



West Hill Newsletter

A publication of the West Hill Neighborhood Organization, Inc.

September 2008

The West Hill Neighborhood Organization is dedicated to enhancing the quality and vitality of the West Hill/Highland Square neighborhood.

www.whno.org

From the President

I love my neighborhood! I'll finish my tenure as President of West Hill Neighborhood Organization in a few months, but my passion for West Hill/Highland Square remains as strong as ever.

I've been reflecting on how far we've come over the last 10 years, and how much has been accomplished for such a large area by so few dedicated and committed people. Together we've established Akron's first residential historic district, and begun the difficult yet exciting process of writing guidelines for new construction and additions in our community. We have even been fortunate enough to obtain a \$10,500 grant from the city of Akron to explore the second historic district anchored around Beck Ave.

The Pooch Patrol has helped to empower neighbors to come out into their streets and get to know one another. With the help of Neighborhood Partnership Program Grants each year, we have presented Jazz @ Glendale for 3 years, showcasing one of West Hill's jewels, and distributed a quarterly newsletter to approximately 1500 residents. Our website now also finally is beginning to take shape as a means of communication.

WHNO has made connections with other groups such as the Cleveland Restoration Society. As their identified target area, over the past two years, we have helped to promote the Heritage Home Program through several public talks. In fact, West Hill was featured on the Metro Living Tour last September as an older neighborhood that was reinventing itself and refurbishing and renovating its housing stock. Our neighbors understand that with the housing bubble bursting, our older urban neighborhoods will begin to be more attractive to buyers, as it becomes clear that one can walk to more places, and that the homes here are extremely well built. More bang for your buck and the pedestrian friendly community helps save money on gas!

WHNO has been doing much this year to help improve things in small ways. Many of us participated in Neighbor's Day and saw how people can come together for a few hours and make new friends and renew old friendships. Clean up Day was also a success - and I think it was great to see our signs everywhere.

Our weekly visits to Akron City Council, have paid off. We were able to see two threatening

(Continued on page 2)

West Hill Neighborhood Organization MEET and GREET at the Highland Theater!

Wednesday, October 1, 2008, 6:30 p.m.

Movie-style munchies and cash bar*

*TBE Theaters will sell concessions

issues defeated that dealt with absentee landlords and billboard placement near a community garden.

I am excited to see where my neighborhood and WHNO will go this coming year. Look for some arts events in connection with Glendale Cemetery, as well as a tighter strategy run by a fast developing and honed board. My biggest wish would be that the organization can somehow mobilize a larger force of volunteers to help accomplish all the wonderful things that are planned. It remains a challenge for so few to keep up the tough pace without reinforcements.

I encourage all that care to join a committee and see what you can do to help us all improve and enhance our neighborhood. It won't happen if we don't do it. And if we do - we only stand to gain the things that we love about where we live and learn together how to make West Hill/Highland Square a better place in which to live.

I love my neighborhood - how about you?

Jane Startzman

**West Hill Neighborhood Organization
NOW ONLINE!**

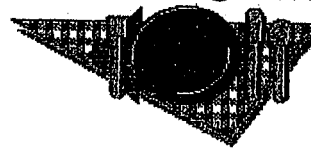
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The WHNO Newsletter is made possible with the generous support of the Akron Community Foundation, Neighborhood Partnership Program and the City of Akron.

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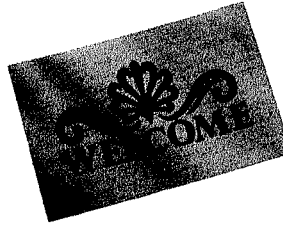
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Welcome to the Neighborhood!



Since last we welcomed new neighbors, 10 welcome packets have been delivered by the Membership Committee. WHNO is happy to be continuing this tradition into 2009. We want to thank Ammy Milec again for her wonderful art that we have included in the packets for the past two years. Starting very soon the packets will include a recycled piece of craft, which I am happy to personally be making for WHNO.

If you know of any neighbors we missed, please email me at junipersage@whno.org. We want to be able to welcome them, as you have, to the neighborhood!

Join us in welcoming new neighbors at:

- 741 W Exchange St
- 1029 W Exchange
- 396 Crosby
- 134 N Highland Ave
- 190 Beck Ave
- 91 N Portage Path
- 50 Oakdale
- 384 Crosby
- 100 Corson
- 45 Beck

DESIGN GUIDELINES

Our housing committee and board are still hotly debating whether or not to allow vinyl siding on home remodeling within the proposed guidelines. We will be banning vinyl siding from any new construction. A concession for remodeling would be to allow vinyl siding only under certain circumstances such as on an addition where the house already has siding or to repair existing vinyl siding. The other control mechanism would be to control the quality of the siding and how it is applied. The main concern is that some siding applications result in the loss of architectural elements like brackets and trim.

We are still looking for opinions about this so feel free to contact housing chair Barb Snyder at barb@snyderandsnyder.com.

GREEN with *Envy*

Tour of City Gardens

If the rain showers on the morning of Saturday, June 14, kept you away from the West Hill Neighborhood Organization's garden tour, Green with Envy, you missed a chance to visit some of the neighborhood's best kept secrets. Eight private spaces went public for a day: each a unique expression of the owner's style and vision.

The West Hill Neighborhood Organization was honored to be able to showcase gardens created by:

Nance Darrow, Don Climes and Ron Lindsey, Judy Casey and Paul Jeffries, Bill Smith, Don and Lisa Drumm, Rob Carpenter, Tom and Donna Cardone, and Andrew Kyprianou and Brian Rodabaugh. Jean Powell and Ammy and John Milec added an artistic touch with their handcrafted creations. Many thanks to all!

Green with Envy was made possible through the dedication of the following volunteers who worked on planning and presenting the event. The Green with Envy committee was co-chaired by Joan Colbert and Bill Smith and included Joe Boyle, Rob Carpenter, Jill Coleman, Chase Horn, Juniper Sage and Jane Startzman. They were assisted by Ken Jakubec, Juniper Sage, John Myers, Greg Wurgler, Holli Mallak, Barb Snyder, Brett and Danielle Kimmell, Jeremy Taylor, Gene Colbert, Hildee Pine and Rudy Polovich.



William Byron Smith's garden beyond the picket fence on Corson Avenue.

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HOUSING AWARDS TIME AGAIN!

It's time to look around the neighborhood and submit nominations for any of the following categories. If there is a property worthy of some sort of recognition that does not fit into any of the categories below, feel free to submit the property anyway. This list is a guideline for nomination suggestions and not all categories will necessarily have a recipient. Please email nominations no later than September 20th to Barb Snyder at barb@snyderandsnyder.com.

Landscape – Best Overall

Landscape – Best Perennial Garden

Landscape – Best Maintained

Housing – Best Overall Maintenance

Housing – Best Restoration/ Preservation

Housing – Best New Construction

Housing – Best New Paint Traditional

Housing - Best New Paint – Contemporary

Business – Most Improved Business

Business – New Building

Landlord - Best Maintained

Landlord – Most Improved Exterior

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HISTORIC DISTRICT SURVEY

The City of Akron has secured a \$10,500 grant on behalf of WHNO from the Ohio Historic Preservation Office to hire a consultant to conduct a study to determine where the next historic district will be within our new expanded boundaries. The firm of Chambers, Murphy and Burge has been selected to conduct the Reconnaissance Architectural Resources Survey. A public meeting will be held to explain the project to the neighborhood and public. Please watch your mail for a special post-card with the particulars and try to attend. This project completion date is targeted to be June 2009.

- Barb Snyder

Business Spotlight: *Fine Art by Cornelius*



There's a small art gallery on West Market Street, right in the heart of West Hill, where the energy and soul are so abundant, it sometimes spills out onto the sidewalk in a flood of good vibrations.

Fine Art by Cornelius is owned by Cornelius Butler, an accomplished artist whose eclectic style is exhibited throughout the gallery in his colorful paintings, evocative sculptures and unique wall hangings. Cornelius and his wife Erica opened the gallery in 2005, the realization of a longtime dream. The Butlers are both originally from Ashtabula County where they knew each other as youngsters. Cornelius moved to San Francisco as a young man to be part of the thriving arts scene. While he did find a vibrant creative environment on the west coast, the cost of living was high and Cornelius began researching the best places to live and start a business. His first choice? Akron, Ohio! With his move back to Ohio, destiny reintroduced him to Erica and the childhood friends were married. The gallery is a joint effort. Cornelius and Erica are both committed to making the business a success – and an attribute to the neighborhood.

Cornelius is a talented musician as well as an artist and the gallery hosts sidewalk jam sessions on alternating Fridays throughout the summer. I visited the gallery during one of these concerts and spent a delightful evening listening to the heartfelt music, checking out the artwork and meeting neighbors I otherwise probably never would have. There was Fred, a folk artist and storyteller originally from Cuba; Carson, a gifted jazz musician recently returned from Europe and Carl, a multi-instrumentalist who makes miniature buildings out of found materials. These were just a few of those gathered to share the camaraderie fostered by the music and friendly atmosphere.

The Butlers' outreach to friends and strangers alike is inspiring. Their good will extends to all in our diverse neighborhood, particularly targeting kids who may have challenges at home or who may be exposed to the less savory elements in the area if unsupervised. Cornelius offers the kids an alternative, giving them art lessons, often donating supplies and his time, free of charge. Erica warmly supports the effort, welcoming neighborhood kids into the gallery and encouraging their artistic interests. The gallery storefront is covered with the young artists' work, many of the drawings bearing the inscription, "For Miss Erica". The Butlers are a model for WHNO's credo of enhancing the quality of life in West Hill. They teach by example as much as anything else. Cornelius and Erica Butler are a living illustration that initiative, hard work, commitment - and lots of soul – make great things possible.

Fine Art by Cornelius is located at 590 W. Market St. Hours are 11 am – 7 pm, Tuesdays - Saturdays. Sidewalk jams are every other Friday evening.

~ Hildee Pine

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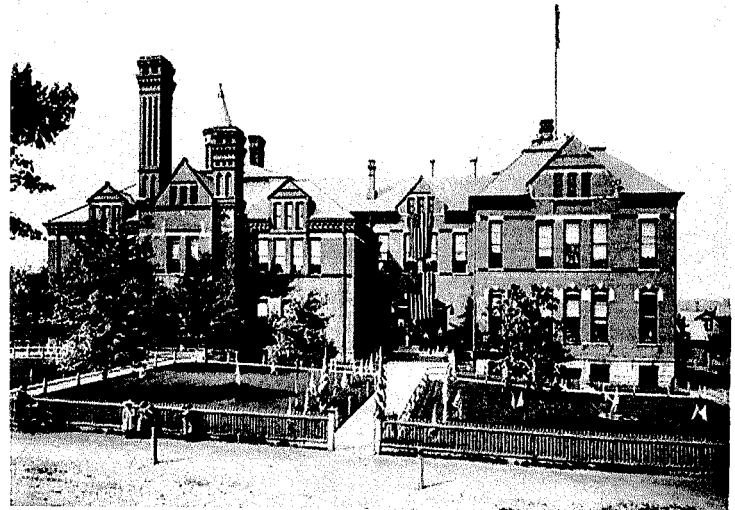


MOUNT PEACE CEMETERY

Contact: Jackie Birch

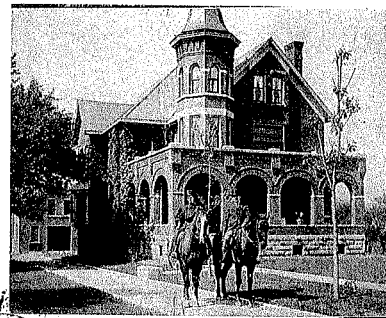
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Here is Crosby School in 1898. Crosby still stands off West Market Street on Smith Street near Valley and Maple across from the Akron Family Restaurant.

Pam Parks-Costa



The house in these pictures once stood between Dodge and Byers Ave. on W. Market St. now the site of the key bank. The house was built by Nathan Berk and Anna Whitelaw Berk where they lived and raised a family. In later years Eleanor Berk, daughter of Nathan and Anna Berk married I. Burton Nobil, the house has been called The Berk House, the Nobil House and most often Shalonside.

The top photo is from 1905; the bottom photo is dated 1969.

Pam Parks-Costa

Garden Notes. . .

The summer weather has taken a toll on the garden. Without frequent watering, this season has been hard on the plants. Our rainstorms have been quick and fast. We lose a lot of the good saturating rain when it falls so quickly - and then is over. We could use a good day or two of continuous rainfall. But alas, we may not be able to welcome that type of rain until fall.

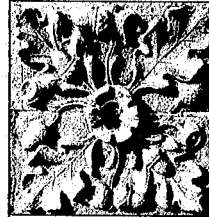
As summer reaches its height, the spring-blooming flowers are all but spent; their foliage is withering and drying, or already gone. It is time to cut back the Iris and groom the leggy annuals, as well as cut back the early May/June perennials. It is late in the season to cut back the spring flowering shrubs, as the new growth is where the blooms are beginning to form. You have waited too long, unless you are willing to settle for good growth and fewer flowers. Evergreens can stand a trim, but be sure to water afterwards.

The dogwoods are developing their next season flower buds, which are surprisingly plenty. My dogwoods (*Cornus florida*) this year have not suffered as much from anthracnose (the deadly bacterial that is destroying this lovely native tree) as in previous years. The lack of moisture has kept it at bay. The leaves are still bright green whereas this time last year they were already red and falling. The berries show a slight tinge of red, which the squirrels are beginning to eat and litter the sidewalks with half-chewed seeds.

At this time, the garden centers are displaying spring bulbs and the gardener should begin planning. Bulb catalogues started arriving in June, and need dusting off for the spring dreamer. The advantage of cleaning existing beds gives one an opportunity to design placement for additional bulbs. If you are like me, you will have an idea of a new color scheme and plant additional bulbs on top of the old ones. Sketches in a garden notebook are a great help to keep track of the placement of bulbs in your garden. Updating the information is helpful, as well, when you remove or add bulbs, or change the bed design. Just remember to check your notes!

It is important to continue to water, especially during these days without much precipitation. The cooler evenings, along with the watering, can give your garden a renewed burst of blooms. This also helps to establish newly planted trees and shrubs, especially the evergreens, for the coming of the colder weather. Grass seed can be planted to cover those barren spots in the lawn - just be sure to water! Vegetables will thank you, too, with continued production. The tomatoes will make more fruits and ripen quicker with additional watering and the amount of sun we are experiencing. And you just may get another crop of green beans if you planted the seeds by the last week of Au-

(Continued on page 9)



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(Continued from page 8)

gust. Surprisingly, the late-crop beans are much more tender than their summer counterparts. Perhaps September will be kind, and not bring colder days and frosts, leaving those times for October. Just thinking of the colder days sends a chill, not only to the garden!

- Bill Byron Smith



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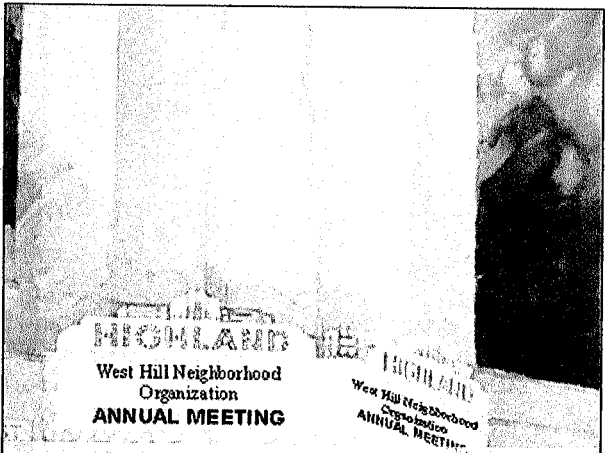
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janestartzman@whno.org

Joe Boyle, President Elect
421 Woodland Avenue
330-328-6328
joeboyle@whno.org

Jill Coleman, Vice-president
131 Oakdale Avenue
330-374-0714
jillcoleman@whno.org

Ken Jakubec, Treasurer
421 Woodland Avenue
330-384-1088
kenjakubec@whno.org

Juniper Sage, Secretary
108 South Balch Street
330-761-0261
junipersage@whno.org

Stephanie Carothers
934 Jefferson Avenue
330-283-8070
stephaniecarothers@whno.org

Joan Colbert
105 S. Portage Path
330-836-6482
joancolbert@whno.org

Chase Horn
938 Jefferson Avenue
330-475-5525
chasehorn@whno.org

Brett Kimmell
449 Crestwood Avenue
330-762-5143
brettkimmell@whno.org

Warner Mendenhall
430 Woodland Avenue
330-535-9160
warnermendenhall@whno.org

John Myers
160 Beck Avenue
330-762-5367
johnmyers@whno.org

Hildee Pine
393 Cloverdale Avenue
330-384-0022
hildeepine@whno.org

Tom Rusk
381 Silver Street
330-221-7037
tomrusk@whno.org

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96 Corson Avenue
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938 Jefferson Avenue
330-414-3899
jeremytaylor@whno.org

Barb Snyder
170 Beck Avenue
330-434-6141
barbsnyder@whno.org

Greg Wurgler
28 Dodge Avenue
330-762-7382
gregwurgler@whno.org



Please begin or renew your West Hill Neighborhood Organization membership today!
Join now for membership through October 2009

Since 1997, West Hill Neighborhood Organization, a 501(c)(3) organization, has been hard at work building a better West Akron. With a focus on a large, culturally diverse area, the organization relies on membership dues, donations, grants, and volunteer hours to meet its mission: *to enhance the quality and vitality of the West Hill/Highland Square neighborhood.* Whether or not you reside in the focus area, your support ultimately makes West Akron a better place to live and work.

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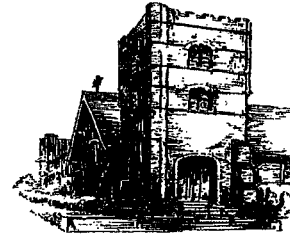
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Where in the Hill???

We'll be limiting the number of possible winners to five on this one - I am happy to have so many people participate but we don't want to run out of prizes! Five winners is still a lot (that is how many we had for the last issue) so don't hesitate to send me your guesses at junipersage@whno.org.

Also, we would like to get the neighborhood involved, please send me your own Where in the Hill? submissions and you could be featured in the newsletter as well as receive a nifty gift.

Last month's E*Trade location was the Valley View nursing Home at the corner of Hickory and Memorial Parkway as seen by Google maps. Spooky what the satellites see, isn't it?
picture by John Bryson/Google Earth

COMING UP...

.....please post and mark your calendars so you do not miss any of these neighborhood events!

POOCH PATROL

Friday, September 19 TBA

CRIME & SAFETY MEETINGS

held at 7 p.m. at the American Legion on West Market Street. Next meeting: **Tuesday, October 14**

**Wednesday
October 1**

Annual Meeting
MEET & GREET
see page 9

**Please check www.whno.org
for updated events and times!**