

# Miller Message for July 2017

## A bad month for Miller

### Walgreens comes and goes

A generation ago, men like Marshall J. Gardner and Frank Percy dispensed pills and advice to their friends on Lake Street in Miller, whom they knew and cared for. They made medical and business decisions that affected their own lives and the lives of their customers, which were based on local conditions.

Then, in skyscraper offices far away, mammoth international corporations developed business Plans, crafted in impersonal offices by MBAs far removed from the customers they would eventually serve. More than twenty years ago, one of these Plans decreed that the corner of Lake Street and Melton Road in Miller was the right place to open a large-scale drug emporium. Walgreens came to Miller, not because it was needed or because we wanted it, but because of the Plan. Eventually, after many years, all the smaller local drugstores closed their doors, and the big international store reigned supreme. Then, still later, the Miller location failed to meet the requirements of the Plan, and it was closed.

Faced with the imminent closing of the Walgreens, which was a landmark in our community, the **Spotlight** group organized a “Critical Mass Rally” on June 17, but the MCC determined that the only way to fight this adverse development was to appeal to people high enough in the corporate hierarchy to perhaps overcome destiny. However, the appeal was in vain. Eric Reaves, his sister Erica (a Walgreen executive,) Mayor Freeman-Wilson, and several others met with major Walgreens executives, but to no avail. The Miller contingent pointed out that the Miller Pharmacy operated shorter hours than neighborhood pharmacies and did not serve medicaid patients, which cut down their traffic, but the Walgreens executives were unimpressed.

What originally made the problem worse was a clause in Walgreens lease which prohibited the building owner from renting to any potential competitor of Walgreens, who would be willing to pay 16 years’ rent, rather than allow any other competitor to take over the property. However, in a later conversation

with the Mayor, the Walgreens managers agreed to waive that clause in the lease. As a result, a team led by Charlie Brown is now out looking for another drug store to fill the space, like CVS who accepts Medicaid customers.

**But remember: the day that Walgreens opened in Miller, it was ready to close.**

## **For Man-cave: adult cabaret, YES, adult entertainment, NO**

After a year of litigation and hearings, the struggle over the Man Cave, on Rt. 12/20 near the turnpike entrance, has come to a close, unfavorably. Donald Schlitz, owner the Mancave, first proposed to open an adult entertainment establishment, and the city refused to grant him a business license. Once this issue was resolved in court, he applied for a special use permit to operate an adult entertainment venue. At the same time, he applied for a two-way wine and beer license. On the verge of having this adult entertainment license denied, he withdrew the request and asked for a simple two-way wine and beer license, with the intention of operating an **adult cabaret, which does not require a special-use permit**. Meanwhile, the two-way license was again rejected by the local liquor board, but eventually approved, on appeal, by the state board, whose argument was that granting a liquor license did not discriminate among what (legal) activities were carried on in the premises.

What Schlitz now plans to offer in his cabaret is **to serve beer and wine, serve food (obligatory), have a dance floor, video games, darts, air hockey, etc. He will also feature persons who appear semi-nude, and give live performances characterized by the exposure of “specific anatomical areas and specified sexual activities.”** He doesn't leave out very much. Out.

Critics of the plan are especially skeptical about the requirement to serve food in a room which has no kitchen.

## Legion holds benefit

The Miller American Legion Post 279 on Old Hobart Road has been struggling financially for some time, and to help with their finances, they are holding a fundraiser on Saturday, July 8 from 5:00 pm to midnight. Admission is \$10 at the door. There will be a Chinese auction (You have to attend to find out what that is), a silent auction, food prepared by the Legion, music by Rebecca Anne and Greg. as well as other performers. Stop by a help out this long-time Miller institution.

The Miller Business Association is doing its part. It is renting the hall for their meeting on Tuesday, July 11 starting at 6:00 p.m.

## Schools still in limbo

The state legislation to set aside the Gary Community School Board and replace it with a CEO, a CFO, and a Chief Academic Officer has been signed into law, and the Distressed Unit Appeal Board is presumably interviewing the prospective candidates for the top jobs. However, nothing seems to be known about who the top three officers will be.

On the side, George Rogge has been participating in the **Marquette/Beverage Transformation Zone**, where the two schools were to get a special appropriation of \$500,000, including \$300,000 from the state, to fund reduced class size, additional activities and longer hours. The Transformation Zone, headed by Joie Patterson, started meeting with some enthusiasm, but attendance soon dwindled to only Rogge. At the last meeting, with Patterson, Rogge and Tolliver, it was finally revealed that **two years before**, the school board had signed a contract making Edison School Corporation (which runs Roosevelt school) an agent of the Transformation Board, for a fee of \$300,000, leaving no money for books and supplies. in the schools. Tolliver blew up, and that was the end of the "Transformation Zone".

## Duly noted. . . .

## **NELSON ALGREN IN TEXAS - JULY 7**

Members and friends of the Nelson Algren Society will meet on **Friday, July 7 at 5:00 pm** at the **Nelson Algren Museum, 541 Lake Street** to discuss *The Texas Stories of Nelson Algren*, edited by Bettina Drew. If the weather cooperates, the meeting will be held in the adjacent Algren Pocket Park. Plan on reading out loud parts of two short stories. If you have not done your homework please come anyway! This event will show what Nelson is about. Entrance to this class is \$10.00.

Friday, July 7 is First Friday in Miller, so plan on enjoying the restaurants and shops afterward.

**TEENS AT WORK.** There are over 100 Gary youths (age 15 to 18) employed in the Gary summer work program. They work 6 weeks 5 days a week, 4 hours a day. Friends of Marquette Park Advocates paid for one student, and they have been assigned four excellent, on time, hardworking students, who are assigned on Monday to the Lagoon, Tuesday to the Statue Garden, Wednesday to the Library on Lake St., Thursday to the Kids Park, and Friday to the Aquarium or special projects like the Train Station Garden.

**SEPTIC SYSTEM CARE.** Natalie Johnson from Save-the-Dunes has teamed up this season with Doreen Carey of the Indiana/Lake Michigan Coastal Program to promote septic system awareness. The word is: **pump your tank every three to five years.** The aim is to keep sewage out of Lake Michigan. (As an aside, the two women agreed that using Ridex does not improve the efficiency of the septic system.)

---

## **JULY 2017 MCC MEETING**

**THE MONTHLY MCC MEETING WILL BE HELD ON MONDAY, JULY 10, AT 7:30 PM, IN THE MEETING ROOM OF THE MARQUETTE PARK UNITED METHODIST CHURCH ON GRAND BLVD. MCC members are invited to attend and participate.**

**Contact the MCC between meetings at P.O. Box 2645, Gary, IN 46403, or e-mail [mcceaton@aol.com](mailto:mcceaton@aol.com). Also visit the MCC website, [www.millercitizenscorp.org](http://www.millercitizenscorp.org).**

-----

**NEW MCC BOARD MEMBER.** At the June MCC Board Meeting, the board members elected **Alan Harrell** to fill a vacancy on the MCC Board of Directors. Alan is recently retired from Xerox, and has developed an interest in community affairs.

**BEACH CARE IMPROVES.** After a poor start, beach cleaning is now working on schedule. Trash cans are in place, and the program of Fiends of the Park for assuring that cans don't overflow is in operation, and summer youth workers are keeping everything clean. At the **Shoreline Committee meeting on July 20 at 7:pm in the Gardner Center**, Jack Eskin, a deputy city planner, will talk about plans for the Lake Street Beach.

## **The Miller Garden Club Presents**

### **it 17th "Secret Garden" walk**

### **"Raise the roots"**

The yearly "Secret Garden" walk gives Miller gardeners their chance to display the beautiful and imaginative gardens they have created. This year's tour features six gardens from the lakeshore to the center of Miller, most of which are truly secrets. It starts at the Aquarium in Marquette Park, then circuits the community, showing off the public plantings maintained by garden club volunteers on the way.

Hours for the walk are **10:00 am to 3:00 pm on Saturday, July 15 and Sunday, July 16. Tickets cost \$10,** and are available at the Aquatorium. The price includes shuttle service from garden to garden in air-conditioned vans and free parking in the lot next to the Aquarium for those who prefer not to drive.

Box lunches from Marilyn's will be available for sale, and sixteen vendors will be selling a variety of wares, garden-related and other. Merchandise will include Garden Club T-shirts and greeting cards. **Come out the weekend of July 15 and 16 and see Miller in bloom.**

## **July and August events**

### **at the Miller Beach Arts district**

## **SANDCASTLE COMPETITION AND BEACH PARY - JULY 29**

Event to be held at the Lake Street Beach from 1:00 pm to 6:00 pm on Saturday, July 29. Sign up for Youth, Family, Individual or Corporate levels of competition. This fun family event includes food and art vendors as well as a beer tent on the beautiful shores of Lake Michigan. More details will be out shortly! In the meantime, contact Roz Mitchell [rozmitchell@forms-funktion.com](mailto:rozmitchell@forms-funktion.com) for information on the competition and becoming a vendor.

## **BOBBY TALAMINE PHOTOGRAPHS MUSIC.**

The Miller Beach Arts and Creative District (MBACD) presents “**Not Fade Away: Music Photography by Bobby Taming**” from **August 4 through August 27** at the Gardner Center on Lake Street. The exhibit will open with a reception on **Friday, August 4 from 6:00 to 9:00 pm**, at which Talamine will be present to answer questions.

**Bobby Talamine** has been photographing music legends and new upcoming musicians for over three decades. More than 50 of his framed photographs will be on display and are for sale. Talamine’s tastes are eclectic and range from rock n’roll giants like Bob Dylan, Pink Floyd, David Bowie and Paul McCartney to tool, SLIPKNOT, the Pet Shop Boys ad Johnny Cash. The first concert he ever photographed was Led Zeppelin in 1975. He is a self-taught photographer; whose love of music drove him to improve his image making. The show will be open weekends starting **Friday, August 4 until Sunday August 27 at the Gardner Center. Gallery hours are Fridays and Saturdays 6:00-9:00 pm and Sundays 1:00-4:00 pm. Opening reception is Friday, August 4th at 6:00 pm.**

Street. The exhibit will open with a reception on Friday, August 4 from 6:00 to 9:00 pm, at which Talamine will be present to answer questions.

Bobby Talamine has been photographing music legends and new upcoming musicians for over three decades. More than 50 of his framed photographs will be on display and are for sale. **Talamine’s tastes are eclectic and range from rock n’roll giants like Bob Dylan, Pink Floyd, David Bowie and Paul McCartney to tool, SLIPKNOT, the Pet Shop Boys ad Johnny Cash.** The first concert he ever photographed was Led Zeppelin in 1975. He is a self-taught photographer; whose love of music drove him to improve his image making. The show will be open weekends starting Friday, August 4 until Sunday August 27 at the Gardner Center. Gallery hours are

Fridays and Saturdays 6-9pm and Sundays 1-4pm. Opening reception is Friday August 4th 6pm.