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March 2006

THE NEWSLETTER FOR THE ARCADIA COMMUNITY OF KALAMAZOO, MICHIGAN

Board of Directors

2005 - 2006

Rex Brueggemann
806 Ellendale, 372--2087

Lee Ann & Mike Claussen
1010 Dobbin Drive
544-1527

Hans Engelke
640 Weaver, 344-1463

Bill Fritsch
925 Boswell Lane, 375-5067

Ruth Krueger
3706 Barrington, 375-0114

Andrew Phillips
3649 Lancaster, 375-2393

Bob Totten
3220 West Michigan
375-5480

Jamie Whitmore
854 Weaver, 345-5808

Doug Williams
858 Dobbin, 375-6926

WHO TO CALL:

Public Safety - Emergency 911
Non-emergency 337-8120
Animal Control 383-8775
Zoning/Trash Violations
337-8221
Parking Violations 342-6383
Public Works 337-8002
Silent Observer 343-2100
KVET (suspicious drug
activity) 337-8880

Arcadia School Playground Improvement

The Arcadia Elementary playground renovation is underway! Students have worked hard on fundraising for years and are finally seeing the fruit of their efforts. Some of the aged and dangerous equipment has been removed, and two pieces of new equipment will be delivered later this month!

Our playground will be a "community build." Phase I will be installed on Saturday, March 25 (weather permitting--alternate date April 22).

Volunteers are needed in various capacities. No experience or construction skill is necessary. If you can join us on March 25, please contact Tim and Bobbi Lane, 834 Ellendale, at 353-0844.

Other needs for March 25 are donations of food and beverages for the installation team: if you have a connection with someone at a local restaurant who may be able to provide breakfast, lunch, and/or beverages for throughout the day, please contact Lauren Keller, 3615 Lancaster, at 372-6873.

Fundraising is underway for the next phases of our project. We have a long way to go before the entire playground is updated. No donation is too small. Please help if you can. Donations are being accepted by Namita Sharma, 806 Ellendale, 372-2087, or at the school by Ramon Baca, Principal, 337-0530.

Your input is important to the Playground Committee. Please contact any of the persons listed above if you have questions, comments, or suggestions. Thank you!

2006 Garage Sale Date

The Arcadia Neighborhood Garage Sale will be on Saturday, May 20 this year. Please mark your calendars and watch for a future announcement.

New Arcadia School Flower Garden Planned

Mrs. Lami-Reed, Arcadia Elementary School Art Teacher, passes the following information on to Arcadia neighborhood residents:

Arcadia School has a garden on the West side facing the parking lot, which has become overgrown and messy. Mrs. Borak (second grade teacher) and I decided to bring it back to life with student and community help. We applied for and received a Good Neighbor Grant from the Kalamazoo Foundation in the amount of \$1000.

Thus far parents and students have cleared and tilled the plot and we will have metal borders installed by a landscaping firm in the spring. Later, we ask your association members to share some of your perennial plants with us and invite you to join us on our workdays. With our \$1000 we plan to purchase our border, select plants and purchase tools, bulbs, fertilizer, and seed. We will need wood chips for our wheelchair accessible pathway (let us know if anyone can provide chips for us). We also hope to involve students from Kalamazoo Central High through the student organization, "Activists for Action."

The focal point of our garden will be the installation and dedication of our own Peace Pole. The Peace Pole is a hand crafted monument that displays the message "May Peace Prevail on Earth." This phrase will be carved in four languages represen-

ANNUAL DUES — \$5.00/residence

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____

I would like to hear more about serving on the Board or helping in other ways.

Mail to: Hans Engelke, 640 Weaver, Kalamazoo, MI 49006

tative of our students' cultures. Peace Poles are located all over the world. (www.worldpeace.org/peacepoles). We are integrating peace themes into our curriculum and hoping to create a culture of kindness and conflict resolution. We will keep you informed of our progress and invite the neighborhood to participate in our work and in our dedication ceremony in the spring.

If you have any interest in bringing peace issues to our attention or to assist in the garden or classroom, contact Mrs. Lami-Reed at lamireedl@kalamazoo.k12.mi.us

KPS Bond Vote on May 2

A New Middle School in Arcadia?

by Tom Thornburg and Doug Williams

Janice Brown, KPS Superintendent, and two school board trustees discussed the pending KPS bond request with parents at a meeting of the Arcadia School Parents Association on February 28th at Arcadia Elementary. Brown outlined the elements of the \$85.5 million proposal, which amounts to an extra \$57.50 in school property tax for a \$100,000 home (or 1.15 mils). Much of the requested funding would be allocated for maintenance of the district's aging buildings. Brown noted that the "youngest" building in the school district is K-Central High, which is 30 years old.

The proposed bond also would provide needed expansion of facilities, notably (1) a new building replacing the inadequate facilities at Chime Elementary, and (2) a fourth middle school building to allow for transitioning to a "6th through 8th grade" educational format for middle schoolers. Currently, the three existing middle school buildings do not have sufficient room to absorb more 6th graders. Anticipated enrollment increases resulting from "The Kalamazoo Promise are likely to overcrowd the present space for K - 6th grades.

One of the roughly eight sites under consideration for the new middle school is the undeveloped WMU Foundation property to the northwest of the Arcadia neighborhood bordering on Drake Road. If the bond passes on May 2nd, KPS intends to make its siting decision within a matter of months, so that the 3-year planning and construction process can be completed by the Fall of 2009.

The Arcadia Neighborhood Association encourages you to vote thoughtfully on May 2 and to let us know your feelings about the siting of a new school in our neighborhood. Stay tuned for announcements of future neighborhood discussions.

W. Michigan Ave. — it will get worse

We have suffered through construction at both ends of West Michigan Ave. (at Howard and Drake), cutting of trees, installing new power poles (set back five or ten more feet from the road), torn up sidewalks and temporary replacements. Scheduled to be completed by the end of April is the moving of all wires (electrical, phone and cable TV) from the old poles to the new ones. then our problems really begin.

MUST DO! For the neighborhood, the city has scheduled a meeting at Arcadia School (lunch room) on Monday, April 17th, at 7 p.m. YOU should plan on being there.

Discussed will be the plans for completing the reconstruction of West Michigan; schedules, when lanes will be closed, sometimes no left turns off West Michigan or no left turns off of side streets onto West Michigan. There may be questions concerning retaining walls or possibly dust or any other questions.

It is going to be a difficult summer, but the City is trying to work with all of us. The City has appointed Mrs. Debbie Droppers as our contact person when there are questions (or problems). Her e-mail is eventkzoo@chartermi.net or phone number is 388-2830. If problems still remain call one of us on the Board.

If there is time at this meeting, the Board has several other topics on which they would like input from you. Your ideas and suggestions are needed.

Barrington Drive to be Resurfaced this Summer *by Tom Thornburg*

Recent communications with Assistant City Engineer John Seelman have confirmed that Barrington Drive is scheduled to undergo resurfacing during the Summer of 2006. This block-long street was previously omitted from the City's previous two resurfacing projects in the Arcadia neighborhood. The precise schedule for the resurfacing work is still unclear, though Seelman has stated that the street improvement will include repaving of neighbors' "aprons." Affected residents will get a NOTICE of the proposed activities a couple weeks before construction begins. For further information, contact the Department of Public Works or Asst. City Engineer Seelman at 337-9766.

Safe, Sound and Secure

The Kalamazoo County Consortium will hold its fifth annual conference for senior citizens. This half-day conference will be at the Third Reformed Church (2345 North 10th Street) on Wed, May 10. Continental breakfast, registration and blood pressure screening are from 8-9 AM. Workshops on personal safety, protection of identity, pharmaceutical safety, financial exploitation, guardianship rights, and internet fraud will be from 9 AM 12:15 and followed by lunch. There is no charge for this event. To learn more or pre-register for the event, call 383-8933 or e-mail safesoundsecure@netzero.com by May 2. Special needs transportation is available.

Arcadia has a New Community

Policing Officer *by Jamie Whitmore*

The Arcadia Neighborhood has been assigned a Community Policing Officer (CPO) to replace Cory Ghiringhelli. Officer Jennifer Haba has taken over the position and can be reached by e-mail at habaj@kalamazoo.org or voice mail at 337-8391. Officer Haba will be at the next Neighborhood Watch Meeting on Tuesday, March 21st - 7:00 p.m. at Arcadia Elementary (either the Library or Cafeteria). Remember to use the hot spot form and come to the meetings to talk with neighbors, Arcadia Board Members, and City Officials about your concerns. If we do not hear about them we cannot help.

