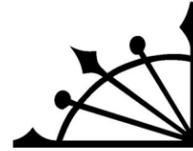


Near Northwest Neighborhood, Inc.
1007 Portage Ave
South Bend, IN 46624
574-232-9182
nearnorthwest.org



NNN Community Dates

Portage Farmstands are open every Saturday from 10AM-Noon in the NNN parking lot.

Hope for the Hungry Food Pantry dates are *Saturdays July 9, August 20, September 10, October 8, November 5 and December 10 from 11AM-1PM* or as supplies last. All dates are at the NNN Community Center, 1013 Portage. See hope4thehungry.com for information.

The **Artist Group** meets *Tuesdays and Fridays in the 1013 Portage Community Center, 9:30AM to noon*. Bring your art gear and join them any time.

BOTANY,s one year anniversary is July 16 and they are having a CELEBRATION. See their webpage for full details about all the festivities: www.botanyorbust.com. You can also find more information there on all Botany special events, seminars and volunteer opportunities.

The **Local Cup** at 1009 Portage Ave. is open with hours that change seasonally. This summer, they are open *Tues, 7-11AM, Fri 8AM-1PM, Sat 9AM-1PM, Sun 1-5PM*. Find them on Facebook @TheLocalCupSB.

First Fridays The merchants of the Near Northwest Neighborhood (Botany, Brain Lair, The Local Cup, No. 6) cordially invite you to discover our corner of the city. Enjoy music, food trucks, family activities, plus special hours and discounts in local shops on the *first Friday of every month from 5-7PM*.

French Conversation Groups meet Monday & Thursday evenings. For details, contact grgloster@hotmail.com or eviebarton@aol.com.

Arts Café, *Sunday, October 2, Noon—6PM*. Our annual Block Party, celebration of NNN homes, neighbors, artists, chefs and children is a delight for all! Volunteer planners wanted—call the office.

Living Lead Safe in the NNN

The NNN, as we well know, was mainly built out within the first half of the 20th century. Today, the typical age of homes in the NNN is over 100 years old! While older homes and buildings add to the uniqueness of life in the NNN, they also pose a number of risks. Houses built prior to 1978 are likely to contain lead based paint. Left to wear and tear from many years of occupancy, this paint gets into the house's dust and soil. From there it can be accidentally, or unknowingly ingested or inhaled by children and adults. Children under the age of 7 are especially vulnerable to lead poisoning, which leaves irreversible brain damage.

The good news is that you can take steps to "Live Lead Safe" in your home. The first thing to do is to learn more about your home environment. The University of Notre Dame offered Free Lead Screening Kits to anyone interested in the County. Lead screening kits are available for pick up at the NNN Offices.

In addition to screening your home, it's important to have your child tested for lead through your healthcare provider or by contacting the St. Joseph County Health Department.

If you want to learn more about living lead safe, contact Jocelyn Keranen at jkeranen@nd.edu, and you can also check online at www.leadscreeningkit.com and southbendin.gov/leadsafesouthbend.



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 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 o llámenos al 232-9182.

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 1977.

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.

THE COMMON GROUND

Near Northwest
Neighborhood
INCORPORATED

NEWS YOU CAN USE

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

JUNE/JULY 2022

Summertime Dreaming

Neighbors, we offer the Common Ground newsletter as a resource to you, and to share news about the many good things happening in our shared neighborhood. While it's a lot of information, it's not even the tip of the iceberg regarding our neighborhood experiences – what's happening on your block, which long-time neighbor you've perhaps had to say good-bye to, what great idea that was shared with you recently. We are the NNN, and the NNN is us. You've perhaps heard of the concept of gentrification - the process whereby the character of an urban area is changed by wealthier people moving in and new development which doesn't match neighborhood character begins to happen, typically displacing current inhabitants in the process. Well, in counter to that, we came across the phrase "withinification" recently, and are mulling it over. How does this neighborhood grow and thrive, and do so from WITHIN and WITH ALL. That's our summertime dreaming – and framework for thinking. If you're having some summertime dreaming, thinking, and ideas for action together – please contact us!

Financial Readiness Class in the NNN

We are proud to present the addition of Financial Readiness Classes on Wednesday evenings in our Community Center. The classes are free of charge and is instructed by our very own Near Northwest neighbor Marce Bingham and facilitated by our Community Organizer/Networker Dré Northern. Dré Northern is also offering one on one personal finance counseling for students. Our goal in facilitating these classes is to empower anyone who desires to achieve financial stability and achieve financial goals such as becoming debt free or purchasing a home. Please stay tuned to our Facebook page for our fall session enrollment.

Anti-Gun Violence Task Force

Please join us in discussions with Group Violence Intervention Project Manager Isaac Hunt as we discuss possible solutions and strategies in preventing gun violence in our neighborhood. The discussion is hosted by Community Organizer/Networker Dré Northern and are on the last Friday of each month at 2pm in our Community Center. Please email or call Dré Northern at anorthern.nnn@gmail.com or at 574-303-7990 for more details.

Chapin Park Unity Garden Continues to Grow

True to the truism, Chapin Park Unity Garden, now in its third year, is leaping! The beds are full, the trees are laden, and the strawberries have been phenomenal. Please come pick, and come join the volunteers on Wednesday nights, 6-8, weather permitting.

Big news!: Ben Futa of The Botany Shop, has volunteered his services to keep our garden wild area manageable. He and his Green Corps will be 'digging in' over the summer. Watch the NNN listserv for ways and times to join in.

In the picture, Shay Chupp, Unity Development and Youth Education Coordinator, neighborhood leader Molly Moon and Unity Garden founder Mitch Yaciw show off the new garden sign nearing completion.



French Conversation Groups

Residents of the NNN (Near Northwest Neighborhood) have formed 2 French Conversation groups. The original group meets Monday nights. A second group meets on Thursday evening with the Forever Learning Institute as a cosponsor. Although intended primarily for NNN residents and members of the FLI Francophone community, any and all Francophones are welcome to come *parlez français* with the groups.

All meetings take place at the St. Joseph County Public Library Main Branch classrooms, downtown South Bend. Thursday Meetings are always from 6:30 - 8:00PM. Monday meetings are 7:00-8:30PM.

Please contact Gerald Gloster (grgloster@hotmail.com) or Evie Barton (eviebarton@aol.com) for more information.



The Bright Spot

This quarter's Bright Spot in the NNN was selected to be Redbud Blossoms along the almost-completed Coal Line Trail.



The neighborhood's western and northern perimeter are now beautifully enhanced with this bike and foot path. The Bright Spot Committee is always looking for suggestions for recognition.

Please send nominations to jomdowns29@gmail.com.

COAL LINE TRAIL

The northern part of Phase 1 of the Trail. Top is the approach to the Woodward Ave crossing and bottom is the approach to the bridge from Woodward. The trail is walkable and almost complete



More Than Just Talk by Community Organizer, Dre Northern

When we began having our Restorative Justice Conversation Circles, for many it was immediately an emotional journey. Together we explored the many components of systemic racism and how the social phenomenon affected nearly all facets of life for people of color.

During the nearly two years we've conducted these conversation circles I've witnessed many ranges of emotions from the topics we spoke on. For some it was anger. For some there was shock and disbelief. But the most prevalent of them all was sadness and feelings of powerlessness. To my surprise, these sentiments came from many of our white neighbors who participated. As I told them stories of my own personal experiences with racism in my life, I saw many become emotional to the point of tears. They would call me after these conversations and apologize to me for my experiences which I assured them that while touched by their sentiments, that they owed me no apology. Then nearly all ask the same question: "What can I do?"

I would do my best to reassure them that the burden of deconstructing systemic racism doesn't lie on the shoulders of just one demographic or ethnic group in this country. Having said this, I also told them as white Americans that they were uniquely positioned in the fight against racism, even more so than myself and all people of color. "How?" one particular neighbor asked. I explained that the contrasting social aspect of systemic racism is white privilege. To deny the existence of one is to deny the existence of the other. I asked this neighbor to imagine using that privilege to cripple systemic racism. The example I later gave with our collective group was to imagine the legislative changes that may have happened if white Americans with their tremendous buying power boycotted Florida as a tourist destination after the absurd George Zimmerman verdict after he murdered Trayvon Martin. I also told many that systemic racism doesn't just affect the lives of those it intends to, it touches us all. The proof can be seen right here in the NNN. The NNN includes an area, Census Tract 6, which had an extremely high percentage of children tested between 2005-2015 with elevated blood lead levels (about 30%). If you view the NNN within this scope, you can conclude that lead poisoning in this neighborhood doesn't just harm African American or Latino children, it harms all of our children.

In one particular conversation with one neighbor where they asked me to go more in-depth of how systemic racism affects the NNN, I explained that the main cog of the systemic racism machine is poverty. I asked them to imagine poverty as a monster like the mythical Kraken whose tentacles manifest themselves in many forms in the context of systemic racism as social ills that are perpetuated to sustain the grip around those trapped within their clutches for generations to come. I asked them to imagine one tentacle as the well-documented disregard of mostly minority cities, communities and neighborhoods with high concentrations levels of lead in homes and/or pipes (like Flint Michigan). I told this neighbor this monster has many tentacles like lack of quality and unbiased healthcare, bias in education, bias in our justice system, discriminatory lending practices, discriminatory practices in hiring; these tentacles have a hold on nearly every social aspect that helps determine our overall quality of life. The effects of the soul-crushing grips of these tentacles reverberates in our communities in the forms of other social ills like gun violence, illegal drugs and prostitution just to name a few. While I argued that breaking the grips of these tentacles seem like a monumental task, it still must be done because regardless of race, we are interconnected. Gun violence doesn't just affect the lives of people of color, it touches us all. Human dignity and compassion dictates that we are all harmed to some extent by its senselessness. And where do we start with when taking on a monumental task? At the beginning. And in the terms of bringing about change in our society, that beginning is right outside of our own doorsteps.

As somber as many of these conversations were, I also found inspiration as we moved towards this final round of conversation circles. It dawned on me that the answer for participants was not to overwhelm themselves with the idea of taking on these social ills on a national scale, but to begin right here within this great neighborhood. Suddenly conversations that started with senses of helplessness and powerlessness started sounding inspired and empowering. We planned on converting our verbal energy from these conversations into kinetic energy within the Near Northwest Neighborhood.

Now we meet on alternating Mondays at our Community Center with specific groups working together to address specific issues within this neighborhood. We have five groups, each with neighbors who are using their skills and talents to address specific issues within the NNN. The groups decided to start with health and wellness; housing; community building; our neighborhood schools; and our local criminal justice system.

Each time we meet, I find that I am smiling as I see many of the individuals I've had those past conversations with where they sounded so defeated look excited and exhilarated. People that may have met for the first time on Zoom in one of our earlier rounds now tell me they are communicating and meeting during the week to work on their projects. One particular evening one of those neighbors I spoke with regularly in our past rounds came to me as we convened for the night and said "This is so great Dré! We are really doing it!". Right in that moment I realized that I heard something clear in that short declaration that I hadn't heard in our past rounds: *hope*.