

Westwood News

Winter 2012



Westwood Neighborhood Association Board

Kristy Barzen, President
kbarzen@aol.com
274-6263

Mike Keller, Vice President
Mrk515@gmail.com
707-2764

Maria Sadden-Berry,
Secretary

Vicki Sehgal, Treasurer -
vicki.sehgal@gmail.com

Brad Sammon, Immediate
Past President
bjsammon@msn.com
883-0616

Snow Ordinance

Reminder for new residents and old: All Westwood Neighborhood streets are designated "Snow Priority" streets by the city. This means that when an inch or more of snow falls, all cars must be off all streets. Cars that remain parked on a street may be ticketed.

Any questions about this city program may be addressed to: Bruce Braun
babraun@dmgov.org

Start the year right at the Annual WNA Art Center Winter Party - Thursday, January 26th

This year's WNA Winter Party will be January 26 from 6:00 to 8:30 p.m. at the Des Moines Art Center. As always the party, like the Art Center itself, is free to attend and will include music, complimentary appetizers, and a cash bar.

Talented Westwood neighbor and guitarist/singer/songwriter Rob Lumbard will be playing his unique blend of blues and folk. You can learn more about Rob and his music at his

web site: <http://roblumbard.com/>

Appetizers will be prepared by the Art Center's Chef and WNA resident Lisa Lavelle, named by the Des Moines Register as one of Des Moines' top five chefs in 2009.

The art center exhibits will all be open this evening until 9 p.m., so you can stroll through exhibits you may not have yet seen, or visit old favorites, before or after the party.

Westwood Going Green in 2012

Every year volunteers help keep our parks and streams cleaner and healthier. With looming city and county budget cuts, the need now is even greater. This year WNA is joining these efforts. Des Moines Parks and Recreation has identified three potential projects where WNA efforts could directly tie into already planned projects in our neighborhood.

Earth Day Trash Bash 2012 - Friday, April 20

Each year volunteers and especially corporate volunteers gather throughout the City to help beautify parks, trails, and other public spaces. This year the focus will be on cleaning up our waterways, protecting and improving water quality and watersheds, including those in and next to our neighborhood. This year's Earth Day Trash Bash is a cooperative effort between the City of Des Moines, Water Works, Polk County, DNR, Metro Waste Authority and Waste Management and could be the biggest ever.

Spring Creek Clean-ups

Near our neighborhood are several

creeks in desperate need of being cleaned up. Parks and Rec is looking for volunteers to start at one end and walk the creek to clean out small and large trash. The timing of this work is necessarily determined by weather to make sure everyone is safe either walking or canoeing the creeks.

Invasive Species Removal

Help clear invasive plants such as garlic mustard, honeysuckle, and buckthorn from our woodlands. The non-native plants are out competing our native wildflowers, grasses and trees. They need to be removed to restore the integrity of the beautiful oak savanna landscape in our parks and improve water quality. Volunteers will use their hands or hand tools to remove the plants.

Please e-mail WNA Vice President, Mike Keller at mrk515@gamil.com if you want to help out with one or more of these projects. Also email if you know of any other groups or organizations that may want to coordinate their own efforts with ours.

Association Meetings

The Westwood Neighborhood Association and its board meet at 7 p.m. at Hanawalt Elementary School in the library. All meetings are open to the public. Please contact one of the current officers if you would like an item discussed at an upcoming meeting.

Meeting Dates:

2012

- ◆ January 26 - Winter Party
- ◆ February 28
- ◆ April 17
- ◆ May 15
- ◆ September 18
- ◆ October 16 - Annual Meeting

We're on the Web!

Westwood Neighborhood Association meeting minutes and newsletters are available online:

www.neighborhoodlink.com/desmoines

*"Be at war with
your vices, at peace
with your neighbors,
and let every new
year find you a
better man"*

*Benjamin Franklin
1706-1790*

We Have New Neighbors

Welcome to **Mike and Leighton Richards** at 223 49th Street. They moved to Des Moines from Virginia in June. Mike grew up on 49th Street and knew he wanted to live in this neighborhood again. Mike and Leighton are both attorneys, and met at Drake Law School. Mike is practicing at the Davis Brown Koehn Shors and Roberts firm. Leighton has stepped away from her career, to be at home with Sam 2, Fletcher 4, and Maggie 5. Maggie is attending St. Augustine's school.



Please welcome **Rod and Jenny Townsend** to 5222 Robertson Dr. They made the LONG move to Westwood from Waterbury! Rod worked many years for Pioneer but has retired and now enjoys crafting beautiful wooden vessels, which he sells at art galleries around the country. You can find his work at Lagniappe in Valley Junction. Rod was recently featured in *DSM Mens Book*. Jennny enjoys knitting and also sells her creations in stores. You can find her items at From Our Hands in the East Village.



Be a Good Neighbor

Doggone it

Everyone, please remember to clean up after your dogs in the neighbor and in the woods. Head out on walks with an extra bag or two, just in case. Dog waste contaminates the ground and is a means of passing parasites and infections to dogs, people and wildlife. And it just isn't fun to see, smell or to step in. Remember, dogs can't clean up after themselves. If they could, we're sure they would.

Leave it cleaner than you found it

While in the woods this Winter and Spring why not walk with extra bags and pick up any litter that you see? If everyone on the trails would take just a few minutes to pick up a little litter and dispose of it properly, our woods would be litter-free. A neighborhood-wide effort could make a world of difference.

SCRUB Days 2012

As part of the budget reduction process for public works, \$50,000 will be saved by reducing SCRUB Saturdays in 2012 to a total of 4 Saturdays, scheduled for 3rd Saturdays, every-other month, starting in March and concluding in November.

Des Moines Neighbors will meet to draft a plan to present to the city. Attend the meeting if you'd like to provide input for the plan. SCRUB Saturdays Planning Meeting, January 26th at 7 p.m., The Mickle Center, 1620 Pleasant Street, Des Moines, IA 50314 www.mickleCenter.com phone: 515.288.0715

In Our Neighborhood—Merrill Middle School

By Rob DenHartog

Merrill Middle School is an International Baccalaureate World School, which offers the Middle Years Program (MYP). The Middle Years Program does not dictate curriculum. Instead, it serves as a framework for the curriculum and emphasizes holistic learning, international awareness, and communication.

Whereas traditional education simply treats curriculum as a body of knowledge, the MYP focuses on meeting the needs of the whole student. Ideally, the knowledge becomes part of the student's person. As such, the Middle Years Program teaches concepts and critical thinking skills. It develops attitudes to guide actions shaped by the knowledge learned. According to Allison Chartier, Merrill's IB Coordinator, students in the Middle Years Program are presented with units of inquiry that allow them to explore topics at length. She said, "In an MYP setting, students engage in authentic learning activities with real-world applications. A unit of inquiry, then, brings together many components. It does not offer students a simple list of facts to memorize; instead, students critically examine a central theme through the lens of one of the areas of interaction, and teachers use authentic assessment methods to measure learning."

Along those lines, the MYP emphasizes intercultural awareness to develop an international mindedness. The learning approach creates a world view to consider issues from multiple perspectives.

Fundamental to the International Baccalaureate framework and philosophy is the belief that student service within the school and/or local community "encourages responsible citizenship" and "deepens a student's knowledge and understanding of the world around them."

Moreover, MYP stresses comprehensive communication skills, skillful listening, verbal and non-verbal communication, and articulate expressions of thought. Excellent communication skill empowers the student to reflect upon what they learned and better express their learning in their life.

In sixth-grade science classes, Mr. Hammond, Mrs. Ryerson, and Mrs. Hleihel posed this question: How much good can you do with one dollar?

To allow the students to answer this question, each sixth-grade student was given one dollar with the charge to pay it forward in some way. Students were encouraged to find creative ways to increase their dollar in order to "do some good" in the community.

On December 20th the students presented their projects to their classes. There was an overwhelming response to the project, and the students raised **\$8,356**, donated **2,600** items, and devoted **71** hours to various organizations. In all, approximately 50 organizations benefitted from the students' projects.

Along with their individual service projects, the sixth-grade class worked together on a project for Aging Resources of Iowa. In their Language A and Humanities classes, students created holiday cards, which will accompany the dinners delivered by Meals on Wheels during the holiday season. In addition, students spent time in their math classes making blankets to donate to the Animal Rescue League, and in Mrs. Williams' Humanities class, students created banners for the Merrill hallways. The banners were made on transparent contact paper to create "lights" in the hallway.

Rob DenHartog is the father of 8th grade Merrill student, David, and recent Roosevelt graduate Rob Jr.

Helping Our Schools

We have both Hanawalt Elementary and Merrill Middle near us. Each school has need for supplies (and also volunteers). Here are some of the items that would be helpful:

Hanawalt Elementary:

Decks of cards
Indoor card/board games
Sharpies
Dry erase markers
Colored card stock paper
Copy paper
Stickers
Chapter books
Bookmarks
Pencils
Pens
Tissue
Flashcards
Post-it notes

Merrill Middle:

Navy/Grey/White shorts and shirts (required for gym)
Trapper Keepers
Band-aids
Chapstick
Copy Paper
Scotch tape
Tape dispenser refills
AA Lithium batteries
Cough drops
Antibacterial handsoap
Heavy Grey or Navy sweatpants

Doodlebugs in Westwood

by Ed Truslow

The word **Doodlebug** does not refer to an insect or a mixture of a French Poodle and some other breed of dog. In this case a Doodlebug refers to a railroad car that once carried passengers and mail on the railroad tracks that today serve as the southern boundary of our Westwood Neighborhood Association.

Today the railroad traffic on these tracks is very infrequent being almost none at all. But many years ago in the 40's, 50's and early 60's it was a different story. Then the tracks belonged to the Milwaukee Railroad and there was considerable train traffic running up and down these tracks. Then it was considered a "branch line" connecting Des Moines with the "main line" in Madrid, Iowa. At "Clive Junction" (presently 86th and University) there was a switch in the tracks that would allow the train to go either to Madrid or all the way to Arnolds Park (Okoboji). Can you imagine your self and all of your vacation gear riding in a Doodlebug through all of the small towns and farm fields in Iowa on your way to Okoboji? The thought of getting there and being able to jump into Lake Okoboji to cool off would make that hot summer trip with no air conditioning seem all worth while. Or you could catch the Hiawatha high-speed passenger train at Madrid and go all the way to Chicago or Omaha. As a 10-year-old boy, I would watch the passing Doodlebugs and imagine that some day I too could be riding to some far away place.

Now, just exactly what is a Doodlebug you say? Technically they were officially known as a gas-electric motor coach. They were about 75 feet long and painted bright orange and trimmed in maroon. Some times they would have a second car coupled to the coach and sometimes it would be just the Doodlebug itself. Some said they were quite ugly, but I thought they were beautiful with their rumbling motor, ringing bell, and distinctive whistle sound they made at every road crossing including the road crossing at the end of 52nd street by the bike trail.

Trains run on schedules and the Doodlebugs were no exception. I remember hearing the whistle every day at 1:00, 4:00, 7:00, and 10:00 as the Doodlebugs rumbled by our house on Welker. In addition to Doodlebugs there was also freight traffic on these tracks. Box cars, tank cars, gondola cars, and the distinctive orange Milwaukee cabooses all were being pulled by either diesel engines or steam engines. As a boy, I was thrilled to witness this train traffic on a daily basis. Come to think of it, I guess I never got over my fascination with trains.

The next time you are about to cross these tracks on your way to the bike trail remember, stop, look, and listen. Listen very carefully and you just might hear that long forgotten sound of a Doodlebug rumbling down these railroad tracks on its way to a far away destination.



CMSIP&P 5938 at Madison, WI, 1950

by Stuart Kurth

Ed Truslow has had a lifelong connection with Westwood. In 1942, Ed's parents, along with his grandmother, moved to Westwood, where they established a riding stable with six horses. Ed lived in the neighborhood until he was 20 and moved back to Westwood in 1991. He recently concluded a three-year term as the treasurer for our Neighborhood Association. Ed is a man of many enthusiasms. He performs with Final Act Ensemble, a group dedicated to vocal interpretations of dramatic works. Just this December the group performed an original adaptation of A Christmas Carol on the Playhouse main stage. Ed is a fan of all things mechanical, an engineer by trade and an auto, motorcycle and train enthusiast. Ed rides a 1976 Triumph Bonneville motorcycle and has refurbished a 1947 Studebaker, which you may see in the neighborhood in nicer weather. Because of his love of trains Ed also volunteers as a steam locomotive engineer for the Boone & Scenic Valley Railroad.

Cornerstone Credit Union

By Kristy Barzen

A neighbor brought to my attention that we have a Cornerstone Credit Union in our neighborhood; we can join it by having a 50312 zip code. It is located off of Grand Avenue beside McDonalds. I took my sons Jackson, 12, and Roman, 9, there with their piggy banks. They received a deposit just for joining. The Credit Union also matches A's earned at school, \$1 for \$1 match with parents. The staff was very friendly. Both boys received a passbook saving account that they take in each time to keep track of their deposits and withdrawals.

I wanted to share this, because I had been saying for several years, that I needed to open bank accounts for them, but not just that. I wanted them to learn about having a relationship at a financial institution, to get in the habit of going there and depositing gift money, money they earn for good grades or for working. I also wanted them to have to make withdrawals by going into the credit union, looking at their balance, subtracting, looking at the new balance. What I and the boys have found is that they think a lot harder about withdrawing that money. I will say, "Sure, you can get that, we just need to go to the Credit Union and withdraw it from your savings account." More often than not, they decide on their own, they don't want the item that badly!

I had not taken them to open account because our bank is not convenient. By being able to buzz down Grand and avoid traffic, it has caused us to go in more often. I want to thank that neighbor for making me aware of Cornerstone Credit Union, and to share the news with you!



Kristy Barzen is the current WNA president.

NEW YEAR, NEW LOOK!

HOME EQUITY LOANS*

Rates As Low As

3.49%**

*3 year fixed rate balloon 3.49%, amortized over a 15 year term.

**5 year fixed rate balloon 4.49%, amortized over a 15 year term.

** Rate determined by credit score and based on credit worthiness.

Loan payments made through direct deposit. New loans only, cannot rewrite a loan currently held at Cornerstone Credit Union.

A Home Equity Loan is available on an owner-occupied dwelling located only in Iowa. Property insurance is required. Member will pay title search, flood search, recording fee and property valuation. Payment example: \$20,000 Fixed Closed End Home Equity with a 3 year fixed rate balloon, amortized over a 15 year term at 3.49% APR, the monthly payment will be \$142.88, the last payment of the 36 month term is a balloon payment in the amount of \$16790.12. Loan to Value Up to 90%.



**CORNERSTONE
CREDIT UNION**

414 61st Street • Des Moines, IA 50312
515.274.2343 • www.cornerstonecreditunion.com

Neighborhood Watch

If you have any concerns regarding crime or other concerns regarding safety, please contact our neighborhood police contact, Sergeant Joe Gonzalez, phone: 237-1531 or email: jagonzalez@dmgov.org

Westwood Neighborhood Association Members

Your support can help great things happen in Westwood! Membership cost is \$25 for a family or \$15 for an individual.

*A warm welcome to all new and returning members (indicated by an asterisks following name).

If you don't see your name below, please send dues to WNA treasurer: Vicki Sehgal, 5125 Welker Ave, 50312.

Allen, Jason
 Althoff, Angela *
 Antoniou, George & Christy
 Aspengren, Mary Lou
 Baldwin, Patricia
 Bannister, Scott & Kathy
 Barr, Judson & Heidi
 Barron, Xavier & Kristen
 Barzen, David & Kristy
 Bates, Dennis & Sally
 Beane, Ron & Virginia
 Beaumont, Tom & Paula *
 Bell, Barbara & Jim *
 Berry, Dr. Greg & Maria
 Bertness, Scott & Nancy
 Boesen, Bryan & Betsy
 Bookey, Harry & Pam
 Brooks, Steve & Katie
 Brown, Kendall & Diane
 Brown, Peter & Lisa
 Burgeson, John & Colleen
 Burke, Bernie, Stephanie Preusch
 Burns, Janice *
 Caldbeck, Garry & Debbie
 Campbell, Jan & Bo
 Cary, Daniel & Tiffani
 Church, Barbara
 Clark, Brian & Ann Reinhart
 Clemenson, Jane
 Clutter, Ryan & Vicki Sehgal
 Coffman, Garth & Celene Gogerty
 Davis, Ron & Agnes
 DeBord, Dave & Kristi Sutton
 DenHartog, Rob & Brenda Currans
 DiDonato, Ann & Mike Fitzgerald *
 Downing, Dr. Wendell & Joyce
 Eckhouse, Herb & Kathy
 Fisher, Bob
 Fleming, James & Allison
 Fox, Cynthia
 Freude, Jeff & Laurie Wolf
 Fulton, Jason & Diane Kuhn
 Galeazzi, Dennis & Nancy
 Galenbeck, Scott & Leann Treloar
 Gottschalk, Mary
 Grannes, Dean & Stephanie
 Gusse, Derek & Sarah *
 Haakinson, Bill & Lori
 Heggen, Dr. Bill & Lynn
 Heiken, Thomas & Vicki
 Hemminger, David & Jane

Hogan, Brady & Allison
 Horstmann, Rick & Laura
 Huber, Rory & Marti
 Hull, Marg
 James, Fred & Rose
 Jessen, Jeremy & Janel Brown
 Katz, John
 Keefe, Brian & Monica *
 Keehnle, Maureen *
 Keller, Mike & Rick Marura
 Kenworthy, John & Lisa
 Kisch, Thomas & Margo
 Hutcheson
 Kramer, Randy
 Krantz, Mary
 Lem Mon, Jean
 Leon, Luis & Katie
 Linebaugh, Jesse & Melissa
 Lonning, Craig & Judy
 Lorber, Fred & Mickey
 Ludwig, Bill & Joyce
 Lyford, Dick & Barb
 Maas, Tyler & Kim Feaker
 Mackaman, David & Laura
 MacKrell, Scott & Amy
 Marquardt, Steve & Sara
 McGreevy, Jeanette
 Medick, Jason & Daughters
 Melton, Mark
 Mirsky, Roman & Daniela *
 Moyer, Debra
 Mullins, Dan & Laurie
 Munier, Shirley
 Murphy, John & Sharon
 Murphy, Kathy
 Musgrove, Dawn & Dave *
 Nesbit, John & Ann
 Olson, Gretchen
 Pederson, Dennis & Cheryl
 Peterson, Mike & Margart
 Petrov, Vasil
 Pokorny, David & Betsy
 Pollard, David & Stephanie
 Pollard, Tom & Julita
 Pomerantz, Rose Lee
 Post, Scott & Diane
 Rabinowitz, Sheldon & Roselind
 Rask, Rick & LaRayne Lilley
 Rasley, June
 Ray, Robert & Billie

Raymond, Chad & Brian
 Ryerson
 Reynolds, Dennis & Charlotte
 Richards, Mike & Leighton
 Ricker, Ronald & Kathleen
 Rosenberg, Dr. Steven & Tracy
 Sammon, Brad & Jenny
 Schroeder, Diane
 Shadur, Dr. Craig & Kimberly
 Shiffler, Bryan & Lyn
 Shumaker, Bill
 Smith, Val & Elizabeth
 Spellman, Kevin & Stephany
 Spellman, Ted *
 Spevak, James
 Stevenson, Peter & Barb
 Bremner
 Strief, Charles & Peggy
 Swift, Tom & Roni
 Taylor, Dawn
 Tegrotenhuis, Jeff
 Tempero, Howard & Megan
 Textor, Jack & Susan
 Tiffany, Bill & Maureen
 Tiffany, John & Laura Martino
 Townsend, Rod & Jenny
 Tracy, Rob & Ann Steger *
 Truslow, Ed & Nancy
 Urban, Tom & Mary
 Vald, Roman & Christy *
 Van Hon, Thomas
 Ver Steeg, Dr. Dirk & Adele
 Voss, Sarah & Zach *
 Wallace, Sam & Sally
 Walsh, Phil & Sharon
 Watson Fuller, Lori *
 Westlund, Bob & Nancy
 White, Toby & Ruth
 Wieland, John & Denise
 Williams, Ted & Nancy
 Windsor, Stephanie
 Wirt, Brian & Kelly
 Wolnerman, Michael & Missy
 Young, Linda
 Zeiner, Andy
 Zisko, Tom & Dena Goblerud

Westwood News is published quarterly and distributed to all residents of Westwood by wonderful, volunteer neighborhood captains.