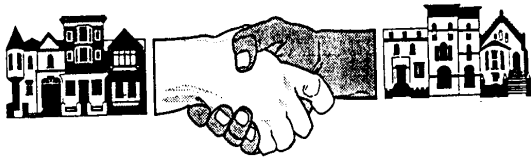


Nelson News



A quarterly publication informing and encouraging the residents of Nelson Neighborhood

Winter 2005

<http://nelson.rinsema-sybenga.com>

Contacting NNIA

President

Larry Spataro (725-9384)

Membership Committee

Dollie Hippchen (726.4890)

Activities Committee

Marcia Hovey-Wright

Communication Committee

Jason Whitman (727-957)

Finance Committee

Mary Jo McCann

Hospitality Committee

Greg Borgman

Upcoming Events

February 26 -NNIA Annual Meeting to be held at the NNIA building. All welcome. Refreshments to be served and annual state of the NNIA to be presented.

Potluck Christmas Dinner

On December 16th, the Nelson Neighborhood Improvement Association gathered together to celebrate the holiday season. The night was full and rich with food, fellowship, and fun. Neighbors helped to make the basement warm and festive for this celebration, many of them lending their home decorations to the celebration. Spiced candles burned, Christmas lights twinkled, and the warmth of the heaters filled the air. Everyone brought a dish to share—hot dogs, Greek salads, deviled eggs, chips and salsa, and deserts more

than one could imagine, or eat!! The favorite dish of the evening was the pot of chili made with love by our very own Board President, Larry Spataro, who was generous enough to share his secret ingredient with those who asked. For those of you who were too busy eating to ask, you'll just have to wait till next year when Larry becomes "of jovial, generous spirit" again! The Hospitality Committee provided door prizes for the lucky again and all of us—especially the Winning Whitman Family—were grateful to Fricano's for their donated gift cer



A good crowd enjoyed the dinner

tificate! Thanks, Fricano's, for sharing the Christmas Spirit with your fellow neighbors! And thanks, all of you, who helped to create and share in this wonderful neighborhood celebration!

Focus on Safety

Judging by crime statistics released by the Muskegon Police Department Nelson Neighborhood has a long way to go towards making our neighborhood a safe place to live. 278 assaults and 116 residential breaking and enterings were reported in calendar 2004. For more Nelson and other Muskegon crime statistics visit muskegonpolice.com. To combat this problem NNIA is facilitating the creation of block groups

led by block captains. Such efforts led to the taking back of St. Joe's Park over the summer of 2004. This was only accomplished by neighbors working together collaboratively with the police to effectively return the park to a place for kids to play. If you, or others who live near you are interested in learning more about starting a block group contact Dollie Hippchen at 231.726.4890.

Christmas Luminaries Light Up Downtown Muskegon

Organized by the NNIA Activities Committee and led by Marcia Hovey-Wright, NNIA was responsible for a good portion of the luminaries that brightened downtown Muskegon's Christmas Eve last month. After signing up volunteers at the NNIA Christmas potluck residents gathered at the NNIA building early in the afternoon to put the luminaries together. The luminaries consisted of pa-

per bags, beach sand, and a votive candle. Marcia Hovey-Wright received advice on how to organize a luminary project from our neighbors at the Glenside Neighborhood Association. This year three blocks of Webster and Muskegon were lit up by NNIA. Next year the Activities Committee hopes to expand this project and light up more of downtown Muskegon.

Many Improvements in Store for 2005

Various agencies and organizations have visions for improvement that are scheduled to take place during 2005. Some are focused on Nelson's commercial district while others target the residential part of the neighborhood.

The biggest project scheduled to impact the residential areas of Nelson is the \$500,000 Neighborhoods of Choice grant that is targeting 5th Street. The bulk of the money will go towards repaving the street and doing a "streetscape" that will improve the landscaping on 5th from Webster through Merrill.

Also, building on the success last summer at St. Joseph's Park neighborhood residents are planning to organize themselves in an

effort to have adult supervision at the park during all daylight hours for the summer months. This will create a safe place for the kids and will allow for healthy interaction between caring adults and our neighborhood youth.

Commercial improvement efforts in the neighborhood center on the downtown area. A grant from the Michigan Department of Transportation (M-DOT) is making possible a repaving and streetscape project on Western Avenue. Already the historic lamp posts have been installed.

Other commercial improvements are expected to be made public soon regarding the rebuilding of the old Muskegon Mall property. Bids are

expected to be made over the winter months with construction slated for spring 2005.



No one at the park now, but hopes are high for next summer.

NNIA events for 2005

The NNIA Activities Committee has planned a number of exciting events for the upcoming year that we hope you will take part in. A planting/gardening event will be held in the spring that will provide for an opportunity for neighbors to contribute to the beautifying of neighborhood common areas, as well as seminars about how to spruce up your own residences.

In the summer a family picnic will be held that will include food and

games. In the fall an ethnic festival is being planned that would be a carnival style celebration of the various ethnic backgrounds represented in our neighborhood. And then next December, in addition to the luminaries (see page 1), a holiday Parade of homes is in the works. If you are interested in helping organize any of these activities please call Marcia Hovey-Wright.

Membership in NNIA rises

Thanks to the efforts of the Membership committee, in particular, Dollie Hippchen, membership in NNIA rose from 25 at the end of 2003 to 50 at the end of 2004. A similar increase in membership is being targeted in 2005. Membership dues only cost \$2 and give you the opportunity to let your voice be heard at monthly neighborhood meetings. So if you have not al-

ready, become a member of NNIA. Contact Dollie Hippchen at . In particular the Membership Committee is targeting residents who would like to become block captains for their block. Block captains will provide a network through which neighborhood residents can become proactive and collaborative in solving block issues.

NNIA Committee Roundup

Activities - see article to left.

Membership - see article to left

Communications - To better inform residents and the wider community about Nelson Neighborhood the Committee has begun work on a website that will soon be up and running. In addition the Committee has committed to quarterly production of the Nelson News newsletter.

Finance - To complete the sale of the remaining NNIA property and support the activities of the association.

Hospitality - The hospitality committee helped pull off the December Christmas Potluck. In January the Committee extended the Neighborhood's condolences to Ciggzzree Morris, whose husband, Richard, passed away early January.