

Town Hall event rescheduled to April 20

The Town Hall Meeting originally scheduled for March 23 has been rescheduled for April 20, 6 p.m. at the Doolin Center Conference Room, 1900 NE 46th Street (NKC Schools Administrative Complex). The meeting will review the past year's activities of NNI, City Hall and the KCPD-North Patrol.

Councilwoman Deb Hermann, NNI Executive Director Jim Rice, and North Patrol Commander John Armilio, will give their perspectives on the past year.

The evening will culminate in a celebration of "Neighborhood Champions," persons who have made significant contributions to Northland neighborhoods.

If you have a nominee for Neighborhood Champion, call Janet at 454-2000 no later than April 10.

Spotlight on Volunteerism: NKC Snake Parade and Festival

by Reta Jo Mitchell

For approaching 20 years, families by the thousands have journeyed to NORTH KANSAS CITY for the annual Snake Parade and Festival (Friday and Saturday, March 12-13). Always, you can catch the tempting aroma of fresh barbecue, and hear the music and joyous shouts of children even before the Parade begins.

Featured are carnival and pony rides, a petting zoo, race car exhibits, stage productions, even a barbecue cook-off especially for charities. Thanks to so many generous sponsors, virtually everything is free, including parking. The purpose of this spectacular event, says co-founder Mickey Finn, is "to bring fun and pleasure to families and help organizations that help Northlanders."

It is the parade itself that meas-

ures the heart of this small but vibrant city (pop. 4700). Over the years, \$450,000 has been awarded to charities and other non-profit groups competing in the Parades various categories. Last year, prizes exceeding \$57,000 went to 10 charities and 28 educational/youth/service organizations.

In 1995, I watched the Meals-on-Wheels float consisting of their volunteer drivers pulling little red wagons bearing "lunches" to the homebound. I was hooked. As a frequent float builder, I have come to conclude that we are all doers, dreamers, and perhaps a wee bit pixilated.

Charity float builders become world-class scroungers. On a panhandled flatbed or semi, they create their masterpieces,

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- 2. KC bond forum - Ravenwood Pancake Feast - NNI Seniors**
- 3. School election forum - Neighborhood certifications - Masters joins NNI Board - NNI Organizing effort begins**
- 4. NNI Meetings**

Everyone is invited to Meet Your Council Members on March 22, from 6 to 7 p.m. There will be a special Leaders' Meeting after the "Meet Your Council" session. We want to hear your ideas on how to make the Leaders' Meeting more constructive and informative.

Correction: the "New Year's Message" in the February issue omitted the names of Doniele Kane and Mario Mayorga as new board members elected at the June 2003 NNI Annual Meeting.

NNI Meetings in March

Mon.,	March 1	KC bond forum	7 p.m.
Wed.,	March 3	Health Dept. Press Conference	1 p.m.
Sat.,	March 7	Clay-Platte Baseball League	5 p.m.
Tues.,	March 9	RecycleFirst Speakers Meeting	7 p.m.
Wed.,	March 10	Senior Citizens Seminar - Elder Law	9 a.m.
Thurs.,	March 11	Greenhaven Neighborhood Meeting	6:30 p.m.
Mon.,	March 15	NNI Board Meeting	6:30 p.m.
Mon.,	March 22	Meet Your Councilman/Leaders' Meeting	6 p.m.
Thurs.,	March 25	RecycleFirst Speakers' Meeting	6 p.m.

Spotlight on Volunteerism (continued from page 1)

usually in unheated sheds or back alleys. Frosted hands and feet are sometimes thawed over cooking grills. (On Parade day, there have been snowflakes and sunburns, but "cancellation" is an unspeakable thought.)

Each year, Parade chairman Suzi Cliff and the dozens of volunteers come up with a fetching theme. Creativity then blossoms throughout the Northland. In 1997, the Clay County Clothes Closet turned "Shamrock and Roll" into a cave shoe factory with leprechauns making footwear for the needy to the tune of Elvis "Blue Suede Shoes." The "Irish River Dance" became a community "Big Mo Hoedown" for NNI, while the Winnetonka Band parents presented an orchestra tableau because "If Theres No Band, Theres No Dance!"

The 1992 "Irish Shenanigans" theme became an open-air classroom where Concerned Care students were being schooled in "Outhouse Tipping 101."

The cash prize is important, but the chance "to get out the word about your charity group is the main thing," said longtime Meals-on-Wheels volunteer Harry Vanderford (who turns 100 on March 1).

In thanking North Kansas City for their gifts to so many, veteran float-maker Carolyn Clinesmith put it this way: "We are all winners. Weve built friendships that will last long after the Parade is over. Its not only the prize money that makes it all worthwhile, but the sharing of ideas and friendships

that matters most."

This years theme is "An Irish Birthday Celebration." Whether St. Patrick gave his people a snake-free environment is problematic. But certain it is that you of Northtown have enriched us all. On this, Snake Saturdays 20th anniversary, we congratulate you!

"Tis thanks we give to you, everyone...May your parade be drenched by the cheerful sun."

For information about the Snake Parade or Festival, call 816-474-SNAK or 421-4438. The website is www.snakesaturday.com

NNI forum to feature KC bond issues

On Monday, March 1, 7 p.m., Northland Neighborhoods will host a forum to discuss the upcoming bond issues on the April 6 ballot.

These include \$20 million for the Liberty Memorial Museum and \$30 million for Kansas City Zoo enhancements.

Mayor Kay Barnes will be here to discuss the \$250 million bond issue for basic infrastructure.

For more information call Janet at 454-2000.

**Northland Neighborhoods, Inc.
Board of Directors - Officers**

Mike Lewis	President
Doniele Kane	Vice-President
Wayne St. Vincent	Treasurer
Pam Moore	Secretary

Jim Rice - Executive Director
Janet Shaffer - Newsletter Editor
Christy Harris - Director of Operations

webnni@nni.org

Ravenwood to host pancake feast

Chris Cakes "All-You-Can-Eat" Pancake Night will be held Friday, March 5, 5 to 7 p.m. at Ravenwood Elementary School, 5020 NE 58th Street. All proceeds will benefit the school library.

Tickets can be purchased in advance by calling Karen Swope at 413-4600. Advance ticket prices are \$3.50 per child aged Kindergarten through 5th grade, and \$4.00 for children 6th grade through adults. All tickets will be \$4.50 at the door.

NNI seniors seminar to focus on legal issues

Join Mary McCormick, Elder Law Attorney, on Wednesday, March 10, 9 a.m., to discover how to qualify for government benefit programs while protecting family savings. Learn about laws that impact caregivers and how to avoid scams which target the elderly. Also get answers to your questions about long-term care insurance, Medicare/Medicaid, and more.

Refreshments will be served and there will be a drawing for door prizes. For more information call Janet at 454-2000.

School election forum slated for March 18

The PTA Council will host a Candidate Election Forum on March 18, 7 p.m. at Eastgate Middle School, 4700 NE Parvin Rd.

The North Kansas City School Board election is April 6. There are two seats open and eight candidates on the ballot.

According to a PTA Council spokesperson, it is "extremely important that residents become informed and vote for the best candidates. Many vital decisions regarding the education of our children - and the future of this community - rest with the board of education."

This will be the only School Board Candidate Forum the PTA Council will hold.

Organizing effort underway

On February 18, leaders from Winnwood-Sunnybrook, Chaumiere and Crestview gave approval for NNI to move forward with a community organizing effort that will rely on block contact persons to rally neighbors to list issues such as code enforcement, infrastructure, and crime and disorder. This information will be cataloged and entered into NNI's Neighborhood Information System where it will be monitored, mapped and updated as the issues are resolved.

For more information on the program, call Riki Carter or Mark Morales at 454-2000.

Time running out for certification to vote at NNI annual meeting in June

Time will soon run out for neighborhood associations wishing to vote for board candidates at Northland Neighborhoods' annual meeting in June 2004. Nearly forty neighborhoods have now completed the simple process. Certification, required under NNI bylaws, involves completing a simple form. This member certification process is necessary 1) to make sure NNI has updated information on association addresses and contact persons, and 2) to qualify an association for voting at NNI's annual meeting in June 2004.

Under NNI by-laws, members are defined as organized and active neighborhood associations that hold open meetings, have submitted a written request for membership, and have been admitted for membership by vote of the NNI board.

If your organization has not received the form, please call Janet Shaffer at 454-2000. The information will be mailed to you promptly, or you may pick up a form at NNI during normal business hours. If you have received the form but not yet completed it, please do so today. Neighborhood associations and block clubs that return the forms will receive an official NNI Member certificate.

Deputy Chief Kevin Masters joins NNI Board

Kevin E. Masters, Deputy Chief of the Kansas City Police Department, has been appointed to the Board of Northland Neighborhoods, Inc. The NNI board made the appointment at its February 16 meeting. Masters is a resident of Coves North in Platte County and is active in his neighborhood association.

"I want to assist in continued development of programs, projects and policy affecting the Northland," Masters said. As deputy chief in charge of several key administrative functions, Masters comes to his NNI role well prepared. He is respected by his KCPD colleagues as a thorough, deliberate thinker and a calming force in tough situations.

NNI Executive Director Jim Rice has worked with Masters for several years. "I first met Kevin when he was Metro Patrol Commander and later worked with him on a city-wide community policing task force. He waited for several meetings before saying much. But when he did speak up, his insights were rock solid, and everyone listened," Rice says.

Masters is a member of the FBI National Academy Associates, the Metropolitan Chiefs and Sheriffs Association, the International Association of Chiefs of Police and the Kansas City Black Police Officers Association.