



## ALL THE NEWS THAT'S FIT TO PRINT

By Sharon Babbitt

200 Park Avenue

### NEW YEAR, NEW BOARD

Happy New Year, everyone! Here's wishing we all keep those New Year's resolutions, even if they are holdovers from last year and beyond.

Yes, we had our "required annual meeting" on January 9<sup>th</sup>, and if you weren't there you missed some good food and good fun, and the chance to vote for our 2010 Board of Directors. We chose volunteers to fill the five open Director positions. They are: Tracy Dreessen, John Huggins, Sharon Babbitt, Carol Mattox and Maxine Gotto. Tracy, John, Sharon and Carol will serve for two years and Maxine for one. Nate Watson and Kyle Muschall are the holdovers from last year and will remain on the Board for 2010.

Following the election, the new Board members put their heads together to vote for FPNA officers for 2010. Everyone was in agreement, nobody argued, and the choices were made. Sharon will be the new President; Kyle will be the Vice President; Tracy will serve as Secretary; and John will be Treasurer. In addition, three committee chairpersons were named. Amy Dixon will continue as DNA representative; Tracy and Kyle will keep up their excellent work as Editor and Publisher of the newsletter; Michelle Mutchler-Burns has agreed to chair the new Membership committee; and Melissa Head will head up (what?) the Events and Fundraising committee. We thank all the volunteers for undertaking this task. The work can be a time consuming responsibility and the pay is, well, nothing, so all volunteers are to be commended.

### NEXT MEETING

Be sure to attend the next meeting at 7:00 p.m. on February 19<sup>th</sup> at 211 Park Ave. This is the home of Melissa Head, our newly elected Council Bluffs City Council member, but we assure you that she is still the same Melissa that she was only a few short months ago. She plans a Valentine's Day theme for her meeting and we are curious to see how she reconciles Valentine pink with that dramatic wallpaper in her newly renovated kitchen! If you also want to know, you will have to show up. See you there!

### AND THE WINNER IS

We are talking about the recent Holiday Exterior Decorating Contest for our neighborhood. The Directors served as judges and it was very difficult to choose only one winner. The entire neighborhood was lit up like, well, a Christmas tree. We could have renamed it "Candy Cane Lane." But we knew we had to bite the bullet and make our choices. The

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# MICHELLE'S MESSAGE

By Michelle Mutchler-Burns

164 Park Avenue

Each time a Real Estate appears on the lawn of a neighborhood home, it saddens me to think that our neighborhood is going to lose someone; a friend that we've shared a celebration with, a meeting, a picnic, a party, or clean-up. Perhaps we've just greeted each other in passing, or a wave across the street, at the very least, they are our neighbor. People leave for various reasons and be it happy or sad; I'd like to think no one would leave the neighborhood because of the neighborhood. Given the choice, I would bet we wouldn't trade our neighbors; however, there is not much we can do to keep neighbors from moving on and hopefully, they'll stay close, either in distance or metaphorically. There are at least five neighborhood homes for sale, currently. Additionally there are several rentals available. I mention this because word-of-mouth is a great way to spread the news that there are properties available in the neighborhood. I can't think of a better way to choose your neighbor.

On a happier note, The Fairmount Park Neighborhood Association recently learned that our grant for custom signs has been approved. It's been about a year since we first mentioned the artisan-crafted signs that we proposed. These signs are for the lawns of the homes currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places, as well as the remaining 17 homes that were determined to be individually eligible. I believe there are 19 in all, remembering that 401 Park Avenue was also considered "individually eligible" prior to its demolition. I'm sure the details surrounding the approval will be mentioned by others in this Newsletter; however, I mention this because I will be calling and knocking on doors seeking signatures of the homeowner(s) to allow the signs be placed as a permanent part of the property (of course, you could choose to have the sign placed on the house, a fence, etc., keeping in mind that it is a badge of honor and it should be placed in a location easily readable from the street) As the signs are completed, you will need to call "811" for information about buried utilities if you choose to have it on your lawn.



SHOW THE LOVE  
FOR YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

By joining us at the F.P.N.A Meeting  
February 19th at 7:00 p.m.  
211 Park Avenue

# ALL THE NEWS THAT'S FIT TO PRINT

By Sharon Babbitt  
Continued From Pg.1

200 Park Avenue

winner, and there could only be one according to our rules, was the home of Bill Mann & Bob Pashek (photo on pg. 7) at 151 Park Ave. We felt it exhibited the best coordination between decorations and style of home, both during the day and after dark, and for this the owners received our \$100 prize and the chance to keep the traveling plaque for a year. There were four honorable mention awards named by the judges. They are: 906 Grandview; 226 High School; 463 Huntington; and 504 Glen. Many more deserved as well. Thanks to everyone who dressed up their homes for the season. It truly beautified our neighborhood in a fantastic way. If you want to see the winners, there is every chance that their decorations are still up because who would want to freeze their (oops) trying to take it all down right now!

## WHAT TO DO ABOUT WEATHER PROBLEMS

Yes, what can we do when severe weather hits? All the snow needs to be cleared from walks and driveways; maybe the power goes off and we have no heat; someone might be stranded; maybe there's a fire—the list goes on. After the first bad snowstorm a few weeks ago, the Directors met to try to come up with some sort of plan for use in our hour of need. Although we couldn't do too much on short notice, this topic needs to be revisited so that we will at least have a telephone list so we can check up on our neighbors. You will be hearing more on this topic in the future. Meanwhile, if anybody has a good idea that ought to be included in the plan we will one day devise, please let any Director know or bring it to any meeting. We must work out something and even other neighborhoods are looking to us for a model plan.

## BOWS

Hey, have you noticed that our holiday bows are still attached to their poles despite the high winds and bad weather we've experienced lately? Hats off to the folks who attached them because they did a marvelous job! Unfortunately, the weather has been so bad that there may not be much left of them come spring—and it will probably be spring before we can get close enough to the poles to take them down. We have plenty of ribbon to make new ones for next year and that's what we'll be doing in a few months. However, we may forgo the suggestion to serve wine at our bow making events because we do want our bows to have certain uniformity about them!

## DUES ARE DUE

Most of the people, if not all, who attended our recent meeting paid their dues, but there are many of us who have merely overlooked that important duty. Our dues remain at \$20 per year, the lowest of all neighborhood associations in Council Bluffs. We are able to do a great deal with our measly \$20 per household and we want to keep it that way. Won't you bring your payment to our next meeting, or send it to our new Treasurer, John Huggins, 206 Park Ave.? We can't keep our wonderful association functioning without your help.

## THE LAST WORD

As your newly elected President, I wish to thank all of you who voted at the recent election and for caring enough to support the FPNA. We look forward to a great year ahead. Our new Board will be meeting in the next couple of weeks and among the topics for discussion will be our ideas for our future goals. Look for more on this subject in the next newsletter. Also, thanks to Nate Watson for serving as our President for the past two years. His leadership placed FPNA on a firm foundation. Thanks, too, to Michelle Mutchler-Burns for her devoted service from the inception of FPNA to the present. We know she will continue to be a force for good in the neighborhood and we count on her help with many of our ongoing projects. Until next time.....Sharon

# January Meeting Minutes

By Tracy Dreessen

126 Park Avenue

Meeting Start 8:10

## Nate

-Contingency Plan (emergency plan) was put into action last major snow storm. We still need to work out the kinks but it can only get better here.

## Sharon

-Community Foundation Grant – The Pott. Co. Community Foundation has approved our grant for signs to be placed in the yards of 20 historic homes (determined by the Tall Grass Historians)

-Bob Paschek and Bill Mann are going to build the signs from period wood

Broadway United Methodist Church will act as our fiscal agent (due to 501(c)(3))

Total amount awarded was the most out of any neighborhood who applied - \$4,418!

## Nate 8:15 to 8:39

-CB Historic Preservation Alliance gave FPNA \$300 for our treasury for the help that Sharon Babbitt provided in coordinating the Holiday Homes Tour

-The Head of City Parks states that Fairmount Park will receive some work after the Playland Park receives a much needed make-over.

The Old Lodge will be torn down and replaced with something much safer.

-Jan. 21st From 7:30 – 9:00 at the Scott Conference Center, there will be a fund raiser for the Neighborhood Center. This year is meant to honor the mayors of both Omaha and Council Bluffs – to help improve relations between both cities. Everyone is encouraged to attend and show support. Minimum cost is

\$25 per person.

If you want to attend and money is a factor, please contact Nate Watson or Ryan Willer at Neighborhood Center.

-The Updated Bylaws were handed out with a Financial review of 2009 New bylaws show annexation of Grandview and the Treasurer position being separated into 2 positions – Treasurer and Secretary

-Someone asked for clarification of 501(c)(3) status – We can now be considered a charity – more than just a benefit to homeowners – but to the community as a whole

-CB Mayor Hanafan is starting “Neighborhood Cabinet” – A promise he made campaigning

Meets monthly with department heads and 4 cabinet members which include 1 member from the following organizations: EEA (east end alliance), DNA (downtown neighborhood alliance), NBA (north broadway alliance), and Roberts Park.

To discuss neighborhood issues and receive direct answers from the Mayor himself

The DNA will have a website soon with links to each neighborhood association

-Mayor approved signs for our neighborhood which Kyle Muschall has designed – including an entrance sign.

## Nate Recaps 2009 8:39 to 8:55

-Neighborhood Center

-Newly formed NAs

-Newsletter off and running in a new format – Kyle Muschall with Tracy Dreessen’s help

-401 Park Demolished

-Losses and gains of Neighbors – Margery McKee and Sue Reiser passed and addition of Rory Fent

-Garage Sale

-Amy Dixon – special representative to DNA

-Clean Sweep

-Picnic

-Holiday Homes Tour

-Holiday Party

-What a YEAR!! Wow!!

## New Board Voted in!!!

Tracy Dreessen – New Board Member – 2 Year Term

Carol Maddox – New Board Member – 2 Year Term

John Huggins – New Board Member – 2 Year Term

Maxine Gotto – New Board Member – 1 Year Term

Sharon Babbitt – Re-Elected Board Member – 2 Year Term

Kyle Muschall – Previous Board Member with 1 more year remaining

Nate Watson – Previous Board Member with 1 more year remaining

**“Not  
everything  
that can  
be counted  
counts  
and not  
everything  
that counts  
can be  
counted”  
Albert  
Einstein**



# NO TWO ARE EVER ALIKE

## How Snowflakes Are Formed

Snowflakes are really ice crystals that are formed in the clouds by water vapor.

When the atmosphere's temperature dips to below 32 degrees Fahrenheit; moisture changes to ice. Snowflake formation is affected by a variety of factors including air currents, humidity and temperature.

Particles of dirt that were trapped in the water vapor affect the weight and durability of the ice crystals.

Because of these extenuating factors, no two snowflakes are exactly alike -- though there is no scientific reason that prevents it. Snowflakes may look the same but will not have the same number of water molecules the exact amount of oxygen and hydrogen.

## Little-Known Facts about Snow & Snowflakes

The largest snowflake recorded in the Guinness Book of World Records fell at Fort Keogh, Montana and was 15 inches wide and 8 inches thick.

Scientists study snowflakes by spreading a chemical compound over a glass plate and waiting until a snowflake lands there. The compound immediately covers the snowflake and hardens. When the snowflake melts, it leaves behind a plastic case that shows its exact structure!

When combined, windblown snow and black dirt make what is called "snirt".

A snow storm becomes a blizzard when visibility is under  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile and the storm continues for more than 3 hours with winds of 35 mph.

Stampede Pass, Washington averages 430 inches of snow per year. No wonder it's known as the snow capital of the United States!

Guess what, it can get cold enough that it doesn't snow! Because snow is frozen water, if there are not enough water droplets in the air it can't snow.

You probably know that it snows when water is lifted into the sky from rivers, lakes, and oceans as water vapor. You can not see water vapor but it is there. There is enough in the air to cover the earth with 3 feet of water. The warmer the air the more water vapor there is.

You can make your own cloud by breathing in cold weather. Or, try breathing on a mirror; there will be a clear gray cloud on it!

For it to snow the tops of the clouds must be below 0 degrees Celsius, or 32 degrees Fahrenheit.

Snow can come from any cloud that is layered.

Sometimes the snow can be feet deep in one place while it is bare in another because the wind has blown all the snow off that spot.

As snow falls snowflakes connect to make bigger snowflakes.

Snow at the North and South Pole reflect heat into space!! That happens because the ice acts like a mirror with the heat of the sun, and the heat bounces off the ice and into space.



# MYSTERY SOLVED

By Anonymous

The following incident occurred right here in our own neighborhood (last names omitted to protect the innocent): Amy, Marie, Melissa, and Maxine were talking about Christmas decorations on houses and wondered why John's house was never spruced up for the holiday. John said he had exactly the number of decorations outside as inside—zero. Well, that was like waving a red flag in front of a (pardon the comparison) bull. The plan was hatched.

Amy found two lighted wreaths (never used) in her garage, but they had no bows. Enter Sharon with two bows. Cindy had lengths and lengths of unused garland. Some lighted boxes were discovered at Menard's (on sale). Melissa had some electrical cords. Bill and Bob devised a ruse to get John out of the house for the evening. Maxine arrived. The culprits were off and running, taking advantage of their small "window of opportunity" to get the dirty deed done! Kyle happened by with camera in hand (no lie). John came home. It was late at night (Bill and Bob had kept him a long time just in case) and the streets had become icy and treacherous. John had to carefully pick his way up the street, never looking up until he reached home. He was met by beautifully lighted garland, wreaths and fake Christmas packages. "Holy #@&\*+! This isn't my house. Wait, it must be my house because those are my porch spindles," he said. (An exact quote, or so we were told.)

Bottom line—after a month of wondering, the culprits were revealed at the FPNA meeting in January. The photo was presented to John, whereupon he said that indictments would be issued shortly.



Photo by Kyle Muschall

## DATES TO REMEMBER

January 18th  
Martin Luther King Jr.  
Holiday

February 19th  
F.P.N.A. February Meeting

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Bring in your family, friends, or neighbors to volunteer as a group or come in individually. Special projects welcome!

Volunteer Opportunities  
Cooks  
Meal Servers  
Van Drivers  
Child Care  
Activity Coordinators  
Donation Sorters

Please contact Volunteer  
Coordinator Tiffanie Teeple  
712-323-4416  
[tteeple@themicahhouse.org](mailto:tteeple@themicahhouse.org)

The MICA House is an emergency family homeless shelter. Their mission is to provide a safe, secure and nurturing environment for families and single women who are experiencing the crisis of homelessness



1415 Avenue J  
Council Bluffs, Iowa 51501

# Tax Season '10

**F**ree tax preparation and free e-file will be available throughout the tax season in Council Bluffs at the Iowa Works site located at 300 West Broadway. You can also receive a full range of additional services and opportunities. The Iowa Works site opens the week of January 25th!

## VITA PLUS SITES OFFER THESE SERVICES (SOME SERVICES NOT ALWAYS AVAILABLE):

Free bank accounts: get your refund faster and safer through direct deposit!

Free credit reports and personal advising: certain days only

Financial Education Seminars: Learn something new while you're waiting!

Refund Splitting: Spend Some, Save Some and Invest Some of your refund

Visits by other professionals in the community, referrals for other services and information to help you and your family.

**Important Notes:** In extreme weather, our sites may close. Contact 2-1-1 or check for cancelations on the TV stations and websites in Omaha.

What to bring to ensure your tax preparation process goes as smoothly as possible:

- Social security cards or ITINs for self, spouse, and dependents.
- Photo Identification
- Copy of 2008 tax returns (especially IA state return)
- All W-2 and 1099 forms (Interest, Dividend, Miscellaneous, retirement, SSA, State (G))
- Child care provider info (Name, address, EIN/SSN) and amounts paid
- For direct deposit, bank account and routing number.
- Property tax receipts and mortgage interest statements, Closing Statement on new homes
- For Itemized Deductions: medical expenses, charitable contributions, 2008 State refund
- Education expense receipts
- Gambling Winnings
- Energy Credit Certificates of Authenticity, Sales Tax Receipts on New Cars,
- Both spouses must be present to sign return or in case of divorce/separation, may need spouse's name and SSN (Alimony/Filing Separate)

# COMING SOON

**TO DOWNTOWN COUNCIL BLUFFS!**

Show support for our local downtown businesses by visiting the Kitchen Emporium when it opens in the next couple of weeks.

Located at 805 S. Main

Phone 712-352-2022

Website

<http://kitchenemporiumandwineshop.com/>

## Holiday Decor

Bill Mann and Bob Pashek display their F.P.N.A certificate for winning the 2009 Exterior Holiday Decorating Contest. Along with their certificate they received a \$100.00 prize and their name engraved on a travelling plaque. Congratulations to both of them and all the honorable mentions.



Photo by Kyle Muschall

# THE Fairmount Press

The Newspaper of the Fairmount Park Neighborhood Association

200 Park Avenue Council Bluffs, Iowa 51503  
[fairmountparkna@aol.com](mailto:fairmountparkna@aol.com)

Sharon Babbitt	President
Kyle Muschall	Vice President/ Publisher
Tracy Dreessen	Secretary/Editor
John Huggins	Treasurer
Amy Dixon	Special Representative

Sharon Babbitt	Board Member (2012)
Kyle Muschall	Board Member (2011)
Tracy Dreessen	Board Member (2012)
Nate Watson	Board Member (2011)
John Huggins	Board Member (2012)
Carol Maddox	Board Member (2012)
Maxine Gotto	Board Member (2011)

## Have an Opinion? Please Share!

**W**e welcome any submission from a member that constructively furthers a topic of current public interest. Of course, opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Association or its membership. Any submission must be received by the first day of the month for inclusion.

## COPIES PROVIDED BY THE



**Yes!** I want to be an active member of the Fairmount Park Neighborhood Association. Please find enclosed a check for annual dues in the amount of \$20.00 per household.

My Name and Spouse's/Significant Other's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Children's Names and Ages: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Telephone Numer: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Remit to:** Chad Fent, Secretary Treasurer, 439 Glen Avenue Council Bluffs, Iowa 51503



**Yes!** I want to purchase a Fairmount Park Neighborhood Association banner.

Please find enclosed a check for the Banner fee of \$10.00

(Or additional amounts of \_\_\_\_\_ for additional banners totaling \_\_\_\_\_.)

You must be a paid member to purchase a banner

My Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Telephone Numer: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Remit to:** Michelle Mutchler-Burns, Vice President, 407 Glen Avenue Council Bluffs, Iowa 51503 or to Sharon Babbitt, Board Member, 200 Park Avenue Council Bluffs, Iowa 51503