

THE COMMON GROUND

Near Northwest
Neighborhood
INCORPORATED



News from the Near Northwest Neighborhood, Inc.

Vol. 14, No.3 Fall 2009

CELEBRATE Arts Cafe 2009

The folks behind the Arts Cafe must really love a challenge.

Every year, they have to come up with a way to top the previous year's event, to make this showcase for South Bend's near northwest neighborhood even better than before.

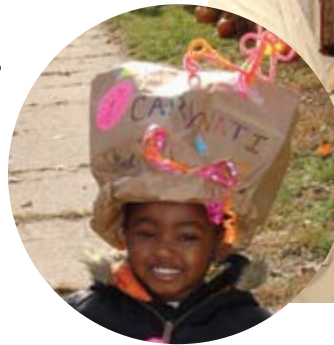
This year, as in past years, they've proven that they're more than up to the task. Visitors to the **Near Northwest Neighborhood Inc.'s 7th Annual Arts Cafe, set for 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sunday, Nov. 1,** will find a stunning treat for the senses.

This annual walking tour, which offers a glimpse of the pleasures of city living, will put the many talents of neighborhood artists, musicians and bakers on display. And for the kids, there's an interactive art area. Plenty to see and do and eat ... and buy. All of this evolved from a simple neighborhood bazaar.

New this year in the culinary arts area is Purple Porch, a local food co-op which connects residents with local growers. According to the Purple Porch Web site (purpleporchcoop.com), customers can "live their values of buying locally and naturally grown whole foods" by shopping online for their food and picking up their purchases at a nearby distribution center. Continuing this theme of sustainable agriculture, Unity Gardens, which have established more than a dozen community gardens in South Bend neighborhoods, also will participate at this year's Arts Cafe. The first unity garden grew out of Sara Uzelac's concern that fresh healthy food be available to those in the community who could not afford to buy it from the supermarket. This good idea has taken root.

While it's the people who truly make the near northwest neighborhood unique, the houses are pretty special, too. This year's spotlight will be fixed on six neighborhood properties, all brimming with character, which will be open to the public. Stop by and check them out.

Did we forget to mention that this event is free? Why wouldn't you want to experience all that is Arts Cafe? Slip on your walking shoes, start at the welcome tent and enjoy.



THE 2010 CENSUS: VITAL TO YOUR FUTURE

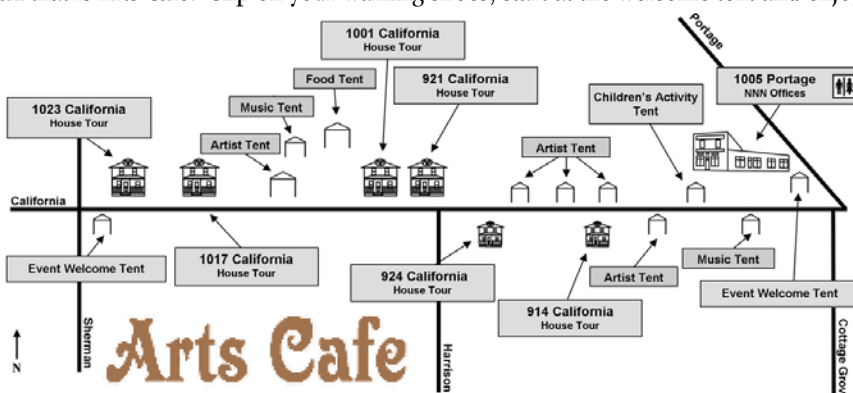
By Chris Dressel

In March 2010, more than 130 million addresses across the nation will receive a census questionnaire. One of the shortest census forms in history, the 2010 Census questionnaire asks 10 questions and takes about 10 minutes to complete. Completing your census questionnaire is easy, important and safe, and your participation is essential to ensuring a brighter tomorrow for our community.

The Near Northwest Neighborhood was not well represented during the last Census. Only 46% of the households in Census Tract 6, which is a part of the neighborhood, returned their forms in 2000. This represented the lowest response rate by tract in all of St. Joseph County.

Required once every 10 years by the U.S. Constitution, the census will count every person living in the United States, both citizens and noncitizens. Census data are used to

continued, page 2





IT'S IN OUR HANDS

reapportion the U.S. House of Representatives, re-district each state and determine the distribution of the Electoral College. Census data also directly affect how more than \$400 billion per

year in federal funding is distributed to state, local and tribal governments. Most importantly, census data is critical in day-to-day planning activities for both local governments and private entities in determining, for example, locations for new hospitals, improving schools, building new roads, expanding public transportation options and creating new maps for emergency responders.

A Complete Count Committee has been formed that covers every jurisdiction in St. Joseph County. The mission of the Committee is to raise AWARENESS, develop COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS, and galvanize CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT in accomplishing as complete a count as possible. To that end, the Committee has: 1) participated in parades and set up booths at various events throughout the County; 2) made contacts with schools, libraries, neighborhood organizations, and not-for-profit agencies; and 3) developed the Complete Count Ambassador Program where volunteers will commit to encourage their neighbors, friends and co-workers to fill out their Census form and mail it in. To volunteer, see the web site below or join us for an informational meeting at the NNN offices on **Wednesday, Nov. 4 at 5:30 p.m. The meeting should not exceed an hour and a light dinner will be provided.**

The Census form is due to arrive in everyone's mailbox on or around March 15-17, 2010. A sample of the Census form, and the Census form timeline, can be viewed at the web site noted below.

By participating in the census, and committing to filling out and sending in your Census form, you can help create a better future for you and those important to you. The State of Indiana has calculated that for each person counted, approximately \$826 per person per year of federal distributions is realized.

To learn more about the Census, visit www.macog.com and click on the Census logo.

This newsletter was produced with the assistance of the City of South Bend Community Development Program through funds made available by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development under Title 1 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1922.

AGENTS FOR CHANGE

By Marilyn Gachaw

Do you believe that community residents can be the agents of change rather than just beneficiaries or clients? I certainly do! Residents are at the heart of the near northwest neighborhood and have the ability to make a difference. After all, it's neighbors and friends like you that help make our neighborhood a great place to live. Strong communities are built on the strengths of their residents and the relationships among them. If you observe any of the seven resident driven committees of the NNN, you'll witness neighbors developing connections within and across the neighborhood and working together to strengthen the near northwest community.

In response to the needs and issues articulated by the community, committee members are actively developing projects, shaping committee strategies and leading the change process. I encourage you to get involved by joining a committee. It can certainly be a rewarding investment of your time and talent. If you're unable to attend committee meetings, but have concerns you'd like to address, perhaps mobilizing your immediate neighbors and hosting a house meeting might be a more suitable way for you to organize around your concerns. For some neighbors this is the perfect arrangement to work on neighborhood problems.

Do you have concerns or issues you'd like to discuss? There are many ways a committee could offer help. If you'd like to discuss your concerns, or obtain more information about safety tools and programs mentioned in the story, contact Marilyn Gachaw, Community Organizer, at 232-9182.

For example, Gloria felt compelled to contact the Safety Committee for help solving quality of life issues in her neighborhood. As a result, the committee hosted a resident meeting on Sept. 26 at Faith Baptist Church with neighbors from Allen Street, Cleveland Avenue

and Leland Avenue. During the meeting each resident described their problem. Featured presenter, Sgt Lee Ross from the South Bend Police Dept., explained how to address community issues of crime and safety. And of course, kudos to the Safety Committee members for providing additional resources; safety tools were shared by members Dick Kilbase who presented the "telephone tree" and John Sellers presented the "call log." Charles Burnside did an awesome job facilitating the meeting and Shane Peters, assisting Vacant & Abandoned Property Committee member Linda Wolfson, captured the essence of the discussion. A message from Pastor Perkins inspired us all. The meeting was an exceptional collaboration between the NNN, Safety Committee members, neighbors and Faith Baptist Church. These neighbors identified their issues, became supportive partners and are leading the change process. You can do the same on your street.

THE COMMON GROUND

Published quarterly by the Near Northwest Neighborhood, Inc.
1007 Portage Ave. South Bend, IN 46616 Phone: (574) 232-9182
Mailing address: P.O. Box 1132, South Bend, IN 46624

Karen Ainsley, Executive Director; Kim Geiger, President; Kathy Schuth, Vice President; Lois Jackson, Secretary; Ann Shell, Treasurer; Alesia Redding, Editor

Board Members: Lornce Applewhite, Patricia Torres-Bell, Darryl Boykins, Barb Bradley, Charles Burnside, Jr., Dave Emmel, Kim Geiger, Lois Jackson, Dick Kilbase, Dave Kimble, Bob King, Arnold Sallie, Kim Sandefur, Kathy Schuth, Ann Shell, Betty Tonsing, Mary Turgi, Jason Vice

FALL MAINTENANCE WILL ELIMINATE WINTER STRESS

By Jeff Stanifer

Fall is here and every homeowner knows what this means: it's the season for cleaning gutters, winding up the hoses, caulking drafty openings, preparing heating systems and more. Yes, there's more, too many to list. However, the following checkpoints touch on the most obvious areas that should be checked before winter sets in.

🏠 Fall means leaves and plenty of them. Be sure to clean gutters and downspouts to make sure debris and snow will not wreak havoc on these systems.

🏠 Check roof for any leaks around the flashing at the chimney and around the vents of heating system. Leaks can cause serious water damage on the roof and the decking.

🏠 While you're at the roof area it's important to check for any holes or access spots where squirrels, raccoons, or even bats can enter your home and make themselves a vacation home for winter. Remove bird nests from chimney flues and outdoor electrical fixtures. A bird nest that blocks heat ventilation can become a fire hazard just waiting to ignite.

🏠 The fall season will also attract all kinds of critters who are also looking for a cozy spot for winter. They don't need a lot of space to get into or under your home. Make sure all exterior vents are screened, and that there are no gaps underneath doors. Pet doors are another favorite access point for rodents.

🏠 Drain and store garden hoses and shut off exterior water spigots. A frozen pipe causes plenty of discomforts, not to mention the unexpected repair expenses you incur - ouch!

🏠 Run all gas-powered equipment until the fuel tank is empty and be sure to remove flammable liquid storage from your garage. Do not store dirty, oily rags in a pile - they might ignite spontaneously.

Next we come to the inside of your house. Fall maintenance is much like spring house-cleaning, except the focus is more on preventative and less on "cleaning."

🏠 Be sure to vacuum and check smoke alarms and their batteries. This is so important for the safety of your family and home. Keep extra replacement batteries on hand as back-up, because preparation is essential. On a cold winter's night which would you prefer a trip to your storage room or a trip to the store?

🏠 Clean that dryer vent. Move the dryer and clean out the dryer vent with a brush and/or vacuum. Make sure you also check the outside vent and clean this one as well. (Homes can catch on fire because of a clogged dryer vent. Don't let this happen to you!)

🏠 Clean the bathroom thoroughly - faucets, showerheads, sink. Make sure that everything is draining properly and that there are no leaks or drips. Check bathroom tile and grout to make sure it is not cracking or chalky. Replace any defective areas with clean, new

caulk. You should also seal the shower grout. Leaks in this area can cause huge damage without you even being aware.

🏠 You will want to clean all the exhaust fan systems in your bath and your kitchen. Clean the filters and the vent covers. This will prolong their life and make them function more efficiently.

🏠 Caulking around all exterior areas is a must. Make sure caulking around doors and windows is adequate to reduce heat loss. Weather stripping also should be replaced if curled or coming loose. Check glazing for loose or missing putty or glazing compound. This reduces water damage to windows and door frames.

🏠 Have your heating/air service people come and do a complete inspection of your system, looking for rust odors, leaks and proper drafting. Changing your furnace filter should be done on a monthly or bi-monthly basis and fall is an excellent time to change your filters. If you use a wood burning fireplace, make sure you examine the attic chimney for loose or leaky caulk and tuck point if any areas are found which need attention.

Preparing your home for winter in the fall can make life so much easier for you in the cold, dark winter months ahead. **If you would like to learn more about basic fall maintenance join us at the NNN offices on Saturday, Oct. 24 at 10 a.m. for a Fall Home Maintenance Seminar hosted by the Near Northwest Neighborhood Inc.** and featuring Property Development Specialist Jeff Stanifer as well as special guest Marv Cramer, from our local Martin's Do-It-Best Hardware store. Our two local experts will share fall maintenance advice not only to demonstrate how to prepare your home for fall, but also provide handy tips to help you rest easier over the long winter months.

SELL SOUTH BEND

The Realtor Certification Program is a training and information program for real estate specialists, designed to increase their knowledge and appreciation of South Bend's near downtown neighborhoods. The program was developed by residential marketing specialist Sue Solmos in the Department of Community and Economic Development. The first class was so successful that a second South Bend Certified Realtor Class was started in September 2009. The expanded program has been re-branded as **SELL South Bend**. Sue will be offering classes to various employers – tailored to their industry – and will be offering a "Lunch & Learn" series in January. The reaction from the public has been just fantastic. Realtors are truly amazed at all that the near downtown neighborhoods have to offer.

The Realtor Certification Program is especially important to neighborhoods like the Near Northwest Neighborhood. One of the

continued, page 4

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
South Bend, IN 46624

Non Profit
Organization
US POSTAGE
PAID
South Bend, IN
Permit No. 243

Sell South Bend, continued

first classes was held at the NNN offices. At that class speakers included Code Enforcement Director, Cathy Toppel, and the city attorney who deals w/code issues. They discussed issues that are important to our neighborhood and the consequences of ignoring code violations.

The class also featured a presentation to help promote the NNN. Participants toured one of the NNN homes and then toured the entire neighborhood. This gave the Realtors a whole new prospective on the neighborhood and what it has to offer. Some of the Realtors from the last class had never been in some of the areas. They were very pleased at what they saw. The NNN Marketing Committee has put together an excellent packet of information for each Realtor. These packets have also been sent to potential partners and supporters in the community. You can access this packet through NNN's web site at www.nearnorthwest.org

SELL South Bend is one more positive thing occurring in our neighborhood!

COULD YOU BE THE NEXT NNN HOMEOWNER!?

The NNN's mission is to preserve and revitalize the near northwest neighborhood. As part of the organization's efforts this past year, it was able to sell 4 homes within the neighborhood. This is quite a positive statement for the neighborhood considering the current national economic environment. All NNN homes are completely rehabilitated, including a new roof, updated electrical and plumbing, all new mechanicals, new kitchen & bath(s) and new windows. Once a home has been finished, it is sold to income qualifying households. Each of these properties is unique and offers a wide range of options for someone looking to purchase a home. They are the perfect home for anyone!

Are you interested in becoming the next NNN homeowner? If so, you could be on your way to getting a new home. Simply fill out a NNN housing application. Once it has been verified that you are eligible for a NNN home, you will be eligible to place an offer on a home listed for sale with the NNN or to be placed on the waiting list to be notified of future homes available for sale. The waiting list is first come, first served, so the sooner you complete your application the sooner you could have your very own house!

To get an application or to learn more about NNN homes, please contact Karen Ainsley, at (574) 232-9182, or stop by the NNN offices at 1007 Portage Ave (corner of Portage & California Avenues).

HOME FOR SALE

508 LINDSEY

\$ 69,900 - REDUCED!

Four bedrooms; one-and-a-half bathrooms; 1st floor laundry; tiled kitchen and bathroom floors; shed; all new mechanicals including central air...now available!



The Near Northwest Neighborhood, Inc. is a community development corporation focused on revitalizing one of South Bend's oldest neighborhoods. Efforts include acquisition and rehabilitation—older homes are bought, restored, and sold to low-to-moderate income homeowners. 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.