. *We can always use new volunteers.*
- Tuesday, March 15, 2005, at 7:00 pm, General Membership Meeting
- Saturday, May 14, 2005 Clean Sweep 8:00-Noon at Westwood Park, south of 47th and Wyoming. *We need volunteers to man the two dumpsters, to be sure that items go in the right place and to confirm that only WPNA residents are bringing stuff. The dumpsters need to be staffed from opening to close. You can volunteer for just an hour or even for the whole session. We also appreciate those who volunteer to bring refreshments.*
- Saturday, May 14, 2005 Picnic Noon-3pm at Westwood Park. This is the big event every year for WPNA. *We need volunteers to contact businesses for door prizes, to contact businesses for contributions (food and drinks), to reserve and set up the shelter, to arrange for the kids' games, to post signs in the neighborhood, and to pick up donations from local businesses.*
- Saturday, June 11, 2005 Neighborhood Wide Garage Sales. Another popular event. *We need volunteers to post signs in the neighborhood and to distribute the flyers to homes that are participating.*

- Tuesday, September 13, 2005 General Membership Meeting at Swinney School Cafeteria
- (Date not yet set) The fall Clean Sweep. *Similar in format and volunteer needs to the Clean Sweep in May.*

Election of officers

In the November meeting we nominated the following for the officers and board:

President: Bob Crutsinger, Shirley Williston

Treasurer: Marlene Toms

Secretary: Paul Minto

Membership: Boyd Williston

At large: Penny Cox, Julie Tennenbaum, John Toms, Delois Moore, Charles Glenn *(5 positions are available, all could be elected)*

As every year, we will elect the officers for the year in the January meeting. **Please remember, you must have paid your 2005 dues in order to vote.** We will have time to collect your dues at the meeting, but it would be helpful if you filled out the form on page 4 and sent it in early.

Winter Can Drain Cash From Your Home

Damage from winter weather can be costly. To protect your home:

Clean your gutters. Melting snow and ice should be able to flow freely to the ground. If the freezing water's path is disrupted – a condition called ice damming – it may seep into your house.

Trim overhanging, damaged or dead tree branches. Accumulation of snow or ice on branches, or even strong winds can cause weak limbs to break. Ice-covered limbs can be particularly damaging to your home or car and dangerous to you.

(Page 2, "Winter Savings")

West Plaza Neighborhood Association Newsletter
Edited by Boyd Williston
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Submit suggestions for newsletter articles or association activities to Boyd at his e-mail or postal address (e-mail is preferred). You must include your name and how to contact you 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.

Production of this publication was made possible through support from the KCMO Neighborhood Development (Community Block Grant) and the Missouri Department of Economic Development (Neighborhood Assistance Program)

Advertising rates (display ad other than listing in business membership):

Business card size	\$25 per issue
Quarter page	\$35 per issue
Half page	\$50 per issue

("Winter Savings", continued from page 1)

Maintain the temperature. Keep your thermostat at 65 degrees or higher. Although you can save on your energy bill by holding your thermostat a few degrees lower than you usually might, temperatures below 65 degrees will make your pipes vulnerable to freezing.

Check your plumbing. Before it gets to cold, inspect your pipes for cracks, leaks or other damage. Learn how to shut the water off so that you can limit the damage in the event of a frozen or burst pipe.

Inspect heating systems. Be certain your home's heat sources, including the furnace, fireplaces and stoves, are working properly

Respect Our Neighbors' Trash!

West Plaza's high participation rate for KC's recycling program indicates that it is being accepted very well in our neighborhood. The new KCRecycles program provides free every-other-week pickup of unlimited quantities of recyclable materials. In addition, the program allows each household a two-bag per week limit on free trash collection. The City will continue to pick up additional bags of trash provided they have an "excess trash tag" (which you can get for \$1 at many Westlake Ace or Price Chopper Stores).

If you have more than two bags of trash, please do not place any in front your neighbor's residence without first obtaining permission to do so. It is recommended that you ask permission each time you have the extra trash bag since a household's trash output may change on a weekly basis. REMEMBER – placing your trash on property owned by someone else is "ILLEGAL DUMPING". If you have questions on the recycle program call Citizen Service at 816-513-3490 or Centro de Accion at 816-513-1313. For illegal dumping incidents call 816-513-3485.

Winter Storm Contacts

Citizens may call these numbers during the winter for assistance: City Snow Command Desk, (816)-513-9364; City Action Center, (816)-513-1313; and the Missouri Department of Transportation, (816) 622-6500. Removal of limbs from the rights-of-way should be directed to the Parks and Recreation Department, (816) 513-7500. Specific information regarding the City's snow efforts can be found online at www.kcmo.org. Residents without electricity should call KCP&L at (816)-471-5275 or 1-888-LIGHTKC.

Working Smoke Detectors

Every year dozens of lives are saved by working smoke detectors. A battery-operated smoke detector costs \$15 or less and batteries run around \$2.

The Kansas City Fire Department distributes free smoke alarms to homes that previously had no smoke alarm or a malfunctioning one. Reminder cards labeled "Change Your Battery" are mailed out to all the people who received free smoke detectors. These cards are mailed out three days before daylights saving time, which is when the entire nation is advised to change the batteries in their smoke detectors. Smoke detector maintenance tips are also on the card. This service is provided free of charge by the Fire Prevention Division call 816-784-9100 or visit the website at www.kcmo.org/fire.

At least once a month, test the smoke detector to be sure it is working. If the alarm chirps, it is time to replace the batteries. If your smoke detector is 10 years old, it should be replaced.

Evaluate where your alarms are placed. Such factors as cooking vapors and steam can set off a smoke alarm. You may need to move the alarm farther away for a kitchen or bathroom.

To slow the spread of smoke and fumes if a fire develops, sleep with your bedroom door closed. If you sleep with your bedroom door closed, install an alarm inside each bedroom. Alarms should be installed in other areas where people sleep. On floors without bedrooms, smoke alarms should be installed in or near living areas such as family rooms and living rooms.

(Page 3, "Smoke Detectors")

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("Smoke Detectors", from page 2)

Since smoke and deadly gases rise, alarms should be placed on the ceiling at least 4 inches from the nearest wall, or high on a wall, 4-12 inches from the ceiling. This 4-inch minimum is important to keep alarms out of possible "dead air" spaces, because hot air is turbulent and may bounce so much it misses spots near a surface. In rooms where the ceiling has an extremely high point, such as a vaulted ceiling, mount the alarm at or near the ceiling's highest point. Installing alarms near a window, door or fireplace is not recommended because drafts could detour smoke away from the unit.

**Well Grounded
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Phone: (816) 729-6208

Donna Farber, Licensed Massage Therapist

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816-931-3535

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816-561-2331

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1409 Westport Road
816-531-8889

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Your West Plaza Real Estate Agent Penelope Cox

This section of your Newsletter is a service for you to help provide you with answers to questions you may have about real estate here in our neighborhood. As the Tax Season is here we received a question regarding the IRC Section **1031 Exchange Tax Law**. Plus, I personally want to touch on Safety. Keep your questions coming. Just e-mail me what you would like answered and your questions will be anonymously covered in this section of upcoming issues.

Send your questions to: pcox@KansasCityHomes.com with the subject matter addressed to: **West Plaza Real Estate Agent**.

IRC Section 1031

Dear Penny: What is a 1031 Exchange?

A: First, I do want to say that though I have sold property that has involved a 1031 Exchange, I am not an exchange intermediary and not fully versed on all of the requirements involved. The company we have used as the intermediary is called Starker Services, which has a location in Lenexa, Kansas (913-375-1031).

That said, topline:

Taxation on personal residence is different than taxation on income or investment property. The Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997 changed the Internal Revenue Code treatment for the sale of a personal residence to allow a "single" taxpayer a \$250,000 exclusion from capital gain (\$500K married couple) upon the sell of the property (with some stipulations). Taxpayer must reside in the property 2 of 5 years. When a homeowner sells appreciated property they pay tax. However, property that qualifies for IRC 1031 can be exchanged "with no gain recognized." To capture the tax savings, your investment also needs to be exchanged for "like-kind" property. "Like-kind" property is based on USE of the

property. AND, to save capital gains tax you also have a 45 day identification requirement to find another property to replace/exchange with, as well as, regulations encourage the use of finding/using a Qualified Intermediary to make certain all guidelines are being meet. A side note, this exemption can be used once every 2 years, but I too would suggest you first contact someone well versed on the subject to understand the entire tax picture. The true power of exchanging is the ability to meet investment objectives without losing equity to taxation.

Safety Thoughts On Portable Heaters

A Personal Message: As a Realtor who is in and out of dozens (if not hundreds of homes each year) I reap the advantage of learning more and more about Safety Issues In Our Homes. These may cover Environmental, Mechanical, Wiring - But - I want to address Portable Heaters. This is our time of year when it is the coldest and I see these in homes and precautions should be followed. The greatest risk with these types of heating sources is - Fire!

The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) shows an increasing trend in residential fire deaths caused by Portable Heaters, and that Portable Electric or Kerosene Heaters are the leading cause of fire-related deaths. Why? - Because people leave these on when they leave the home or leave them on in bedrooms at night running throughout the night, people wake up are often then overcome by toxic smoke.

CPSC says to stop leaving these on when you are not at home and stop using them overnight. If one must be used at night then a properly functioning smoke/fire detector should be installed in the heated room to provide an early warning. Additionally, please purchase only certified units with the latest safety features (like a tip-over shut-off), and keep combustibles at least 3 feet away.

Join Your Neighbors in the WPNA

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
New Renewal Household (\$12) Senior (\$7) Business (\$25)

Name _____

Address _____

Zip _____ Phone _____

e-mail _____

I would like to help the neighborhood with:

Picnic Property Maintenance/Zoning

Yard Sale Neighborhood clean-up

Crime prevention Distribute newsletter

Refreshments for meetings

(January 2005 Newsletter)