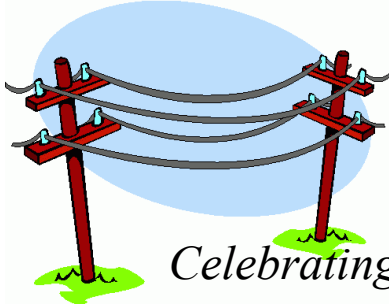


The

LEAVENWORTH

EXCHANGE



Celebrating together as friends and neighbors

Volume 25
Issue 3



March 2010

Letter from the President....

Shakespeare wrote “Beware the Ides of March” in reference to the ultimate demise of Julius Caesar. With all this snow on the ground, perhaps we should update that to “Beware the Tides of March.” Wow. It will take some very warm days to get that condensed pack down to the river. For the sake of those living on the Elkhorn and Platte, we hope the meltdown is easy to prevent flooding. The rain has to stay away to keep that assurance. Of course, in Midtown we want some rain to clean the crud. And expose the litter. And those yard tools that disappeared upon the first snowfall... Time to get ready, spring is near and the neighbors will once again be outside visiting.

And nature’s renewal will coincide with the coming out of the woodwork. We will finally be able to see beyond the headshots of neighbors waving as they drive by. The gloves will be put away, the shorts will be unpacked, and the walking starts. Even if those legs are lily white from the winter, it will be nice to see folks out and about once again.

And it will be nice to see the continued activity of the LNA with our pool of neighbors. Having taken on this leadership role again, I am optimistic about the ideas and efforts coming forth from the membership. I enjoy my involvement because it is our environment, our comfort zone, our travels through the neighborhood that all work towards sustaining a higher quality of life. Something I trust all of neighbors will strive towards.

I asked a 31st Street resident the other day why she had not joined the LNA. The response was interesting because she said she only rented her space. I had never thought of our mission as one that would apply only to property owners, but could see where she might have been coming from. But I encourage everyone to become an active participant. You might be surprised what you can learn. I suspect when meeting on a walk down the trail the conversations will continue. **Jim Thompson**

Community Garden Update

By Carol Haas

At the February general membership meeting, the LNA agreed to work with Ford Birthsite Neighborhood Association in establishing a community vegetable garden at 1113 South 31st Street. The lot is owned by Urban Village Development and is approximately 50’ x 150’ in size.

The community garden committee has been meeting and efforts are underway to obtain grant funding for this project and solidify details for the layout and water supply for the site. It is anticipated that raised beds will be ready for planting at the end of May. A number of committee members will be attending a workshop on community gardens on March 10 after which more complete details will be determined.

We hope that this garden will serve as a means to reach out to our neighbors and build a sense of community while providing a viable green space in an empty lot. Volunteers will be needed to prepare the site and build the raised beds. Now that spring is really on the way, it’s a great time to help out your neighborhood while spending time outdoors. If you are interested in participating in the planning of this project or volunteering at the site, please contact Kat Vinton, Brian and Gail Henkel, Kristie Lee, or Carol Haas for additional information.

Reminder! The next LNA meeting will be **March 18, 2010, 7:00 PM** at the VFW at 3302 Leavenworth St (in the meeting hall on the lower level). Enter on the south side main entrance facing Leavenworth OR on the north side to avoid using stairs. **Mark it down!**

Alleys- A Neighborhood Treasure

By Todd Wyatt

At some point this winter, the City of Omaha stopped clearing alleys of snow. As frustrating as this was, reasonable people must recognize that the City had to cut something in order to deal with costs incurred from the "Snow of the Century." However, I am reminded of the famous quotation from Sen. Carol Moseley Braun: "In the future, expect to pay more, receive less, and be asked to feel more patriotic about it." That aside, I'd like to point out the value of alleys to our neighborhood.

The beauty of the alley is its ugliness. It's where we can keep our messes. When there's not four feet of snow, I can put my trash and recycling out of plain site on collection day. Imagine how ugly the front of a cul-de-sac must look on trash day! Much of our utility company infrastructure is hidden in the alley, out of public view. On my block, front doors and porches face the street, with garage doors facing the alley. New home construction is all about the street-facing garage in a sprawl neighborhood without alleys. By allowing us to have our garages in the rear of our homes, the street-facing fronts of our houses are much more interesting and unique.

The alley is narrow by design. No one drives fast on an alley, so it's pretty safe. Police and firefighters no doubt appreciate the extra access to homes and buildings. More importantly, a network of alleys makes for a more pedestrian-friendly environment. If we expect people to walk for exercise and transportation, they are much more likely to do so if the neighborhood is pleasantly interesting and different from point A to B.

The alley is a bargain. Streets in traditional neighborhoods such as ours are one-third narrower than those in new sprawl developments. In addition to keeping us safe through slowed traffic, there's a lot less infrastructure to maintain when neighborhoods have alleys instead of curvy roads and cul-de-sacs. Thus, the decision to not clear snow from alleys, but to continue clearing snow from cul-de-sacs does little to reinforce the wise decision residents have made to live in an economically responsible neighborhood such as ours.

Membership Drive in Full Swing

By Bill Kline

A gentle reminder is being sent out to all LNA members who have not yet paid their dues for 2010. As an all-volunteer organization, the LNA relies upon the continuing support of the membership to keep projects going. Over 120 individual members are on the list and 60-plus business memberships. The LNA appreciates *everyone* taking care of this matter.

To make payment convenient, a stamped return envelope has been included with every letter. When making your payment, consider adding in an additional contribution. The LNA tackles a lot of projects that need your support. If you receive the letter and have already paid your dues for 2010, please contact the LNA treasurer, Zack Johnson, to get this corrected. Zack can be reached at 650-0877 or emailed at znj@mac.com. Thank you!

LNA Events Calendar

Every Monday and Wednesday: LNA Walking Club, 9 a.m.. North Entrance of Jackson Elementary. Call Irene Perez for information at 541-6374.

Every Thursday: Yoga Classes
First Lutheran Church,
542 S. 31st St.
9-10 a.m., free-will offering.
All fitness levels welcome.

First Saturday of each Month: Pick-up Litter at 10:00 AM.

Information for Contributors

To contribute to *the Exchange*, please contact **Ruth Spurgin** at: peekatchyoo@aol.com. Or **Jim Thompson** at: zippijd@aol.com
Deadline for the April issue is **April 1, 2010**. (No Fooling!)
Content submitted may be edited as needed.

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Midtown Neighborhood Alliance

As you know the LNA has been a part of the MNA since it was created in 2004. Various volunteers have represented our group in this larger assemblage of neighborhood associations. We are currently looking for someone to step forward to attend their meetings and provide input. The duties are simple. The meetings last about an hour and are held the third Wednesday of each month at the neighborhood center on 49th and Farnam. They usually serve refreshments!

The mission of the MNA is to encourage, assist and advocate for the economic, community and cultural development of historic neighborhoods in and around Omaha, Nebraska and to create and provide educational resources on the value of community revitalization to quality of life and economies in older urban neighborhoods. If these sound familiar it could be the mission of any of the 14 plus neighborhood associations that comprise the MNA. The alliance will hopefully not duplicate the LNA actions, but through numbers and comparison, will only enhance our individual efforts.

In related news, the Executive Director Deborah Knott of the MNA has resigned. Currently the Board is evaluating options on this position and the overall mission of the MNA.

Please come to the meeting or give any of the Board members a call if you would like to become involved in this cause. The LNA will also vote at the next meeting to renew our \$50 membership to the MNA.



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Color It Clean – One More Time!

By Jim Thompson

Get your calendar out and mark down Saturday, April 17 as THE day to spruce up the neighborhood. I talked to Jim Flowers from WOWT-TV and he assured me that the snow will be melted by then. Of course, I called Bill Randby from Channel 7 just to get a second opinion. He told me to go ahead and clean up the neighborhood!

This is the 22nd year of doing the clean-up in the neighborhood. Thanks to the city leaders, we will again have the opportunity this year to spruce up. Kermit Engh has again graciously offered his lot at Fashion Cleaners for the event. It will start early and end around 3:00. This year will also be a chance to get rid of old tires and white goods (washers, dryers, refrigerators, etc.). Columbus Park Neighborhood Association will be the host site for the tires and Spring Lake Park N.A. will host the appliance site. Our site will also recycle any other scrap metal. We are proud of our long standing record of keeping this commodity out of the landfill. Also, the city no longer delivers green recycling bins for your household. We will a quantity of them on hand to hand out to qualified residents.

Of course we need pick-up trucks to roam the alleys. It seems that our 3 or 4 volunteer units are kept busy all day long. The rewards are obvious when viewing the alleys afterwards. But we can always do more. Please call me if you have one or know of someone who can drive around for a portion of the day. We never run out of things for volunteers to do on that day. We usually have some people picking up loose litter as well. If you or your neighbor belong to a Boy or Girl Scout troop and want to use this day to earn badges, it's a great opportunity.

More details will be available next month. And of course, sign up at the March meeting to help. The local businesses have always been helpful in providing refreshments. These folks help tremendously on this busy day and are very much appreciated.

YARD WASTE

Collection starts the week of April 5. As a reminder, use designated containers or brown yard waste bags. Branches must be bundled and no longer than 4 feet long. Check out Omaha's website at www.wasteline.org for more details. [Note to JN: I don't think the bags survived the winter, be prepared to re-bag!]

Business Profile - OUCH Studios

By Jim Thompson

While traveling through the neighborhood the other day I noticed a new marquee at 2910 Farnam. I have been down Farnam dozens of times in the last 6 months, but for some reason this new business just never caught my eye. Slow down, take a good look around, and one never knows what may pop up. Ouch Studios began operating in this space last July. If you did not know that we had a tattoo shop in the Leavenworth Neighborhood, we do!

Honestly, I've never visited a tattoo shop before. I quickly found this place to be a great addition to our neighborhood. The cleanliness, orderliness and in general, the "cool" look upon entering left any stereotypical notions I may have had outside on the curb. I could instantly tell there was a great deal of pride in their presentation and attitude.

Owner and artist Troy Christenson is not new to the business. He has been a member of the Alliance of Professional Tattooists since 2004. They are the industry leader in terms of promoting safe tattooing. Troy calls it a diversified shop. In my eyes, I saw quite a diverse range of tattoos. However, their niche is they do all custom tattoo work, along with body piercing. Given your need to jump forward with a tattoo they do a collaborated effort with in-house artists on various designs. I met master tattoo and body piercer Aaron MacKeogh. He proudly showed me his work and frankly, I was amazed how these drawings can end up displayed on the human body. They also have "flash" designs on display that can be adapted to your needs.

During my visit I couldn't help but notice the trophies that were displayed. These represented winners at national competitions for tattoos. Yes, these artists go national! Winners are judged on client showings of tattoos. Perhaps the awards show will appear soon on some cable channel.

You may check their website www.ouch-studios.com for details on the business, including pictures of the artist's work. Or call them at 402-342-1907. I noticed they are offering discounts for UNO students. I did not ask for any discount for an LNA member, but wondered who would come forward to have their own LNA logo placed on their arm?

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Note To Dan Kammerer: Your jacket is STILL hanging in the coat room at KHA.

A Message to Help Kids...

Over the years the Junior League of Omaha has organized and supported great projects which inspired the League and its membership. Six years ago, JLO launched a signature project called H.I.P. Kids. H.I.P. Kids stands for Healthy, Inspired and Proactive kids – a mission the project has worked continuously to fulfill. In July 2009, H.I.P. Kids partnered with M.O.R.E Nature launched a community-wide initiative called Go! Play Adventure. We are proud to announce that due to its success, we are launching the second edition of Go! Play Adventure.

What is GO! Play? GO! Play is a collection of outdoor play destinations designed to get families active together in nature. Each destination has a rubbing post that families search to find. 5,000 books were distributed in 2009 with 1,000 copies going to local youth serving agencies. The 2010 edition, released in May, will feature 20 destinations that will include a section for families to journal about their experiences.

What is MORE Nature?

MORE Nature has graciously stepped up to serve as our presenting sponsor and partner. They have been involved in all aspects of the book from the beginning. MORE Nature (Metro Omaha Resources for Exploring Nature) is a collaborative initiative to bring more outdoor, nature-based play to the children of the Greater Omaha area.

Why are we asking for support?

As with other non-profits in the Omaha area, the JLO has limited funds for projects this year. We are also seeking corporate support from area businesses. Please consider a tax-deductible contribution of \$5, \$10, \$25, \$50 or \$100 to this great JLO project! Click on the [Donate Now!](#) Logo at www.juniorleagueomaha.org to make your donation now on our go directly to our secure website. Thank you for your support and dedication to the Junior League of Omaha and our community! I am proud to be a part of this organization of women building better communities.

Sincerely,

Kareen Hickman
HIP Kids Chair

Chili Cook-Off

By Ruth Spurgin

Yum. And yum again. What a contest! Thank you to all who brought chili for our annual cook-off. If you went home hungry, it was your own fault! There was plenty to go around with lots of fixings. We had a legitimate vote on which one was the best. Believe it or not, there was a FOUR WAY TIE for the best chili!! That's right, four cooks had very different recipes and the group was just as diversified in what they liked. Normally the winner has to submit the winning recipe but there just isn't enough room to publish them all.

We especially want to thank Romeo's Restaurant, 29th and Farnam for donating gift certificates for the event. It is wonderful to get the support of our neighborhood restaurants for these activities. Please tell them thank you next time you stop in.

This meal alone was worth the price of membership. How often can one try 8 different chili recipes all at once.



Winners of the Chili Cook-Off: (l to r.) Reggie Wells, Scott Hennarty, Bill Kline, Wyatt Spurgin



Enjoying a feast: John McCaul, Bill Stowell, Scott Hennarty, Brett Curtis and newcomer Dave.



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Street Tree Trimming Opportunity

By Carol Haas

Jerry Reimer of Urban Village Development (currently renovating apartment building at 3007 Jackson) has offered a crew and an arborist to provide trimming of street trees in our neighborhood and Ford Birthsite neighborhood. The date for this activity is Saturday, April 10. If you have trees in front of your home that need trimming, please call 345-6085 by March 20.

Additionally, volunteers are need to help with clean up of loose branches and debris on the day of the trimming. Larger branches will be chipped and the resulting mulch will be used at the new community vegetable garden.

This is a great opportunity for our neighborhoods and we appreciate the help of Urban Village.

From the Green Omaha Coalition.....

National Park Service Youth Employment Opportunities

The application period is now open for the Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) summer youth employment program at the National Park Service (NPS) regional headquarters in Omaha. Any student regardless of his or her scholastic preferences or strengths--even business administration or history--is encouraged to apply.

The YCC program welcomes all eligible students to apply. Furthermore, students with disabilities are encouraged to apply as the federal government provides reasonable accommodations that allow all employees to work effectively.

We endeavor to hire a diverse team of students in which the individuals can support and learn from one another.

For more information contact Alvis Mar, Recruitment Program Manager at 402-661-1978 or alvis_mar@nps.gov.



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As long as the Earth can make a **spring** every year, I can. As long as the Earth can flower and produce nurturing fruit, I can, because I'm the Earth. I won't give up until the Earth gives up.

- [Alice Walker](#)

First Lutheran Church 542 So. 31 Street

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Worship-Sunday 9:30 am

Worship-Sunday 8:30 am and 11:00 am

Pantry-1:00-2:30 Mon.-Fri.

AA Meetings-7:00 pm Mon.

ESL Classes-9:00 am Tu.& Th.



*Building a Neighborhood
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Mobile Nursing Center

First Central Congregational Church, 421 S. 36th St, will be hosting a Mobile Nursing Center on Thursday, April 15th, from 10 a.m. to noon, or longer, if necessary. This event is **open to the public**, and is a free service of the University of Nebraska Medical Center College of Nursing. A Spanish interpreter will be on site. Screenings available, **for no charge**, include blood pressure, blood sugar, height, weight, and body mass index (BMI). In addition, cholesterol (total and HDL) testing will be available for \$15. The screenings will be held inside the church; please enter through the Harney street doors, on the northeast corner of the building.



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Who We Are

A neighborhood association advocating growth and pride for families and business in the heart of the city -- working to provide a safe, attractive, and welcoming environment in which to live, work, and play. The LNA is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization.

Our Board Members

President: Jim Thompson Phone: 342-4371
 Email: zippijd@aol.com
 Vice-President: Anne Meysenberg Phone: 707-3979
 Email: anne@kentbellows.org
 Secretary: John Costanzo Phone: 344-3867
 Email: costanzoj@cox.net
 Treasurer: Zach Johnson
 Email: znj@mac.com
 At Large: Ruth Spurgin Phone: 960-7817
 Email: peekatchyoo@aol.com

Join us for our monthly meetings -- the 3rd Thursday of the month, 7 p.m., V.F.W., 3302 Leavenworth St.
Website: www.lnaomaha.org

Become a Member of the LNA

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Renewal

Make checks payable to LNA. Dues are for Jan.-Dec.

Mail to LNA, PO Box 55193, Omaha, NE 68155.

Each adult 18 or older, 2 max. per family or business that pay dues and lives, owns property, or owns/operates a business in the LNA boundaries shall be eligible to vote on Association matters.

LNA boundaries: East - 29th St., North - Dodge St.,
 South - Pacific St., West - 36th St.