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ALL THE NEWS THAT IS FIT TO PRINT

By Sharon Babbitt

200 Park Avenue

READY FOR A PICNIC?????

If you aren't, you will be when you know what the FPNA has planned for our next meeting. Come to fabulous Lookout Point at 4:30 on August 22nd and join your friends for a whopping good time! Our annual picnic meeting will feature hot dogs (with buns) and hamburgers (with buns) cooked by Kyle and Cindy; drinks like iced tea, lemonade and water, provided by the FPNA Board; side dishes like salads and desserts, provided by us, the neighbors; a few games and toys; plates utensils, napkins, table cloths, etc., will also be provided by the association and whatever else we need to make the afternoon memorable. We have always felt that Lookout Point was the ideal spot to be on a hot summer afternoon—green grass, plenty of shade, and good company.

Please mark your calendars for this not-to-be-missed event. Just the way to end our summer.....And no business, we promise.

YARD OF THE MONTH AWARDS

What a treat! In this month's newsletter we can all gaze upon not one, but two, beautiful yards. Our committee chair, Kelli Deere, scoured the neighborhood during May and again in June, and picked out several well kept and beautiful yards for the Board to choose from. She further made it easy for the choices to be made by taking clear photos of each yard (thanks, Kelli). See these photos in this newsletter.

OUR MAY YOM is 136 Glen, home of Janelle and Kent Coker. We asked them to write a few words about their yard and how it came to be, and Janelle furnished us with more than just a few words to describe it. She says, "Over the last couple of years we have simplified the front, as the backyard landscaping is so extensive. We feature peony bushes for their fragrance and because they are a Victorian favorite. A Killian Donahue clematis graces one corner, while knockout roses (plant them and forget them roses) line the front retaining wall. We have tried to find what grows best, which means we have dug, moved and tossed many, many times."

Janelle and Kent thanked us for this award, but it is we who must thank them!

OUR JUNE YOM is 242 Park, home of Rob and Georgie Hoag. This beautiful and interesting yard is situated on a corner and so gets attention both coming and going. The yard does double, maybe even triple, duty by featuring flowers,

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The President's Corner

Sharon Babbitt

200 Park Avenue

When we held our last meeting on Friday, June 26th, our guest speaker was Brett Burns, a representative of the Council Bluffs Police Department. He spoke about their Neighborhood Watch Program. Although the PAR officer wasn't there, among the materials shared by Brett was a flyer telling what the PAR officer does. So, we were privileged to learn about the whole kit and kaboodle regarding the Police Department and us.

The flyer explaining about Neighborhood Watch has been reproduced elsewhere in the newsletter, but it is good to know that participating in this program doesn't require us to drive around in cars at night looking for crime. In fact, such activity is strongly *discouraged* as being unsafe for us ordinary mortals. The Neighborhood Watch program will expect vigilance from us and prompt notification to the PD about suspicious activity. Brett stressed that calls to 911 for in-progress situations are encouraged—no call is too insignificant. Better safe than sorry.

As for PAR (Police Area Representative), its mission is to develop partnerships, solve problems and improve the quality of life for citizens in the neighborhoods. Types of problems they focus on are : children in dirty homes; drug activities; frequent disturbances/noise affecting quality of life; problems between neighbors; trash and junk vehicles on private property; unsecured abandoned structures, and unsafe or unsanitary structures. The City is divided into zones for PAR purposes. We are in Zone 3 and Officer Poore (712-328-4983) is our PAR officer.

If we establish a Neighborhood Watch program in our neighborhood, we will have to do things like naming block captains for various parts of the NA, and meeting occasionally to coordinate our activities.

Most everyone at this FPNA meeting showed their interest by signing up for further information. This isn't hard to do and will significantly improve the safety of our neighborhood. Our neighborhood is pretty safe now, with the common police calls involving property crimes—no violent crimes occur here, so far. Establishing a Neighborhood Watch program can show that we are serious about keeping it this way.

**"We tend to
forget that
happiness doesn't
come as a result
of getting
something we don't
have, but rather
of recognizing and
appreciating what
we do have "**
Fredrick Koenig

MAY YARD OF THE MONTH



Janelle & Kent Coker

136 Glen Avenue

Photos by Kelli Deere



ARE YOU READY FOR THE SUMMER

FAIRMOUNT PARK PICNIC

We'll bring the hamburgers, hotdogs and all the fixins

We'll have refreshments to keep you cool

You bring that favorite side dish, dessert or salad
that you enjoy sharing with everyone

We'll have games and toys for the kids
Come spend a lazy afternoon with the neighbors

AUG 22ND 4:30 PM

INVASIVE KILLERS

By Sharon Babbitt

200 Park Avenue

Our trees are under attack! Can scientists save them or is it already too late?

Here are some facts from the Nature Conservancy that shows that the death knell for four of our most important species hasn't rung quite yet.

The four species that are the subject of this article are the American Elm, American Chestnut, Sugar Maple and White Ash.

The American Elm was the favorite tree for city planners in the 19th century and were planted everywhere, earning the right to be memorialized by countless streets named Elm. Who can't remember them towering over so many residential streets in our town? But by the 1930's, a foreign fungus called Dutch elm disease struck and has since killed at least 43 million of these majestic beauties. Replacing them is not as simple as just planting some more elms; genetic diversity is needed.

To that end, the Nature Conservancy has collected branches from surviving elms and bred more than 1,000 new disease-resistant but genetically different trees at 24 sites in the Connecticut River floodplain. They'll plant thousands more in the coming years. The hope is the elm range will grow naturally when the mature trees produce seeds, and will resemble what it once was.

The American Chestnut once accounted for as many as one in four trees in Appalachian forests. It was responsible for feeding people, livestock and wildlife, and its timber was used for furniture, utility poles, railroads and much more. But at the turn of the 20th century, a foreign fungus began sweeping through the forests and by 1950 the species was almost entirely gone.

Restoring the chestnut requires breeding a new tree. For three decades, the American Chestnut Foundation has crossed surviving native trees with the Chinese chestnut, which is immune to the disease. One of the hybrids they've produced is genetically more than 93 percent American chestnut. These trees were deliberately infected with the disease and about 50 of them survived to live another day.

Today, American chestnuts are gradually returning to the landscape after a century's absence.

The Sugar Maple is culturally significant and economically crucial—who doesn't love maple syrup? But it is being attacked by the Asian Longhorned Beetle, which looks like something out of a sci-fi movie. In efforts to curtail this monstrous insect, some cities have cut down all infested trees. Another method of containment is to restrict the transport of firewood. This beetle has also gone after 13 other types of trees, including willows and birches.

The White Ash has been in our local news lately because Council Bluffs may initiate a massive campaign to cut down all our ash trees in an effort to eliminate the Emerald Ash Borer. This insect appeared in the 1990's by hopping a ride into the country on a shipment from Asia. By some estimates, the bug has already killed more than 50 million trees.

Researchers are rushing to find new ways to stop it. The current treatment is costly, and the infestation must be fought one tree at a time. The Forest Service, the Nature Conservancy, and even Louisville Slugger (which uses the ash to manufacture baseball bats), have tried to slow the progress of the Beetle by urging campers to use only local or heat-treated firewood. The campaign is meant to ultimately change wood-buying habits and give forest managers time to prepare for infestations.

There are many trees in trouble, these being only four. Researchers are trying to breed trees that are immune to certain diseases, introducing new predators to attack insects and simply trying to slow down infestations long enough to find ways to stop them altogether. If the American Elm can nearly die off yet survive to make a comeback, there's hope for other giants as well.

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

What is a Neighborhood Watch?

A Neighborhood Watch is a group of neighbors who are willing to communicate with each other and pass along information. The group will be educated in crime prevention and will watch for suspicious activity and report this activity to the police.

Neighborhood Watch does not require citizen patrols or citizen assist.

How often does a Neighborhood Watch have to meet?

We like each group to meet 3 times a year. This can be a formal meeting or can be a neighborhood BBQ in someone's backyard. Many of our groups have one meeting in the spring and one in the fall.

How many homes have to be a group to qualify as a neighborhood watch?

A Neighborhood Watch group involves all the houses on one street facing one another, cul-de-sacs, and green belts, which usually consists of 10-25 households or as many families that you can get.

Why should I start a Neighborhood Watch?

When you participate in the Neighborhood Watch program you will have a direct liaison with the Police Department through your Community Resource Officer (CRO). Your CRO can provide you with crime prevention information.

What are a Block Captain's responsibilities?

A Block Captain's job is fairly simple. You are to be a point of contact for your neighbors and the Police Department. The Police Department will occasionally send out information to you, the Block Captain. When you receive the information it is your responsibility to communicate the information to your neighbors.

Signs are provided.

Neighborhood Watch signs are provided at no cost

Neighborhood Watch Depends On You!

Neighborhood Watch does depend on you calling 911 for in-progress emergency calls or 328-5737 for non-emergency situations. Suspicious activity calls can be handled with a minimum of personnel compared to the investigation of an actual crime. Do not hesitate to call as often as necessary. We expect more calls from Neighborhood Watch groups.

A WORD OF CAUTION

A NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH does not mean prying or nosy neighbors who try to stop criminals all by themselves. As a member, your responsibility is to call the police and report what you've seen -- NOT to take action yourself.

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200 Park Avenue

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shrubbery and organic vegetables. The flowers and shrubbery disguise the vegetable plants, which grow in pots on the open front porch and in the specially made boxes in the back. Yes, home grown salad fixings served with a bouquet of flowers, any day of the week. A unique feature is the wood box installed nearby housing individual little openings for the wood bees. These bees have only one job and that is to pollinate—no distractions like honey production for them. Each bee lives in its own little one-room apartment, goes to work each morning and returns each evening to its solitary existence. While you're out walking, take a look at this box on the High School side of the house and expand your knowledge of both gardening and bee keeping.

WE PAID OUR DUES

The following folks paid their dues in the last few weeks. We thank them. Remember, dues are payable each year and remain \$20 per person/family.

George Scott Kent and Janelle Coker Jon and Mo Garrigan

THIS 'N THAT

The Police Department recommends the installation of motion detector lighting for greater nighttime safety and energy efficiency. They cost less to operate than front porch lights, can light up more territory, and don't have to be on all night, making them less expensive to operate.

The FPNA will begin taking down the historic homes signage soon, beginning with one or two of the ones that show the most deterioration. These signs, beautiful as they were when installed, will have to be replaced by some that will be made from cedar wood. This project will take a long time to complete and your patience may grow thin, but keep in mind that all this work will be performed by our resident volunteers.

Dates for meetings for the rest of the year go like this:

Picnic on August 22nd at Lookout Point
Fall meeting in October at Terri and Karl's, 445 Glen
Christmas party in December at Sharon's, 200 Park
Annual meeting in January at Kyle and Cindy's, 332 Glen

SIX EASY CONSERVATION TIPS FOR RENTERS

You may not own your apartment or home, but it's easy to save energy and increase comfort. The following simple changes won't cost you much, but they can make a big difference on your utility bills.

-Focus on lighting. Replace conventional incandescent bulbs with ENERGY STAR certified compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) or light-emitting diodes (LEDs). These bulbs use 75 percent less energy and last longer.

-Adjust the thermostat. Raise or lower temperatures (depending on the season) at night and when you're away from home. If you have a programmable thermostat, set it to optimize savings while maintaining comfort.

-Go unplugged. Many electronic devices continue to use power when they're turned off or not in use. Unplug battery chargers and any other devices when it's convenient. Use a power strip as a central point to shut off power to clustered devices.

SIX EASY CONSERVATION TIPS FOR RENTERS

-Take shorter showers. The typical shower uses 30 to 50 gallons of hot water, costing you money. Limit your time in the shower to 10 minutes or less. Install water-efficient showerheads; it's a low-cost upgrade that can reduce energy and water use.

-Cook up energy savings. Cooking at home is a great way to make healthy meals; these tips will help you trim your energy costs:

-Cover pots and pans to cook food more efficiently.

Match pots and pans to the size of the burner, and keep burners clean.

Use a microwave oven to heat food whenever possible.

Scrape dishes before loading them into the dishwasher, and run it only when full.

-Use window treatments. During warm weather, close treatments on south-facing windows to keep out solar heat during the day. In the winter, open curtains or drapes during the day to let in the warmth of the sun; close them at night to retain heat.

Talk to your landlord or property manager about additional energy-efficiency improvements. High-performance windows, ENERGY STAR appliances and other upgrades will not only help reduce your energy bills, they're also a great investment. Studies have shown that such upgrades can improve property value and increase occupancy rates.

Visit www.midamericanenergy.com/ee to learn how MidAmerican Energy Company can help you save even more money on your energy bills. MidAmerican Energy offers various EnergyAdvantage® energy efficiency programs designed to encourage the use of high-efficiency equipment in residential, commercial and industrial buildings.

JUNE YARD OF THE MONTH



Rob & Georgie Hoag

242 Park Avenue

Photos by Kelli Deere

THE Fairmount Press

The Newspaper of the Fairmount Park Neighborhood Association

332 Glen Avenue Council Bluffs, Iowa 51503
www.fairmountparkna.org

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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