

Art to pop up and stay up

The final Pop-up Art event of the year is scheduled for Saturday, December 8 from 6:00 to 10:00 pm at the Marshall J. Gardener Center for the Arts, 540 S. Lake Street. The title of the show is **“In an Indescribable Vessel and Moving Rapidly Toward an Indistinct Shore.”** (You’ll have to come to see what that means). The participating Chicago-based artists are Christine Tarkowski, Jon Langford, and Damon Locks, plus video by Rob Shaw and additional musicians, Sally Timms and Martin Billheimer.

This time, the art works will not immediately disappear. They will continue to be on display on Sunday, December 9 from 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm and on December 14 and 15 from 2:00 pm to 7:00 pm.

MEET IU-NORTHWEST AUTHORS. As part of the **Pop-up Art** event on **December 8**, the **Lake Street Gallery** will host a book-signing by 5 authors associated with Indiana University Northwest: **James Lane** (“Gary’s First Hundred Years”), **Ron Cohen** (“Woody Guthrie: Writing America’s Songs”), **Steve McShane and Gary Wilk** (“Steel Giants”), **Jennifer Greenburg** (“Rockabillies”), and **Ken Schoon** (“Calumet Beginnings” and “City Trees”). A special guest will be Roy Dominguez, author of “Valor, The Odyssey of Roy Dominguez” as told to James Lane.

A tale of two dances

Beginning in 1980, the MCC sponsored a big community party at the Marquette Park Pavilion every Valentine’s Day, to which everyone in Miller was invited. For thirty-two years, the MCC Dance was a big event of the winter season. Then, in 2011, the Pavilion was closed for renovation as the key part of the Marquette Park upgrade. To substitute for the February dance, the MCC sponsored a successful costume ball in October, 2010, a final event in the “old” pavilion. The renovation project subsequently took longer than planned, but when the refurbished hall reopened this fall, the MCC was eager to celebrate the opening with a rerun of the Masquerade Ball.

Prices at the renovated pavilion were significantly higher than two years before, so plans for the 2012 event called for hors d’oeuvres in place of a sit-down dinner, along with an open bar, a live band, and a ticket price of \$55, based on the attendance of 300 party-goers. It was hoped that the masked-ball format would attract a younger crowd to fill the pavilion.

Unfortunately, ticket sales lagged, and, in the end, only 107 people attended. MCC president Eric Reaves tried to cancel the event at the last minute, but we would have had to refund all the money collected for tickets, while the management of the pavilion would not refund the money we were committed to pay for rental of the building, food and drink. Those who attended were happy with the affair, but they didn't come near to paying the expenses.

The following is a recap of the finances:

Pavilion rental	\$ 4,343.00
Food	5,474.38
Bar	1,716.00
Entertainment	1,037.62
Publicity	620.75
Decorations	459.29
Miscellaneous	100.00
Total expenses	13,751.04
Ticket sales	5,883.95
Deficit	(-7,867.69)

If we had sold 300 tickets, the budget would almost have been balanced. However, income from 107 tickets did not come near to covering the costs.

The MCC has planned to hold the traditional Valentine's Day dance on February 16, 2013, but we are now still deciding whether it is feasible to sponsor the event with the Marquette Park Pavilion as the venue. To break even, we would need to offer less, sell many more tickets, and probably raise ticket prices. At the same time, it is hard to see how paying more for less will encourage more people to attend. Keep tuned for news of the latest developments!

Duly noted . . .

HOLIDAY BAZAAR AT THE FLAMINGO

On **Saturday, December 15 from 10 am to 4 pm**, the Flamingo Pizza at Locust and Shelby will morph into an emporium, where visitors can enjoy free appetizers and a cash bar as they shop. Featured wares include:

Andrea's "Sew It Seams" scarves, ponchos and capes

Jewelry designs by Annie Rose

Lake Treasures by Liz Locke

Pottery by Jerry Savel

Good Tree Soaps and Body Butter by Ciara

Tasty Sweets by Jess from Great Lakes Café

Come check out the merchandise!

MEN & BOYS. A Miller tradition – the 22d annual **Men and Boys brunch** will take place on Saturday,

December 15 from noon to 2:00 pm at Miller Pizza, 622 S. Lake Street. This is the men's chance to hang out while the women are busy shopping. Donations of \$10.00 per person are a contribution for the Marquette Kids Park. Up until now, the event has raised more than \$5,000 for the park. Sponsor of the event is Big Joe Petras, who can be reached at 938-8808 or at BigJoePSM@aol.com

METHODIST COOKIE WALK. The Marquette Park United Methodist Church, on Grand Blvd. across from Wirt-Emerson High School, will sponsor its annual Christmas Cookie Walk on **Saturday, December 8 from 10:00 am to Noon.** (Note the very limited hours). The event features umpteen types of tasty home-made cookies, all **on sale for \$6 per pound.** Here's your chance to stock up with goodies for Christmas entertaining!

DECEMBER MCC MEETING

THE NEXT MEETING OF THE MILLER CITIZENS CORP. BOARD OF DIRECTORS WILL BE HELD ON MONDAY, DECEMBER 10, AT 7:30 PM IN THE MEETING ROOM OF THE MARQUETTE PARK UNITED METHODIST CHURCH ON GRAND BLVD. Members are invited to attend and participate.

Contact the MCC between meetings at P.O.Box 2645, Gary, IN 46403, or e-mail mceaton@aol.com. You can also visit the MCC website at www.millercitizenscorp.org.

R.I.P. TO MCC FOUNDER. When the Miller Citizens Corp. was founded 41 years ago, the organization had a three-person presidency consisting of Mose Dilts, Clarence Borns, and Fred Eichorn. Fred was the last survivor of the three, and he passed away a month ago in Bloomington, IN, where he has lived for some time. In addition to his role in establishing the MCC, Fred had statewide political connections and was a long-time Trustee of Indiana University. In the mid-1990s, he was instrumental in getting the State Police to send reinforcements to Gary to deal with rampant crime in the city. Here in Miller, we owe him serious thanks for his role in keeping this a community where people with choice want to live.

444 GRILL IS READY FOR THE HOLIDAYS. The 444 Grill on Lake Street will be open every day from 3:00 pm to 10:00 pm, featuring a variety of jerk meats,

grills and side dishes. They will also jerk whole turkeys for customers to cook at home and will cater parties. For more information, call 219-427-0145

Wirt/Emerson students show off

This is the prime season for high quality performances by students at the Wirt/Emerson Performing Arts Academy. By attending, you can offer them support and enjoy the shows:

The **Band Department Winter Concert** is **Tuesday, Dec. 4** at 6:30 p.m. in the Wirt/Emerson Auditorium, 210 N. Grand Blvd., Gary. (Park on the north side of the building; that's the auditorium entrance.) Admission \$5.

The **Orchestra Department Winter Concert** is **Thursday, December 6** at 2:50 and at 6:00 pm in the Wirt/Emerson auditorium. Admission is \$1 for the matinee, \$5 in the evening.

The **Dance Department** will perform the "Urban Nutcracker) on **Friday, December 14** at 1:00 and 7:00 pm and on **Saturday, December 15** at 7:00 pm in the Wirt/Emerson Auditorium. Admission is \$3 for the matinee, \$10 in the evening.

The "**Homecoming**" **Concert**, performed by the Wirt/Emerson **Jazz Tornadoes**, will be **Tuesday, December 18** at 6:30 p.m. in the Wirt/Emerson Auditorium. Admission is \$5.

Mayor clarifies park operation

Following the recent community meeting with Mayor Freeman-Wilson, the MCC Shoreline Committee addressed to the mayor a number of questions regarding the management of Marquette Park. The mayor's response covered a variety of topics:

1. Marquette Park and the Pavilion will be managed as a single unit under the direction of the park department, which will manage the maintenance and marketing of both. Park department employees have been assigned to handle routine maintenance of the Pavilion and grounds, including the Kids Park.
2. All revenue generated in the park will go into a non-reverting fund for park maintenance. This includes revenues from the boat launch, parking, concessions, Pavilion rental, and fees. There will be a fee of \$5,000 for Special Events, and smaller fees of \$80 to \$200 for large groups and shelter rentals. The revenues will be

handles like all city income, to be deposited by the Controller and appropriated by the Common Council.

3. Park Superintendent Lori Latham will be involved in researching and writing grant applications for the park, with assistance from the South Shore Grant Center. The RDA is also offering assistance in identifying sources of funding for operation of the Park. In addition, the Park Department is working to establish eligibility for grants from the federal Land and Water Conservation Funds. They are also looking for funds from the state to finance boating safety classes next spring, along with water safety classes, conservation education and recreation programs.

4. A wide variety of activities will be permitted in the park from dawn to dusk. However, RVs and tents for camping are not allowed on the beach. Campers are referred to the National Park and to private campgrounds.

5. The Shoreline Committee sees trash collection as a continuing problem, especially on weekends. The City recognizes that they do not have the manpower to pick up trash consistently on Saturday and Sunday at all the city parks.

6. Marquette Park has two beach combers, only one of which is functional, but it is often not used because it is more efficient to pick up trash and dump it into a payload loader to minimize trips to the dumpster.

7. Rip tide warning flags will only be displayed in designated swimming areas. Visitors are discouraged from swimming at any time in other areas of the beach and when lifeguards are not present.

In the background, the Shoreline Committee has written a letter of support for a DNR grant which requests funds for a park Program Director. The committee has also written letters of appreciation to park department and public safety managers for the work they have done this past summer.

We have not yet heard any comment from Mayor Freeman-Wilson concerning the complaints voiced about the location of the trash collecting station at the east end of Marquette Park.

Finally, the Shoreline Committee is taking a few months off, unless some critical issue comes up. **Their next meeting is scheduled for February 21, 2013 (the third Thursday of the month).**