

# LBNA NEWS

*Lower Beaver Tales*



*A publication of the Lower Beaver Neighborhood Association*

## **LBNA Annual Potluck Picnic scheduled for Sept. 14!** **See page 3 for details.**

### **Of sofas, bike trails, and signs** *by Brian L. Millard*

It all started about 10 years ago with a sofa someone had dumped along MLK and no one seemed to care. I was appalled when I took a closer look. The scrub trees and brush were full of all kinds of dumped items. The LBNA was new and a few of us were looking for ways to improve our neighborhood. We contacted the city and they agreed to let us clean up the area from Clarkson to Madison along MLK.

That is where it all began. With a lot of sweat, a few cuts, and several bruises, we hauled 44 bags of trash, a half-dozen huge piles of concrete chunks, logs, metal, tires, shopping carts, and the remains of a meth lab.

Over the years, we cleared test sections and added fencing to keep out the 4-wheel-drive trucks. We enlisted the support of DM Public Works, Polk County manpower and equipment, DM Forestry, Polk County Betterment Grants, Polk County Conservation,

DM Parks, and Trees Forever. Names like Connolly, Vlassis, Stowe, Land, Cownie, Kozitza, Moore, and other city/county leaders jumped in to help the LBNA. A couple of floods held up progress at times, but we were determined to finish the job.

That's where the new neighborhood sign project came in. We went to Supervisor Angela Connolly to see if she could help us identify funding sources and place it at the River Place property. She came through once again for us. Our awesome neighborhood sign is to be installed later this year.



When the bike trail had to be moved, we went back to the drawing board. More than 50 trees were planted and post & chain went up to protect the newly renovated area.

All of this... because someone dumped a sofa in our neighborhood.

Change often has the strangest impetus!

#### **Association Officers**

Bob Harmon, <i>President</i>	274-5538
Brian Millard, <i>Vice President</i>	274-5038
Tom Vlassis, <i>Secretary</i>	277-7809
Lynn Cutshall, <i>Treasurer</i>	255-3367

#### **Members-At-Large:**

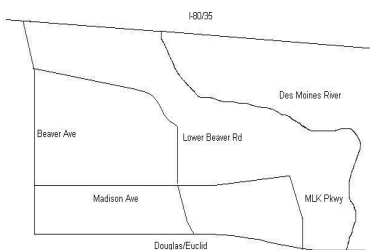
Velma Anderson	255-8427
Janet Herrold	279-3779
Debbie Moon-Davis	274-6455
Allan Olney	271-9225
Lesley Peacock	279-5701

#### **Who We Are**

An organization dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for over 2,300 households and businesses in the Lower Beaver Neighborhood. You are our neighborhood!

#### **Our Boundaries**

I-80/35 on the north; Douglas/Euclid Avenues on the south; Beaver Avenue on the west; the Des Moines River on the east.



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## The Board Room

### The President's Corner

Welcome to the annual edition of the LBNA News. And if you are new to the Lower Beaver Neighborhood, welcome to the neighborhood!

My wife Ann and I moved into our house on Lynner Drive 25 years ago as newlyweds. We were looking for a good neighborhood with affordable housing. We found a true fixer-upper and have been working on it ever since.



*President Bob Harmon*

Twenty-five years ago the neighborhood had a brand new Hy-Vee store, a Target, McDonald's, and Hardee's. Now, our Hy-Vee is set to downsize and the other local businesses are struggling to exist. Instead of an overgrown dump site, we now have a beautiful bike trail that we take our dog Stella (aka most-walked dog in the LBNA) for walks on. Woodlawn Elementary has closed but Samuelson has been renovated and expanded. What was an old brickyard used by off-road motorcycles is now the Tai Village.

Changes are inevitable. The Lower Beaver Neighborhood may never have a bunch of new luxury homes or a bustling retail center, but nor will we decline. We are one of the most stable neighborhoods in Des Moines. To keep it stable I think we should:

- ⇒ Continue to maintain our homes and yards and assist our neighbors to do the same.
- ⇒ Shop locally for goods and services.
- ⇒ Embrace our public spaces like Woodlawn Park, Trestle to Trestle Trail, and River Place.
- ⇒ Join civic associations and volunteer at your local schools and churches

Speaking of joining a civic association, please consider joining the LBNA! We need more members both young and old, families and retirees. Everyone is welcomed. In this newsletter is a form to sign up. We hope that you'll join us!

—Bob Harmon

### News & Notes

#### Membership Dues

Yearly membership dues, now only **\$20 per household** are due in February. You may pay your dues at the Annual Meeting in February, or renew by mail using the membership form on page 6. Memberships run February to February.

#### New Board Members Elected

Officer elections were held at the February 15, 2010, General Membership Annual Meeting at Polk County River Place.

Elected were **Bob Harmon**, President; **Brian Millard**, Vice President; **Tom Vlassis**, Secretary; and Directors-at-Large **Allan Olney** and **Lesley Peacock**.

#### Velma Anderson Honored

Each year, the LBNA presents the **Sophie Vlassis Volunteerism Award** to the LBNA board member who best exemplifies the tireless, do-anything attitude of the award's namesake, the LBNA's own **Sophie Vlassis**.

The 2010 **Sophie Vlassis Volunteerism Award** was presented to **Velma Anderson**, for her years of dedicated service to the LBNA, as well as her long-time community volunteerism.

### LBNA Committees

#### Beautification

Brian Millard, 274-5038

#### Business Development

Norman Goldberg, 277-7404

Brian Millard, 274-5038

#### Communications

Allan Olney, 271-9225

#### Community Relations

Brian Millard, 274-5038

#### MLK Enhancements

Brian Millard, 274-5038

#### SCRUB Day

Brian Millard, 274-5038

#### Special Events

Janet Herrold, 279-3779

Lynn Cutshall, 255-3367

#### Traffic

Lynn Cutshall, 255-3367

#### Welcoming/ Membership

Bob Harmon, 274-5538

Volunteering for a committee is fun! Not only can you make a difference in your neighborhood, you also have the opportunity to meet wonderful people and form new friendships!

Please contact any of the committee chairpersons if you are interested in volunteering. Your assistance is both welcomed and appreciated!



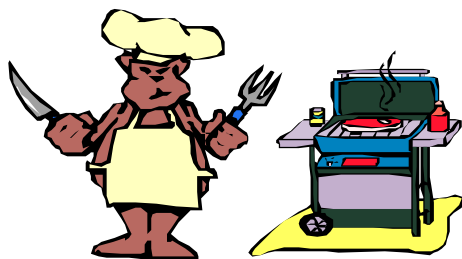
*Even the Easter Bunny finds time to volunteer for the LBNA!*

**Tuesday, September 14, 2010  
6:00 - 8:00 PM**

# LOWER BEAVER

NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION'S

## Annual POTLUCK PICNIC



### **Woodlawn Park**

*(South of the intersection of  
Lawnwoods and Twana Drives)*

**Drinks will be provided!**



*Please bring a main dish and a salad  
or dessert to share, along with  
your own table service and lawn chairs*

**DON'T MISS THE KIDS' ACTIVITIES!!!**

**Questions? Contact Janet Herrold, 279-3779, or Lynn Cutshall, 255-3367**

**SEE YOU THERE!!**

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## 'Special Events' sparkles! *by Janet Herrold & Lynn Cutshall*

We started out the year with a good turnout at our **Annual LBNA Meeting and Potluck** in February 2010. This is also the time of year that we have our annual membership drive and also our election of officers.

On June 11th and 12th, we had our **First Annual Area Garage Sales**. The Special Events Committee advertised that we were having garage sales in the Lower Beaver area on those dates. *Look forward to this again next year!*

July 3rd brought our **First Annual 4th of July Kiddies' Parade**, which was held on the Woodlawn School grounds (see pictures at right). We had about 25-30 children and adults. There were games with prizes and refreshments. We also had our neighborhood potbellied pig. *Keep this in mind for 2011!*



## General Crocker 'bridges' history past to present *by Bob Harmon*



General Marcellus Monroe Crocker was born in Indiana, and attended West Point in 1847-1849; however, he dropped out to take up the practice of law in Des Moines, Iowa.

When the Civil War began, he gave up his law practice. He served in the Union Army with his regiment in Missouri before being tapped to command a new regiment. At Shiloh, he was briefly in

command of a brigade and immediately afterward, he was given charge of a brigade of Iowa troops with which he was long associated.

This brigade was made up of the 11th, 13th, 15th, and 16th Iowa Volunteer Infantry. This was on April 27, 1862; he was in command of his brigade until May 1863. It was called the 'Crocker Brigade,' and was one of Iowa's most distinguished. Even after Marcellus Crocker was promoted to a higher field of duty, the men still referred to themselves as 'Crocker's Brigade.' This Brigade stayed together throughout the war.

General Crocker fought at Cornith, Mississippi, and was in command of a division during the Vicksburg Campaign, particularly distinguishing himself at Champion Hill. From the summer of 1863 to the fall of 1864, his division was engaged in operations in Mississippi and Louisiana. During the movements of the Corps to join Sherman's Army

in the Atlanta Campaign, Crocker was forced to relinquish command due to ill health. He suffered from tuberculosis.

He was briefly ordered to duty in the New Mexico Territory for health reasons, but was sufficiently recovered by the end of the year to be ordered to report to Thomas's Army at Nashville, Tennessee. However, before reporting, he was ordered to Washington, D.C. There was much speculation about Crocker's possible assignment to command in West Virginia. By the time he reached the nation's capital, the war was nearing its conclusion, and his health, having worsened, precluded active field duty. He died in Washington, D.C., on August 26, 1865, at the age of 35.

General Crocker was buried at Woodland Cemetery in Des Moines. Crocker's family was eventually interred next to him.

In addition to the recently dedicated Euclid Avenue bridge at the Des Moines River, Crocker School, that stood in Des Moines on the North side of School Street between Sixth Avenue and Seventh Street from 1870-1962, was named after Crocker, as is the city's present-day Crocker Street.



## The Community Page



### Polk County Update

*By Angela Connolly*  
Polk County Board of Supervisors  
5<sup>th</sup> District

As I write this, I know many citizens have been through pain and anguish over the wet basements associated with our recent flash flooding. Polk County is working to assess the needs of our citizens in helping them get back in to their homes. If you have a flood-related issue and need assistance, please contact our Public Works Department at 286-3705.

#### River Place Flood Wall

Polk County began work on the construction of a permanent flood wall across the

rear of the property to protect River Place in mid-July but the work has been delayed due to several days of excessive rains. This project is expected to take approximately 120 work days, not including rain days. Work will start on the west side of the building.

#### Trails on Beaver

The Beaver Drive Project is currently in the design stage with public input meetings to be held early next year. We are awaiting feedback from the City of Des Moines on the Public Service Agreement to split the costs.

#### Trestle to Trestle

Construction repair work on the project will continue once the rains subside. The plans are dependent upon obtaining pylons from the Missouri River. Signage is scheduled to be complete this Fall, the new sign will be located in front of River Place.

#### Polk Receives Profits from Iowa Events Center

Global Spectrum, management company for the Iowa Events Center, has notified Polk County that we will be receiving a profit of \$536,563 for FY 09/10. This is the largest profit since the Iowa Events Center began operations in 2005. Prior to the construction of Wells Fargo Arena and Hy-Vee Hall, Polk County subsidized the operations of Veterans Memorial Auditorium and the Convention Complex at over \$800,000 dollars annually. Since engaging Global Spectrum to manage/operate the IEC facilities, Polk County has not had to provide any subsidy for the entire complex (four buildings, Hy-Vee Hall, Wells Fargo Arena, Convention Complex and Veterans Memorial Auditorium). Since Global became operator of the facilities, Polk County has received a profit. The partnership between Polk County and Global Spectrum has truly been a "win-win" for Polk County taxpayers.

### 'Priority Snow Streets' *by Pat Kozitza, Deputy Des Moines Public Works Director*

The Department of Public Works has purchased several more wing plow units to clear snow routes faster. Upon completion of the snow routes, ten of those units will be available for clearing residential streets. The size of the units, however, limits their use to streets with no parking.

Wing plows were used on a pilot basis last year on residential streets in neighborhoods where residents agreed to no parking with excellent results. Based on those results, the Department of Public Works is prepared to expand the use of wing plows in neighborhoods where residents agree to no parking throughout the neighborhood.

To qualify, neighborhoods need to request no parking during snow removal operations by **September 20, 2010**. If approved, the neighborhood streets will be signed 'Priority Snow Street – No Parking' and wing plows will be used to clear the streets this winter. Of course, cars parked on the street during plowing operations will be ticketed. The efficiency of using wing plows increases overall efficiency and

will permit the plowing of streets after every storm following the snow routes.

The Department of Public Works now has the equipment and personnel to significantly improve the quality of snow removal on residential streets. With your cooperation in relocating vehicles off the street during snow removal operations, the Department of Public Works can clear

roadways curb-to-curb and minimize residue snow on the surface and subsequent icing conditions. Neighborhoods not requesting a change will continue to enjoy the current

level of service provided in snow and ice control.

Questions regarding this possible snow and ice control program improvement may be directed to **Street Maintenance Administrator Bruce Braun, 237-1371**, or **Deputy Public Works Director Pat Kozitza, 237-1425**.





LOWER BEAVER NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION  
MEMBERSHIP FORM - 2011

**\$20/YEAR PER HOUSEHOLD**

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Home e-mail(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone(s): 1: \_\_\_\_\_ 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Work e-mail(s): 1: \_\_\_\_\_ 2: \_\_\_\_\_

New membership/renewal of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed. Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to: Lower Beaver Neighborhood Association (LBNA)

Mail to: Lower Beaver Neighborhood Association (LBNA)  
% Des Moines Neighbors  
1620 Pleasant St.  
Des Moines, IA 50309

DUES PAID DURING CALENDAR YEAR 2011  
ARE EFFECTIVE THROUGH  
ANNUAL MEETING IN FEBRUARY, 2012

\*\*\*\*\*  
\* **Be sure to join us Saturday, September 18, for the *Beaverdale Fall Festival Parade!*** \*  
\* **The LBNA will be marching, joined by our friends from the Tai Dam Village.** \*  
\* **The parade starts at 10 am — be sure to get there early for a good seat!** \*  
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**LBNA Remembers...**



**2002**

***MLK then...***



**2010**

***MLK now...***

**Upcoming  
Special Events**

LBNA's  
**Concert in the Park**  
at

**Woodlawn Park**

(Lawnwoods & Twana Drives)

**Saturday, October 2, 2010**  
**@ 5:00pm**

Bring your neighbors, and your  
lawn chairs, and enjoy the musical  
stylings of

**SIG'S BAND**

*Playing a variety of polkas, waltzes, marches,  
and patriotic music!*