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ALL THE NEWS THAT IS FIT TO PRINT

By Sharon Babbitt

200 Park Avenue

ONCE A YEAR EVENT

That would be the annual meeting of the FPNA at 6:30, January 25th, 2014. Once again, it will be hosted by Kyle and Cindy Muschall, 332 Glen. They are generously providing all the food for this event and it promises to be excellent, as always. And, since 332 Glen is easy to find, we don't have a good excuse for not attending unless it is a snow storm, tornado, flood, or other major catastrophe. See you there.

This meeting is the most important one of all because it is where the election of Board members takes place, and four positions will be vacant—those of Sharon Babbitt, Michelle Mutchler-Burns, Dave Huggins, and Carol Mattox. The other three positions, those of Kyle Muschall, Linda Ring, and Nate Watson, will not expire for another year. This was arranged deliberately so there would always be some experience on the Board from year to year. If you wish to run for election, this meeting will be the time to throw your hat in the ring. After this election, the new Board will retire to hold its first meeting of the 2014 term, where the officers will be named. You can see how important it is to make informed choices for this Board as everything that occurs in 2014 will be guided by them and the officers they appoint. Technically, the only folks eligible to vote are paid FPNA members, and it would be great if you can come prepared to pay your \$20 per family (we need the money but more on that below). If you happen to have paid your dues in the last month (and there's only one family that did so, we think), then your payment went toward your 2014 membership. If that family was you, then you know who you are. If you forget to bring your dues, and you swear in blood that you will pay later, we will believe you and you can still vote, but, remember this—we *know where you live*.

HOLIDAY DECORATING AWARD

In December, the Board rode around in Carol's spacious vehicle (or perhaps it would be more correct to say that we *raced around until we told her to slow down*) and viewed the many exterior decorations in our neighborhood. It wasn't easy to pin down the best one as they all had merit, but our final choice was the home at 420 Glen owned by Cindi Ostronic and John Kmeicik. Their décor is very classy and speaks to the beautiful exterior of their home. Cindi and John will be presented with the traveling plaque and a \$100 check at the annual meeting. Honorable Mentions are listed by address below, and we congratulate every homeowner for the thoughtfulness they obviously put into decorating for the holiday season.

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The President's Corner

Kyle Muschall

332 Glen Avenue

The December issue is a little late this month but I'm sure the Holidays took a toll on all of us; another year is coming to a close and looking forward to the year to come. It was a banner year for the FPNA, figuratively and literally.

I'll start with the Banner Identification Pole project. We completed two phases of the project to install our poles with banners and flower baskets, a total of eleven poles have been installed thus far. I want to thank all the folks who volunteered their time, expertise and especially dues to get this project to its current milestone.

Sharon Babbitt is our grant writer extraordinaire without her wordsmith flair we would not have received the funding to make the project happen. Dave Huggins and Mike Ring, along with myself, took on the installation task. Although it was some tiring, dirty work it was very rewarding to see the finished poles be such a striking presence in the environment. Michelle Mutchler-Burns our resident horticulturist did a Herculean task of keeping the flower baskets watered, fed and looking beautiful. She is already visualizing next year's baskets and the plants she wants to utilize. Linda Ring added the Christmas flair by designing two-sided Holiday wreaths that hung in place of the flower baskets during the cold months.

I want to recognize our partners in this project as well, and the organizations that awarded us the grants to fund the first two phases. The Neighborhood Center was the backbone of information and resources to complete and submit our grants. Without their presence of support, expertise and advocacy this undertaking would have been short-lived. The Pottawatomie County Community Foundation (PCCF) Neighborhood Strengthening Grant and Live Well Council Bluffs CURB grants were the linchpin of this effort. Without their belief in the project goals this endeavor would have never gotten off the ground.

Lastly I want to thank all the neighbors who donated specifically to the project or just simply paid their dues. This was instrumental to achieving the second phase goal. Our fundraising efforts brought in a very commendable \$3495.00 with the notable anonymous donation of \$1400.00 that allowed us to purchase

six poles instead of the original five. It has been very inspiring to see the immediate and positive response to the identification poles by active members and more importantly non-active residents within the FPNA who have become members.

The projects ultimate goal is building cohesion with the many diverse portions of our neighborhood to increase participation in activities and events. But we are not done, not just yet. The original goal was to have 15 to 18 locations and we have the next four scoped out. Sharon has already drafted the next and we think final round of grant proposals, which will be submitted shortly. We'll be looking to all of you for your assistance in this last push to complete the overall project. The easiest and most helpful contribution is to renew your membership or if you are not a member become one.

Although it seems like 2013 was entirely focused on the pole project we did manage to engage in other events and activities.

Since the late 2012 demolition of the derelict houses on upper-Park Avenue we've been in discussions with the City and Neighbor Works to devise a renovation project for those empty lots. Although the progress is slow we are keeping at it.

In March we provided a hearty sack lunches to the Habitat for Humanity Blitz build. Although the weather was still biting cold the volunteers for Habitat were very grateful for the filling lunch and baked goods.

In May the FPNA, along with the Gibraltar and Lincoln-Fairview associations were honored by the Council Bluffs Historical Preservation Commission for the everyday efforts that our organizations commit themselves to preserve what we think makes our neighborhoods unique.

We conducted a food and clothing drive in June for the Care and Share House at 600 Main Street. We donated four large boxes of clothing and three medium boxes of food to help supplement their food pantry and good will store.

June was also the kick off of the Kirn Park Renovation. We held a launch party with the Gibraltar association and the C.B. Parks Department where we began the demolition by taking a few swings at the old storage

PREPARE FOR A WINTER STORM

Extrême winter weather can immobilize an entire region. Even areas that normally experience mild winters can suddenly be hit with heavy snowfall or intense cold. Winter storms can result in closed streets and highways, power outages and flooding. Take action now to ensure the safety and comfort of your family in the event of extreme winter weather.

Before a storm:

Have snow removal equipment on hand, as well as rock salt to melt ice, and sand to improve traction.

Regular heating fuel sources may be cut off, so make sure an alternative is available. For example, store a good supply of dry, seasoned wood for your fireplace or wood-burning stove.

Keep fire extinguishers on hand and make sure everyone in your house knows how to use them. House fires pose an additional risk as more people turn to alternate heating sources without taking the necessary safety precautions.

Locate your main water supply and valves and make sure you know how to shut them off in case a freezing pipe bursts.

Repair roof leaks and keep gutters clear. Trim any tree branches that could fall on your house during a storm.

Winterize your home by caulking and weatherstripping doors and windows, sealing the attic area and installing storm windows. This will help to keep

your family safe and comfortable during a storm.

During a storm:

Listen to your radio, television or NOAA Weather Radio for weather reports and emergency information.

Eat regularly and drink ample fluids, but avoid caffeine and alcohol.

If it becomes necessary to conserve fuel, keep your residence cooler than normal. Temporarily close off heat to some rooms.

Stay dry. Change wet clothing frequently to prevent the loss of body heat.

Watch for signs of frostbite. These include loss of feeling and white or pale appearance in extremities such as fingers, toes, ear lobes and the tip of the nose. If symptoms are detected, get medical help immediately.

Drive only if it is necessary. If you must drive, travel in the daytime, do not drive alone and keep others informed of your whereabouts. Also, stay on main roads. Avoid back-road shortcuts.

After a storm:

Avoid overexertion when shoveling snow. Overexertion can bring on a heart attack—a major cause of death in the winter. If you must shovel snow, stretch before going outside.

Help neighbors who may require special assistance including infants, the elderly and people with disabilities.

If the pipes freeze, remove any insulation and open all faucets; pour hot water over the pipes, starting where they were most exposed to the cold. Do not try to thaw them with a blow torch or other open flame.

Follow forecasts and be prepared when venturing outside. Major winter storms are often followed by extremely cold conditions.

A little forethought and some attention to detail will help to ensure that you and your family stay warm, dry and safe in your home this winter, no matter what the weather is outside.

VACANT BUILDING REGISTRY

The Council Bluffs PAR Officers are asking for the participation of the Neighborhood Associations. If you can check your neighborhoods for houses or businesses that are empty or vacant and then call 712-329-1856 or e-mail D. Wissler at dmwissler@councilbluffs-ia.gov to report them it would be a great help. You can leave the address of the residence or business. If there happens to be some type of sign with a phone number on it that information would also be great to have. We are trying to get a better number and location on how many empty houses and businesses there are in the city. The list is kept by the C.B. Police department and for the C.B. Police department only

THE CHURCH BASEMENT LADIES

The Arts Center at IWCC (2700 College Road) presents on January 17 at 2 p.m. and at 8 p.m. Our favorite Church Basement Ladies are back in the fourth and latest installment of this popular series of musical comedies "A Mighty Fortress is our Basement."

The year is 1960 and a reformation is underway. From a new crop of Confirmands, to the construction of a super highway, The Church Basement Ladies are once again required to face change head-on. And to top it all off, the Pastor, who has always found strength and solace in the church basement, has found new love and announces his impending nuptials.

Against the changing tide, these pillars of the church stand strong in their faith and in their friendships with more crazy antics, more great new songs and more lessons reluctantly learned.

Tickets may be purchased by going to www.artscenter.iwcc.edu/season.asp

or by calling 712-388-7140.

FIRST NIGHT COUNCIL BLUFFS

The City of Council Bluffs presents:
"First Night Council Bluffs"

A unique experience ushering on New Year's Eve with a variety of performers, artists and vendors celebrating our culture and history. Fun and affordable for the whole family! For more information and to get a schedule of events go to www.firstnightcouncilbluffs.org/



**"Carry
Laughter
with you
wherever you
go"**

Hugh Sidey

DATES TO REMEMBER

First Night Council Bluffs
December 31st.
Tom Hanafan River's Edge Park
#2 Harrah's Blvd.

A Mighty Fortress is our Basement
January 17th. 2:00 and 8:00 p.m.
IWCC Arts Center
2700 College Road

FPNA January Meeting
January 25th 6:30 p.m.
332 Glen Avenue

HERES to a New Year

Let's get together for the January FPNA meeting. We will be electing new Board members, contributing to dues and forming committees for the coming year. Bring your appetite, as we'll be serving some delicious casserole dishes. We hope to see you there.



January 25th

6:30 p.m.

332 Glen Avenue

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By Sharon Babbitt
Continued From Pg.1

200 Park Avenue

Tony and Cindy Lainson, 114 Park Ave.
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Hestness, 143 Glen Ave.
Bill and Mary Spitznagle, 906 Grandview
Mike and Vicki Myers, 311 Park

Thanks to all for your Holiday Decorating efforts to make our neighborhood a festive place this season.

MONEY MATTERS

We recently submitted our latest CURB grant application for four more poles. If we are awarded this grant, that will bring the total poles for our identification project to 15. While this sprawling neighborhood could sustain many more of these poles, we can't afford them and are settling for 15, at least for now. In addition, with this latest grant application, we have committed just about every penny in our treasury. We feel it is one of the best things we've done as a neighborhood association and is money well spent. During our recent membership drive in support of all this, thirteen new members joined, and eight folks caught up with their dues, to add to the total members who had paid during the first half of the year. In addition, sixteen people donated various amounts. This response is heartwarming and illustrates your support for this project and for the NA. An exact total for dues and donations will have to come from our treasurer and he will give a report at the upcoming annual meeting.

LATEST DONATION FROM: John Huggins

Thanks to you all for a Job Well Done!!

A PERSONAL VIOLATION

That's what it feels like to have something stolen from you. That applies whether or not it is a wallet, a car, or...a giant fountain you spent years finding, months installing, and more months landscaping. Imagine, therefore, how the homeowners Bill Mann and Bob Pashek at 151 Park Avenue felt when they discovered, on Christmas Eve of all days, their priceless vintage fountain came up missing! The wonder is how this could have occurred without someone noticing. And that's the point to be made here—how could this have happened without someone noticing? Friends, those green "Neighborhood Watch" signs in our windows aren't just for show. We have a reputation of watching out for one another, as the signs say. Does this make us "nosey neighbors?" Maybe, but so what.

MORE CHRISTMAS CHEER

The decorated wreaths attached to our new identification poles are about to be removed for the season, if they haven't been already by the time you read this. Linda and Mike Ring put them up and will take them down before the winter weather beats them up too much; we want to use them again next year. Linda put two wreaths together back-to-back so they would look good from all angles. Then she and Mike climbed up to the sky (those poles are pretty tall) and attached them well so they wouldn't blow away. Hang up, take down, repeat in 2014—that's the plan. Thanks, Linda and Mike.

FOUND; A really nice stainless steel slotted spoon left at Sharon's after the Christmas party. Is it yours?

GOOD ADVICE: "Be like the sun and the meadow, which are not in the least concerned about the coming winter."
George Bernard Shaw

The President's Corner

Kyle Muschall

332 Glen Avenue

Continued From Pg.2

building. Now that we are at the end of the year we can all view for ourselves the magnificent work that has been done to Kirn Park and the revitalization that has occurred; a truly stunning achievement for all the organizations and groups involved.

Along with the Kirn Park Renovation, the FPNA, along with other neighborhood associations and citizens throughout the city, participated in the "Art in the Park" project conducted by the C.B. Parks Department. We provided detailed and targeted feedback to artists for the construction and installation of new park signs that state the uniqueness of each park. The Kirn Park sign is currently under construction and will hopefully be complete soon.

We engaged in three clean-ups in 2013. The first was our annual neighborhood clean up in conjunction with Keep Council Bluffs Beautiful and C.B. Pride week. We also took time out of our schedules to help the Neighborhood Center with two clean ups for the 100 block of Broadway. It just shows that a small commitment of time can have an immediate and beautiful effect.

The Brick Street Initiative continued to progress. This is our on-going effort with the C.B. Public Works department, the Gibraltar association and the Dodge House to maintain the historic brick streets in our neighborhoods. 5th Avenue was the target this year to repair several of the rump-busting dips and divots just prior to the Kirn Park entrance.

We lent a few strong backs and hands to the Preserve Council Bluffs work day at the historical Bregant House in October to help with renovations.

FPNA Board Member Carol Mattox's son Steven and his wife Karris held the grand opening of their Mad Ox Bakery just on our northern boundary in the Ogden Strip mall. They have since become members of the FPNA and proudly display our FPNA garden flag. I can attest that I frequent the establishment to get my fix of cinnamon roles, mini cupcakes and delicious donuts.

Along with all this activity we also gave out our Yard of the Month awards from May thru August. Linda Ring awarded certificates and a houseplant to the recipients. Our annual Exterior Holiday Decorating Award was just announce in this same issue and our annual Holiday party had a great turn out where friends and neighbors got the chance to catch up.

Sometimes we lose sight of all that is accomplished throughout the year because we're concentrating on the task at hand. But if you take a moment to reflect we realize that we are truly fortunate to have friends and neighbors that are motivated to make a difference in their surroundings. Next year is shaping up even better than this year. Thanks for your time.



THE Fairmount Press
 The Newspaper of the Fairmount Park Neighborhood Association
 332 Glen Avenue Council Bluffs, Iowa 51503
www.fairmountparkna.org

Kyle Muschall	President/Publisher
Linda Ring	Vice President
Carol Mattox	Secretary
Dave Huggins	Treasurer
Sharon Babbitt	Editor
Amy Dixon	Special Representative

Sharon Babbitt	Board Member (2014)
Kyle Muschall	Board Member (2015)
Nate Watson	Board Member (2015)
Dave Huggins	Board Member (2014)
Carol Mattox	Board Member (2014)
Linda Ring	Board Member (2015)
Michelle	Board Member (2014)
Mutchler-Burns	

**Have an Opinion?
Please Share!**

We 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. Please Contact the Editor.

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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: Dave Huggins, Treasurer, 150 Park 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 \$12.00

(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: Kyle Muschall, President, 332 Glen Avenue Council Bluffs, Iowa 51503 or Dave Huggins, Treasurer, 150 Park Avenue Council Bluffs, Iowa 51503