

NNI Annual Meeting set for June 28

Northland Neighborhoods will hold its Annual Meeting June 28, 6:30 p.m. at the Baptist Theological Seminary at North Oak and Vivion. The agenda for the evening includes ratification of NNI's revised by-laws, election of board members, and presentation of the Larry McManus Good Neighbor Award. Michael Lewis, current president of NNI, is running for his second term. Current Board members Virjean Burton, Stan Cunningham and Kevin Masters are running for their first full terms.

Thomas Schweitzer, a resident of Briarcliff Estates, and Misty Casey, of Pine Lake, were appointed to the Board in March to fill unexpired terms that run out in June 2006.

(Continued on page 2)

Spotlight on Volunteerism: *Help Along Life's Final Journey*

by Reta Jo Mitchell

I sing to use the waiting,
My bonnet but to tie;
And shut the door unto my house,
No more to do have I...

The proof that man is an eternal optimist lies in the fact that he will get another dog. Or put off looking into nursing home insurance or drafting a living will.

Over 200 years ago, common sense purveyor Benjamin Franklin remarked that nothing in life is certain but taxes and death. This is one maxim I would rather not think about at this time of year--or life. But when circumstances so prescribe, it is a comfort to know that help along life's final journey is very near. For ourselves or our loved ones, it is to KANSAS CITY HOSPICE that we can turn.

Since 1980, this non-profit organ-

ization has rendered service to patients with life-limiting illness in nine Kansas and Missouri counties. Care is brought into private homes, retirement communities, or long term care facilities by a diverse team: physicians, nurses, health care aides, social workers, chaplains, therapists, attorneys, bereavement specialists and devoted volunteers. Funding is through Medicare, Medicaid, other insurance, or patients themselves, but inability to pay does not deny service.

Each year, KANSAS CITY HOSPICE brings care and comfort to over 2,000 patients and their families. Everywhere, Hospice is a growing alternative to extensive, often painful and exhaustive procedures that usually do not cure, but only prolong.

(Continued on page 2)

2. NNI Places Third in Snake Parade

3. NNI Seniors - New NNI Board Members - Neighborhood Solutions - CHAMP Update - Pothole Hotline

4. NNI Meetings

Everyone is invited to Meet Your Council Person on April 26, from 6 to 7 p.m. The Leaders' Meeting, immediately after "Meet Your Council Person," will feature a presentation from NKC Schools on "Making Connections: Neighborhoods and Schools."

NNI Meetings in April

Mon.,	April 5	Neighborhood Relations Committee	6 p.m.
Tues.,	April 6	Holiday Hills/Kaw Valley Engineering Meeting	7 p.m.
Thurs.,	April 8	Greenhaven Neighborhood Meeting	6:30 p.m.
Wed.,	April 14	Senior Citizens Seminar	9 a.m.
Wed.,	April 14	Community Policing Task Force	7 p.m.
Thurs.,	April 15	Valleybrook Neighborhood Meeting	7 p.m.
Mon.,	April 19	NNI Board Meeting	6:30 p.m.
Tues.,	April 20	Town Hall Meeting - Doolin Center Conference Rm 1900 NE 46th St. (NKC Schools Administrative Complex)	6 p.m.
Mon.,	April 26	"Meet Your Council Person"	6 p.m.
Mon.,	April 26	Leaders' Meeting	7 p.m.

Spotlight on Volunteerism (continued from page 1)

When one is unable to choose, the family may decide. Always, the goal is to provide “dignified, quality, compassionate care to dying people and to render support and assistance to their families.”

I have known three families, one related, in which the choice was made to allow a loved one to reach the end peacefully and painlessly. To “go gentle into that good night.” (Nothing was done to hasten the dying, nor is it for KANSAS CITY HOSPICE clients.) But these families were on their own except for a visiting nurse.

How they could have benefited from Hospice’s holistic approach! An RN would have coordinated care with the patient’s physician, and health care aides would have helped with personal needs like bathing. Social workers would have assisted with resource identification; chaplains would have consoled. And there would have been the respite care volunteers, those true embodiments of the biblical Good Samaritan, who pitch in on household tasks or fill in as companions while the family caregivers get a little time off.

Northlander Lola McCloud told me that Hospice care meant as much to her as to her husband when he made his journey. Having someone sit with Jim while she had a few hours off was very welcome. Having that special someone at her side all the way was a priceless gift.

KANSAS CITY HOSPICE has 38 respite care volunteers in the Northland, coordinated by Barbara Pfaff who also provides this invaluable service. When I asked Barbara why she gave of herself to what seems so

depressing, she told me she was the one rewarded. To share one’s “act of moving on,” to her, was “almost a spiritual experience.”

Krisi Morelock serves where few would have the courage: with pediatric patients. Said Krisi, “It is an honor to be asked. I have been invited into someone’s life at the absolutely most personal time of their life.”

From talking with Hospice professionals and volunteers, I’ve learned that nearly all had attended a final journey in some way, thus bringing understanding to their calling. It even goes beyond death.

Again this May, KANSAS CITY HOSPICE will host the Circle of Lights, a time when candles of remembrance honor those who have gone. On May 25 at 8:15 p.m., Northlanders will gather at Anita B. Gorman Park to celebrate the memory of those with whom life was shared. As staff member Jeannette Ford wrote in her Circle of Lights poem, luminaries will “warm this circle of comfort like a gentle hug.”

To learn about Respite Volunteers or staffing a Christmas Tree of Memories booth, call Kathy Fetters at 363-2600. For Hospice information, call Cathy Shively, at 468-5700. For Circle of Lights information, call 363-2600.

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

NNI Places Third in Snake Parade

Northland Neighborhoods’ float in the North Kansas City Snake Saturday Parade placed Third in its division, winning \$3,000. Five neighborhoods worked for weeks to design and create a wonderful float. The prize money will be divided among the five neighborhoods.

The theme of the parade was an “Irish Birthday Celebration” and NNI along with Sunset Dixon, Sunset Hill, Chaumiere, Maple Park and Ravenwood neighborhoods celebrated by creating birthday cake, card and presents.

We thank the people who spent many hours to make the float a huge success!

NNI Annual Meeting (continued from page 1)

Their appointments must be approved by the Member organizations. The one open seat on the Board is that of Wayne St. Vincent, whose second term is up in June 2004.

NNI will hold a Board Candidate Forum May 17, following a brief board meeting at 6:30 p.m. at the NNI offices. Persons wishing to run for a board seat should submit a resume and application to Doniele Kane, chair of the nominating committee.

Under NNI bylaws, only certified Members may vote at the Annual Meeting. The deadline for neighborhood associations to be certified is May 17, 2004.

Organizations wishing certification or individuals wanting a Board Member application form should call Janet Shaffer at 454-2000.

NNI seniors: "So much time, so little to do"

Join Tina Uridge with Creative Care on Wednesday, April 14, 9 a.m., to discover unique opportunities available to you during retirement years. Tina will discuss how being active during these years can affect your well being. She will also offer ways you can do the things you love in your free time.

There will be refreshments and a drawing for door prizes. For more information call Janet at 454-2000.

CHAMP heading toward finish line

The Chouteau Housing and Maintenance Program (CHAMP) should wind up by late summer or early fall. Of the 210 home repair applications pre-approved by NNI, 179 have received final approval from the TIF Commission staff. Ninety-seven repairs have been completed.

To date, \$190,831 in private funds has been leveraged from homeowners who opted to add their own dollars to the grants to make additional improvements. NNI may approve additional grants if financial projections indicate sufficient funds will be available when all approved projects are completed.

Misty Casey, Tom Schweitzer join NNI Board

Misty Casey, a Pine Lake resident, and Thomas Schweitzer, active in Briarcliff Estates, were appointed to the NNI Board on March 15. Casey fills the vacancy created by the resignation of Jim Silke. She is employed by Argosy Casino and is active in community affairs. "I want to make a difference in the quality of people's lives, and maintaining our neighborhoods is key to that" Casey says.

Tom Schweitzer is a semi-retired financial executive and fills the vacancy resulting from the resignation of Carolyn Clinesmith. He is currently a partner in the firm of Schweitzer and Associates, and will serve on NNI's Administration and Finance Committee where his accounting and financial skills will be much appreciated.

Pothole Hotline debuts May 12

The Street and Traffic Division of the Public Works Department is beginning its 48-Hour Pothole Hotline commitment. Citizens can call (816) 513-9224 to report potholes on city streets. Barring inclement weather, the pothole will be repaired within 48 hours. The hotline will be in operation until May 12.

Phone calls to the hotline will be answered by the Action Center staff between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Pothole locations will be sent to the appropriate field office and work orders will be prepared.

NNI Launches Neighborhood Solutions

NNI has combined its neighborhood organizing effort with the Neighborhood Information Center to form NEIGHBORHOOD SOLUTIONS. The program will rely on block contact persons to rally neighbors to meetings where residents will list and prioritize issues.

The Information Center, funded by an SBC Excelsior grant (Excelsior is a trademark of SBC Knowledge Ventures, L.P.), will enable NNI and participating neighborhoods to monitor, map and update information gathered at the block meetings.

The program incorporates ideas from "What Makes a Solution? Lessons and Findings from Solutions for America," a major research project of the Pew Partnership for Civic Change. It employs four key ways to find solutions: make connections, change minds, think small, and do democracy. NNI expects to help find solutions through its housing and home repair programs. Some problems will require help from the City and other agencies. However, NNI believes that most problems will be resolved by "neighbors helping neighbors."

For more information, call Jim Rice or Riki Carter at 454-2000.