



## The Art of Neighboring

by Dré Northern, NNN Community Organizer

### Conversation Circles on Race Round III: Why Economics?

As many of you know, I have been hosting a series of Conversation Circles on Race. For the third round we shifted gears to look at the economic component of racism in America. Why are we looking at racism through the lens of economics? Because you cannot talk about systemic racism in our country without talking about the economic component. It is arguably the very foundation of systemic racism. For the sake of argument, try to imagine the term "economics" outside of what you see on Bloomberg but as simply the science of how resources are allocated and accessed by people to survive. In this country, economics ties into everything. Healthcare and therefore, overall health and mortality. It determines quality of education, influences politics, dictates overall quality of life and on and on.

Consider Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, a theory in psychology consisting of a five-tier model of human needs. Maslow argued that we have five categories of needs: physiological, safety, love, esteem, and self-actualization. In this theory, higher needs in the hierarchy begin to emerge when people feel they have sufficiently satisfied the previous need.

Having said all of this: if in theory your goal was to completely neutralize or marginalize a group of people, without making it completely apparent that this was what you were trying to do, how would you do it? By putting the basic needs that Maslow argued human beings need for a state of well being in constant conflict, struggle and flux. To disrupt their physiological needs, you continue to allow them to drink lead contaminated water like Flint Michigan or continue to allow them to occupy houses contaminated with lead like what we see right here in our neighborhood. To disrupt their needs for safety you continue to allow rampant hiring discrimination in the job market, restricting access to higher paying jobs or you continue to allow miscarriage after miscarriage of justice to continue as in the case of Trayvon Martin or Brianna Taylor to where even your safety of walking home in a safe neighborhood or sleeping in your own bed isn't guaranteed.

And finally love and belonging. Where you resist assimilation in every way for people of color into this country but appropriate their culture on a wide scale. In other words, love the music; hate the people. Love the cuisine; hate the people. Utilize their gifts and talents for your own enrichment and entertainment but make every argument to not duly compensate or [See bottom, next column]

## Lead Grants Available

Funding is still available through the City of South Bend for grants to income-qualified homeowners for lead abatement or interim controls that make your housing safer. Additionally, property owners and landlords that rent to income-qualified tenants may qualify for grants.

Who is eligible? Renters and homeowners who earn less than 80% of area median income (\$58,800 for a family of 4).

Call 311 for more information or more information is online at: [southbendin.gov/leadsafesouthbend](http://southbendin.gov/leadsafesouthbend)

## Reduzca el Plomo de su Casa - Subvenciones Disponibles

Los fondos aún están disponibles gracias a la Ciudad de South Bend para subvenciones a propietarios de viviendas con ingresos calificados para la reducción del plomo o controles provisionales que hacen que su vivienda sea más segura.

Además, los propietarios que viven en su propia casa y los propietarios que alquilan a inquilinos con ingresos calificados pueden calificar para estas subvenciones.

¿Quién es elegible? Inquilinos y propietarios que ganan menos que el 80% del ingreso promedio (\$58,000 para una familia de 4).

Para mayor información llame al 311 o visite la página web [southbendin.gov/leadsafesouthbend](http://southbendin.gov/leadsafesouthbend).

[From previous column]

give credit to them for it.

This is how you have Chuck Berry as the architect of rock and roll, but crown Elvis the king.

The relevance to the Near Northwest Neighborhood may not be so apparent at first but in taking a closer look it can be easily visualized. The stark contrast. This neighborhood is not only one of South Bend's oldest but most polarized, the ever present "Portage Divide". I challenge the great residents of this neighborhood to imagine being who you are inherently but to imagine being marginalized in a way that would keep you from ever realizing your potential. This of course is not the one answer that will knock the economic cog out of the systematic racism machine but maybe it can convince some that the machine at least exists in the first place.

Call the office to join the Conversation Circles on Race.

# THE COMMON GROUND

## NEWS YOU CAN USE

Near Northwest Neighborhood, Inc. 1007 Portage Ave. South Bend, IN 46616 574.232.9182

NOVEMBER, 2021

## Fostering an inclusive community that values diversity: Brain Lair Books Holiday Pop-Up at the NNN

The Near Northwest Neighborhood is welcoming Brain Lair Books as a holiday pop-up shop in the NNN's own Mary Grace Room. Brain Lair Books provides books that uplift marginalized voices, especially for children and teens. Many community members have come to know and love owner, Kathy Burnette, and Brain Lair Books! We are delighted that our partnership in this pop-up is a community benefit opportunity within the NNN, and includes a strong donation from Brain Lair Books to our neighborhood elementary school libraries.

If you don't know Brain Lair, they are a bookshop dedicated to developing empathy and building a community centered around the discussion of inclusive books. They host a combination of live and online events with authors and others. Kathy Burnette also makes sure to be running book clubs, hosting events to benefit causes, offering live readings, and otherwise supporting readers.

The holiday pop-up will open on 11/12 and last partly through December. Hours will be:

- Mondays and Tuesdays by appointment (closed Sunday)
- Wednesdays, 5-8 PM
- Thursdays and Fridays, 10 AM—7 PM
- Saturdays, 10 AM—4 PM

An Adult Book Fair is scheduled for Friday, November 12 at 7 PM with parking available in the NNN lots.

The Brain Lair Pop Up address is 1005 Portage Ave.



# BRAIN LAIR BOOKS

## Muessel School Beautification Project: Phase 1 Complete!

**M**uessel Elementary School, on Blaine Ave, welcomed new leadership and many new staff members this academic year, as the school entered a re-design phase, aiming at better outcomes for Muessel students.

The NNN welcomed Augustine Pugh, the new Muessel School principal, and we began discussions right away about partnering NNN neighbors with Muessel to support Muessel staff and students. Ms. Pugh immediately asked if we could partner on a beautification project at the school. Enlisting The Botany Shop as a partner was our immediate next step – Ben Futa and his team bring planting expertise and connections, and love of a community effort, and a public garden!

For Phase 1 of the project, the NNN applied for and received a City of South Bend Love Your Block grant of \$350, and Ben found a connection to donate plants. Ben also got to work, and designed, planned, and led the entire volunteer effort. Over the course of two mornings, the Muessel School courtyard outdoor classroom was prepped and re-planted! Many NNN and Muessel School volunteers joined together in this effort and delivered great results!

Phase 2 of the beautification project will be lined up in Spring 2022, and will focus on the front entrance to Muessel Elementary School. We'll be sure to announce additional volunteer opportunities around this ongoing partnership.



The outdoor courtyard classroom at Muessel Elementary

## Arts Café 2021



Boomer and the crowd in the performance area



Everyone loves the horses and wagons

**T**he NNN was graced by great weather, wonderful neighbors, incredible music, great artists, spectacular food and beverage at this year's Arts Café. Thanks to our volunteers for their time at the event. We hope to see you all there next year. Until then, here are some photos that captured the day.

## NNN Community Dates

*The indoor NNN Community Spaces are open for reservation. We also share outdoor spaces when the weather permits. Please call the office with questions.*

The Community Outreach Team is hosting a **Christmas Party** for neighborhood children. **Dec 11, 3-5.** Eligible children can get tested for lead, meet with an elf or even receive a gift.

**The Local Cup** at 1009 Portage Ave. is open with hours that change seasonally. Find them on Facebook @TheLocalCupSB

**South Bend Bike Garage** at 909 Portage Ave. is open **Wednesdays from 5-8 PM.** until November 24. Reach them at [info@sbbikegarage.com](mailto:info@sbbikegarage.com) or 574-286-6508 or to schedule an appointment after the 24th. And they will be back evenings in the Spring, TBA!

**Portage Farm Stands** closed for the year on October 23 and we will miss them. They had an amazing year and are grateful for all the wonderful customers and vendors who made the market such a vibrant, joyful place to be each Saturday morning. See them again next Spring around the end of May. Until then, find them on Facebook @Portagefarmstands.

The **Children's Gardening Group at Sherman Ave Community Garden** meeting in the garden at 904 Sherman has closed for the season. Keep an eye on the NNN Listerv for current information in the Spring.

The **Unity Garden** at Lamonte Terrace and Portage is also about done with the season. See them in the Spring.

Hope for the Hungry Food Pantry dates are **Friday, Nov 19, and Friday, Dec. 17** from 11AM-1PM or as supplies last.

NNN Offices closed **December 23-January 2.**

## Dates for '22 NNN Events Chosen

**Chili Supper, Wednesday March 3, 6-8 PM:** Potluck carry in for NNN families, without much agenda beyond getting together and enjoying our own company. Held at the Holy Cross School Gymnasium. Cooks, volunteers and appetites needed.

**Adopt A Block, Saturday, April 23, 8 AM to noonish:** Our annual battle with trash in the Neighborhood. It's an early morning affair with coffee and donuts at the Community Center followed by generous hearts doing the clean up.

**Annual Meeting, Thursday, May 19, 6-8 PM** is at the NNN Community Center, 1013 Portage Ave.

**Arts Café, Sunday, October 2, Noon—6PM:** Our annual Block Party, celebration of NNN homes, neighbors, artists, chefs, children is a delight for all!

## NNN Welcomes Hope for the Hungry to the Community Center

The NNN has established a partnership with Hope for the Hungry, a local food pantry. We are becoming the pantry's home base/storage location with both organizations benefiting.

The NNN has worked for years to reach the most vulnerable residents of the NNN. We need these ties to these residents so that we can offer them additional services to improve their overall quality of life. An upstanding organization like Hope for the Hungry is the ideal draw to help the NNN establish relationships with our neighbors who are the most in need.

Hope for the Hungry is partnering with the NNN because it needs a home base but also because founder Laquisha Jackson's roots are in the NNN. She grew up here understanding food insecurity and the power of food pantries as a child. She feels a strong pull to help others break the cycle of poverty and food insecurity by serving with compassion, feeding the mind and body, and bringing an impact through education. She is also the head chef/owner of the catering service Soulful Kitchen, the main sponsor of Hope for the Hungry. Laquisha truly believes that food should do good as much as it tastes good!

In winter, the food pantry, which provides non-perishable items, will operate at specific dates/times in the 1013 Portage NNN Community Center. In better weather, Hope for the Hungry provides pop-up pantry locations throughout South Bend, touching people where they live.

Scheduled Hope for the Hungry Pantry dates are **Fridays, November 19, and December 17 from 11AM-1PM, in the 1013 Portage Community Center** as supply lasts.

If you want to help, Hope for the Hungry is always looking for donations and volunteers on their webpage: <http://hope4thehungry.com/>.



Would you like to be on the NNN ListServ and be in contact with your neighbors about Community information and announcements? Please email or call us with your name and email address to [nnnassistant@nearnorthwest.org](mailto:nnnassistant@nearnorthwest.org) or 232-9182.

¿Le gustaría ser parte del grupo de emails de "NNN ListServ" y estar en contacto con sus vecinos/as respecto a la información de la comunidad y sus anuncios? Por favor, mándenos un email al [nnnassistant@nearnorthwest.org](mailto:nnnassistant@nearnorthwest.org) o llámenos al 232-9182.

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Seeking contributions for the Common Ground: News You Can Use Feel free to write 100-300 words about your non-editorial neighborhood happenings. Subject to editing and space available, we welcome your contributions. Call the office for more information.