

The Benton Park News

A Monthly Publication of the Benton Park Neighborhood Association

Volume 9, Number 11

November, 1992

Fremont Project Wins \$4.4 Million Hud Approval

The Fremont School building, one of the earliest closed by the City of St. Louis, will soon be coming back to life--this time to support the needs of citizens at the other end of the age spectrum.

\$4.4 million in funding has been approved by the Department of Housing and Urban Development for the renovation of this landmark building into 75 one-bedroom apartments for senior citizens. This private housing project will be managed by Cardinal Ritter Institute.

In order to attract development, the Benton Park Community Housing Corporation had purchased the site earlier and, through funding obtained with the assistance of Alderman Aboussie, is readying the site by removing asbestos and doing some demolition of wings that had been added to the building.

Construction is expected to begin in late summer of '93, with completion and occupancy in 1994.

Many thanks to all who took the time to write letters of support to Congressmen and HUD officials. We have been told that these letters turned the tide of support for the project.

Focus on Crime Prevention

The November meeting of the neighborhood association will focus on the development of a crime prevention program similar to the one that has been so successful in reducing crime problems in **Soulard**.

The meeting will focus on implementation tactics for a number of vital programs. All Benton Park residents are urged to consider becoming involved in one or more of the following ways:

MOBILE PATROL is a very effective way in which you can help keep an eye on what is going on in our streets and alleys. Volunteers are trained by an experienced mobile patrol volunteer. They are taught what to look for, how to use the mobile phone, how to report suspicious activity and how to keep themselves safe while doing this. Volunteers always work in pairs, with two other pairs of volunteers always in contact for support. You need not work more than one evening a month, though you can work more often if this suits your schedule. If you would like to try mobile patrol, please call Joanne Hoppe at 353-3359. Joanne could use help in scheduling and distribution of materials if you want to help but don't feel secure with doing the actual patrol.

BLOCK CAPTAINS are essential to establish communication in each and every block of Benton Park. The block captain's role is to get to know the people on the block, and talking over problems which may be occurring in that block. The block captain acts as a go-between for the neighborhood residents and the persons who can bring resources to bear on problems. If someone in your block has already volunteered, you could

act as an assistant. About 30 block captains have already volunteered and are now being trained. We need many more. If you are asked to be the block captain for your block, please consider it seriously. To find out who is the block captain for your block, or to volunteer to be a block captain, please call George Rutter at 664-5118.

FUND RAISER is a very important role if we are to launch our own patrol of security officers. **Soulard** bought a golf cart and employed two police officers for several hours each evening. We need a large and enthusiastic team to arrange fund raisers if we are to have this program. If this is the area in which you want to contribute time and effort, please call Bob Jackes at 773-4669.

Several responsible persons are needed to assist with the leadership in each of these areas. We are all busy with jobs, families, upkeep of our property, etc. This neighborhood belongs to us, and it is up to us to make it the wonderful place it has the potential to be. To assume that the city, police, churches, or officers of the association will take care of the problems is not shouldering our responsibilities. If we all give just a little time to this, we will have a better place to live, and nobody will be worked to the point of burn-out. Please decide what you want to do, make the phone call and then follow through with your duties!

BPNA Meeting: Tuesday, November 3

Benton Park Neighborhood Association meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month at 7:30 PM at Epiphany Church Hall, 2911 McNair. The public is invited to attend.

BLOCK CAPTAIN MEETING

A special meeting of block captains and would-be block captains will be held at Epiphany Church, Tuesday, November 17 at 7:00 PM.

A Message From Joint Neighborhood Ministries

Motivated women are needed for the Near Southside Maternal and Child Health Program. We offer flexible hours, full or part-time positions, child care, and a small salary beginning with training. If you or anyone you know wants to learn more about women's health and infant care, and then share that information with teens in your neighborhood, call Jenny Levi at 664-4937, Terry Jo Bichell at 776-1933, or Joint Neighborhood Ministries at 771-3987. Get involved in your community!!

A Message From Mary King: What Updating Helps Sell Your Home

When you think about all the work and expense you have put into your home, it is hard to determine exactly which improvements will really increase the value of your home. Is it the great deck or patio; the jacuzzi tub, or the skylights?

The newly remodelled kitchen is the number one project we have found over and over again to provide the greatest return on your investment. A clean, fresh, well lighted kitchen is the greatest selling point. Women are usually the primary decision makers when it comes to purchasing a home. Since they are usually the ones who also spend the most time in the kitchen, this is the most important room to them.

The next most important room is the bath! A full second bath is almost essential in today's market. Although today's families are smaller, consumers are demanding for two or more baths.

Energy efficiency is another concern, especially in the Benton Park housing stock, with our high ceilings and older windows, fireplaces, lack of insulation, etc. Replacement windows, updated heating and air conditioning, ceiling fans, and fireplaces with lined chimneys and either glass doors or a good damper are important.

Last, if you are trying to sell your home, walk across the street and examine the street appeal. Are gutters secure; is the yard neat and landscaped? Is the paint chipping? Would you ask to see this house if you were driving by? Remember, you can't sell a home if a prospective buyer can't get past the outside to go in to look at it.

We at Mary King & Assoc. Inc. are committed to Benton Park. We have sold nine homes this year so far and look forward to selling many more. If you have any questions regarding your remodelling projects, please feel free to call us.

Do You Own, Rent, or Lease an Apartment?

The St. Louis Development Corporation (SLDC), a not-for-profit corporation, working with the Community Development Agency (CDA) and the DeSales Housing Corporation, has designed a pilot program to encourage the coordination and professional management of rental property within the Fox Park, Tower Grove East and Benton Park West neighborhoods. Management Assistance Program (MAP) has been created as a special two-year pilot program for owners of residential investment property within these neighborhoods.

Benefits for property owners are free professional management of your property for two years; full-time property manager; advertising and showing of vacant apartments; monthly operating statements; professional tenant screening; assistance in creating an operating budget; enforcing uniform building rules; coordination of inspections; professional rent collection procedures; and, speedy evictions when necessary.

Owners are required to do the following: Make two-year commitment to the program (transferable to new owner if the property is sold); bring units up to Conservation District standards; prepare annual operating budget (with assistance from professional building manager) and agree to minimum operating guidelines; cooperate with manager to enforce building rules and evictions; participate in programs designed to improve the neighborhoods like Operation Brightside Blitz; promote the MAP program wherever possible.

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PUBLICATION DEADLINE

The 20th of each month is the cutoff date for material to reach the Benton Park newsletter editor. We welcome input from all of our readers regarding people and events that involve Benton Park and its residents. Submit information by phone (664-8552), FAX (664-6310), or mail (3108 Illinois, 63118).

1992 BPNA OFFICERS:

Nancy Christen President
Ron Bentley, Vice President
Beth Kizer, Secretary
Kevin Kelleher, Treasurer

How to Thwart a Thief

Burglars won't steal something they can't sell easily. So one of the best ways to destroy a burglar's profit motive is to make all stealable property worthless. According to an article in *Real Estate Today*, here are some tips for protecting your property.

Etch your driver's license number on the underside of all valuable property. Write clearly on a part of the item that can't be easily removed.

Record the brand name, model and serial number of everything burglars might target. Not only will you help police, you'll also have an easier time with your insurance company.

Make sure you get stickers that say valuable items are marked and then place the stickers on doors, windows and valuable property so burglars will know the items are identifiable.

Don't forget to mark expensive artwork so that it can be identified. Take pictures of it and other special items. If marked items are stolen, ask law enforcement authorities to enter their make, model and serial number into your state's crime computer and the national crime computer network. Thus, if items are recovered, they can be returned to you.

Neighborhood Addition

Marty and Pam Keevan are the proud parents of a little boy, born October 21, clocking in at 9 pounds, 13 ounces, and 21 inches long. Welcome to Benton Park, Samuel Bernard Keevan!

Plant a Tree

Save energy, money and the environment. Plant a tree. Trees can help lower your energy bills. As natural insulators, they can help heat and cool your home.

Large, leafy trees (deciduous) planted on the south or west side shade your home from hot summer sun. In winter, these trees lose their leaves, letting the sun warm your house so you can turn down your thermostat.

Evergreens (conifers) on the west or north side of the house form a barrier to protect your home from frigid winter winds. You'll feel warmer and keep the heat lower.

To find out more about planting a tree, call or visit a local nursery, horticultural society, arboretum or botanical garden.

Urban Gardening Program

Vacant lots can be changed from neighborhood liabilities into productive assets when neighborhood organizations, block units and youth groups work with the Neighborhood Betterment Program and the University of Missouri Cooperative Extension Service, Urban Garden Program. The Urban League Gardening Program makes available to those interested groups, aesthetic materials, gardening tools and continued technical assistance. Request forms for gardening projects can be obtained from the NBP office.

The Neighborhood Betterment Program is located at 3701 Grandel Square, St Louis, MO 63108. Contact Adrienne C. Whitters at 534-8222.

Membership Application

Activities of The Benton Park Neighborhood Association are funded primarily by the dues and donations from neighborhood residents, and property and business owners within Benton Park.

Annual dues of \$5.00 include a year's subscription to The Benton Park News and a 10% discount on all purchases from participating area merchants. The growing list includes: Allen's Garden Shop, 3201 Cherokee; Morands Hardware & Supply, 1801 Pestalozzi; TEASE Hair Salon, 1615 South Ninth; Edele & Mertz Hardware Co., 1822 S. Broadway; the Icarian Studios, 3016 Wisconsin; and Sidney Street Cafe, 2000 Sidney Street and Art of the Ages, 2205 Cherokee.

Count me in as a member for 1992:

Name _____

Address _____

— Annual Dues enclosed

— Additional gift of \$ _____ enclosed to support neighborhood programs/events.

(Make checks payable to Benton Park Neighborhood Ass'n.)

Mail to: BPNA, P.O. Box 2066, St. Louis, MO 63158

A Message from City of St. Louis, Department of Streets

This year for the first time, St. Louisans are faced with the challenge of doing something else with their leaves instead of throwing them away. From December 1 through March 31, there will be no yard waste collection. This means that yard waste dumpsters will not be picked up and that no yard waste should be placed in these dumpsters during this time. Residents with roll-out carts will not have a collection on Wednesday during this time. The only yard waste that we will collect during this time are tree limbs, bundled into 6-foot lengths, tied together, and placed out for your monthly bulky collection.

The yard waste recycling program is working well in many areas of the city and we are continuing to make improvements in others. Our biggest problem has been trash mixed in yard waste dumpsters. Placing trash in yard waste dumpsters is a violation that we will start prosecuting next spring.

To date, St. Louisans have recycled 14,000 tons of yard waste into compost and mulch. This means we have already reduced the amount of waste going to landfills by 10%.

For information on composting, call the Missouri Botanical Garden's Composting Hotline, 577-9555.

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Leaves - What to Do With Them!

1. Spread leaves as a mulch around trees shrubs, and in plant beds.
2. Add them to your compost pile.
3. Mow a thin layer of leaves back into your lawn.
4. Give your leaves away - As a city resident, you also have the option of using the city's yard waste collection service. Place leaves in yard waste dumpsters for collection. Be sure to remove plastic bags. Note that this service will be discontinued from December 1 through March 31.
5. Curb your leaves - Rake or mow leaves to street curb the day before your street cleaning day. The street sweeper will collect them.

Eva's Environmental Tips

Even if you don't do it, you probably know someone who leaves the water running while brushing his/her teeth, shaving or washing the dishes. A running faucet uses more water than you think - as much as 3-5 gallons of water a minute. A household might save up to 20,000 gallons of water each year by getting a grip on its faucets.

Brushing your teeth: If you just wet and rinse your brush, you use only 1/2 gallon of water. Savings: Up to 9 gallons each time you brush.

Washing dishes (by hand): If you fill a basin, you use about 5 gallons of water. Savings: Up to 25 gallons each time you wash dishes.

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