



News from the Near Northwest Neighborhood, Inc.

Vol. 15, No.2 Spring 2010

JUNE IS HOMEOWNERSHIP MONTH

By Marilyn Gachaw

The American dream can and should be for everyone.

Throughout the month of June, in celebration of National Homeownership Month, educational outreach efforts are underway to provide home-buying information and financial tools to more families. Buying a home is the single largest investment ever made by most households but it's the return on your investment that makes it worth its weight in gold. Equity in the home offers an opportunity to build long term financial security and independence.

Expanding homeownership has been the nation's long-standing policy dating back to when Abraham Lincoln first signed the Homestead Act in 1862 to stimulate western growth and homeownership for more Americans. Although homeownership is a bit more complicated today, the Near Northwest Neighborhood, Inc. continues paving the way for more Americans to become first-time homeowners, as well as enjoy the opportunity of the economic benefits of homeownership.

The home-buying process doesn't need to be scary. At the NNN 2010 Housing Fair you can walk through the process and get answers to your personal home-buying questions. Attendees will have an opportunity to have one-on-one access to realtors, financial institutions, insurance providers, foreclosure assistance, home improvement ideas and more. The Housing Fair is a place to learn - an educational event that will certainly equip prospective buyers and existing homeowners with the knowledge and tools necessary to purchase a home or save a home. If you have any questions about the NNN Homes for sale, landlord and tenant rights, foreclosure prevention or other housing related questions, mark your calendars and make plans to attend NNN's **2010 Housing Fair scheduled for Saturday, June 12 at NNN Offices, 1005 Portage Ave. from 9 am – noon.**

If you haven't seen NNN's beautifully restored homes for sale, we've got a special bonus in store just for you. Since the Housing Fair will include service providers located within the NNN Homes along California Avenue, the event is also your ticket to tour open houses. Talk about amazing values, be sure to check out these treasures, they're loaded with charm and character – the craftsmanship and attention to detail is exceptional. While you're in the area, I strongly suggest you take a moment and tour our neighborhoods too. Experience the spirit of the near northwest neighborhood – one of South Bend's premier downtown locations to live. It's more than a place: it's a mindset!



Last year's Housing Fair drew many participants interested in learning more about the home buying process.



CREATING HOPE IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

By Karen Ainsley

The NNN's community outreach efforts are grounded in the belief that people are the neighborhood's most important asset. The commitment to empowering residents is central to the organization's mission. Over the years, this has been some of our most challenging work. Building community is difficult, but essential to a neighborhood's success.

If we are honest with ourselves, we will admit that most of us don't know our neighbors well and they don't know us. We are too busy, too shy, or too intimidated to make connections and

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NRC IS READY TO INSPIRE

By Scott McKibben

CREATING HOPE, *continued*

build relationships with people on our street or on our block. The fact is, in this day and age, getting to know neighbors can be hard and a bit scary.

In our view, the costs of this neighbor-to-neighbor disconnection are enormous. Behind poor communication lurks distrust and countless lost opportunities to improve our lives and our communities. Some believe that the days of neighbors knowing each other and looking after each other's children are over. In the Near Northwest Neighborhood, we think that we all just need more practice and a safer environment to get it started. The "Circle of Hope" program is one way of starting up the long-interrupted, neighbor-to-neighbor conversation once again.

How does it work?

Under the leadership of a resident "host" and trained facilitator, five to seven families come together three times over the course of a month for refreshments and conversation. They get to know each other, talk about the neighborhood or the city and decide as a group if there is something that they can do together to help build community in the near northwest neighborhood.

What next?

A "Circle of Hope" can continue to meet regularly after the third meeting to address neighborhood issues or organize activities to bring neighbors together and build community.

"Circle of Hope" could lead to projects and collective action on specific issues or just bring neighbors together to organize block parties and share time together.

How can I start a "Circle of Hope"?

For more information and an orientation on how to start a "Circle of Hope" please contact Marilyn Gachaw at 232-9182 or nmnorganizer@sbcglobal.net.

THE COMMON GROUND

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The NRC is back in business.

No, not the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

I'm talking about a local not-for-profit organization, the **Neighborhood Resources Corporation**, whose sole mission is to help restore South Bend's neighborhoods.

After more than two years of retooling, the NRC is back and ready to do all it can for neighborhoods across the city. We've successfully sold the former neighborhood partnership centers; hired our first executive director, Diana Hess; drawn up a strategic plan and a board charter; and now we're ready to take the first really big groundbreaking step: piloting our newly created INSPIRE program.

INSPIRE means Innovative Neighborhoods Solving Problems and Inspiring Resident Engagement. INSPIRE grants up to \$5000 will be awarded to neighborhood organizations and residents who need funding for very special projects.



NRC offers this example:

An organization or task force of residents wishes to put neighborhood youths to work so they decide to create a bicycle recycling business.

This requires purchasing broken bicycles and new parts to repair them and finding a location at which to do the work and perhaps even advertising. The NRC is here to help with the start-up costs of such an undertaking.

During the first year of the INSPIRE program, awards will be made three times. Applications must be submitted by 5 p.m. on the following dates: June 25, Aug. 27 and Dec 3, with award announcements coming within two weeks of those dates.

For more information, contact the NRC at nrcneighbors@gmail.com or call Diana Hess at 287-0425. The NRC will also continue our work granting money for block parties, neighborhood newsletters, community gardens and other projects, and will continue to provide scholarships for neighbors to attend regional and national neighborhood conferences.

The Neighborhood Resources Corporation is committed to our mission and plans to step up our support for South Bend neighborhoods. Board President Mary Jo Regan-Kubinski: "Now that our transition is complete, we will seek resources to continue the work of improving our neighborhoods. The work of the NRC is the work of our neighborhoods. We know that our neighborhoods require care and dedication as well as resources. We hope you join our efforts to support, improve, and change."

NATURAL CREEK, NEW PATHS TO FOLLOW ANGELA IN 2011

By Tom Price

Seeking to improve drainage and separate combined storm and sanitary sewers in the Diamond Avenue corridor, South Bend city engineers discovered a jewel of an idea by asking, "What if?"

Typically, drainage and basement-backup problems require expensive infrastructure underground and out of sight. What if, for the same cost, the city could create an amenity that enhances the beauty, livability and quality of life of city residents?

Construction will begin in 2011 near the start of the Riverside Trail at Angela Boulevard. In front of Steel Warehouse, crews will create an open channel resembling a natural creek and pond. Landscaped with meandering paths and a pedestal for public art, the channel will move natural storm water from the west. Water will cascade into the river past a Riverside Trail overlook. (Open-air agitation of storm water enhances water quality before returning it to the river.)

The project, now in final design by The Troyer Group, will be funded in the next phase of South Bend's Combined Sewer Overflow long-term control plan. The 20-year effort is the city's largest public works project ever, mandated by the federal government to protect the region's most treasured natural resource and funded by city sewer rates.

The Diamond Avenue project will rely on storm-sewer separation and green solutions, carrying only storm water to the river. A small low-energy pump in the river will re-circulate water in the channel during hot, dry periods, ensuring that the natural creek bed won't run dry.

The city will also make traffic-flow changes at the Angela and Riverside intersection by:

- Moving the intersection west away from the bridge, creating better sight lines and more park space along the river's edge south of Angela.
- Creating a roundabout to enhance pedestrian safety.
- Extending a multipurpose path along Riverside up the hill (south of Angela).
- Adding parking for Brownfield Park along Angela and pedestrian-scale lighting along the new walkways.

The project has received input from the city park board, the Historic Preservation Commission and neighborhood residents.

"We value the role of citizen as planner, which was at the core of City Plan, South Bend's 20-year comprehensive plan," said Public Works Director Gary Gilot. "We strive to do our job to bring about that common vision of what we collectively said we want our future city to be like."



WALK THIS WAY

The NNN's **Garden Walk 2010** is in bloom, two years after the first event successfully showcased the creativity thriving in the neighborhood.

This year's celebration of unique outdoors spaces - more than a dozen gardens will be featured - is scheduled for **Saturday, July 17, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.**

Although the near northwest neighborhood's lovely old character-filled houses are well-known, this fundraiser allows visitors to get a closer look at the beautiful flowers, trees, shrubs - and don't forget vegetables - planted and nurtured by our neighbors.

Those who attended Garden Walk 2008 know that nothing - not even a steady downpour of rain - can dampen the enthusiasm generated by this event. But don't worry: this year, the Garden Walk Committee has put in a special request for perfect, sunny weather!

Don't miss it. For more details - including information on volunteering at this year's garden walk - please call (574) 232-9182.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Near Northwest Neighborhood, Inc. is an organization of citizens dedicated to the preservation and revitalization of the neighborhood through providing affordable housing to low-moderate income households, organizing and empowering community residents and promoting the neighborhood's interest within the neighborhood and the entire community.



P.O.Box 1132
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DONT MISS THE NNN GARDEN WALK!

**SATURDAY, JULY 17
9 A.M. - 5 P.M.**

MORE DETAILS INSIDE!



FOR SALE: RENOVATED, REASONABLE, REMARKABLE !

If you are paying more than \$550.00 a month in rent you could afford a home of your own.

This is "the" street to live on. The one brand-new and three newly rehabbed homes have been completed. Each complement the other homes on the street that were rehabbed years ago.

Attractive features include a welcoming, full front porch with bead-board ceiling, a large living room with gleaming hardwoods, triple windows overlooking the porch and an open staircase with window. There's a spacious dining room, a yummy kitchen with cherry-stained cabinets, three bedrooms, a family room, two bathrooms and a one-car garage with a gabled roof.

Consider these standard features:

- Full view storm doors
- Double-pane windows with screens
- New furnace, air & hot water heater
- New electric & updated plumbing
- New roofs (dimensional shingles) & siding
- Rear yard with picket fence
- Wood floors
- Tile floors in kitchen & baths
- Natural woodwork
- Laundry hook-up in basement



**921 CALIFORNIA
\$73,900**



If you're interested in purchasing an NNN Home, please stop by the NNN offices at 1007 Portage Ave., or call (574) 232-9182 to get an application package. Several homes are currently available and listed for sale.

Near Northwest
Neighborhood
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