

MCC committee activity

ALL ABOUT THE LAKEFRONT. The **MCC Shoreline Committee** will meet at the Woodson Library on Lake Street at **6:00 pm on Thursday, April 21**, and the agenda will feature its long-term interest – planning and carrying out the Marquette Park renovation, financed by the Regional Development Authority (RDA); and its short-term interest – helping people enjoy the park and beach this summer. There will be presentations on the Marquette Park East Project and on plans for a Conservancy, to maintain this key facility after the renovation is complete. Then, Officer Brazelton of the Gary Police Department, who heads the summer beach patrol unit, will talk about Beach Safety. **Everyone is invited to the meeting.** In the background, the traffic flow study of the loop around Marquette Park is finished, and the results will be used to design a road plan that meets the unique needs of our park. The Aquatorium renovation is moving forward, slowly. If all goes as planned, construction will begin on the Aquatorium in September 2011. (Remember, patience is a virtue.)

EDUCATION COMMITTEE. The **MCC Education Committee** meets at the United Methodist Church on the second Monday of every month, an hour before the MCC Board meeting. **The next meeting is Monday, April 11 at 6:30 PM.** The committee members are attending Gary School Board meetings and Committee meetings to keep abreast of issues in our schools. They are also building relationships with Gary Public Schools and Charter Public Schools in our community. The committee wants the schools to involve parents in preparing students for ISTEP testing and in overall school improvement. Members of the community are welcome to join the Education committee – just show up at the meeting and sign up.

Duly noted

CLEANING UP MILLER. The annual MCC cleanup is set for **Saturday, May 7 from 9:00 am until noon.** The starting point is across from the Miller Town Hall in the former Ralph's parking lot. Volunteers will spread out from there to Old Hobart Road, Grand Blvd., Lake Street, and the three-pronged corridor from Lake Street to Clay Street. What is guaranteed is – there will be lots of trash to pick up. What is not guaranteed is having enough workers to do the job. This important activity depends on volunteers from the community, so we need YOU to invest a little time and effort to make our neighborhood presentable. **Come out and help with the cleanup!**

CURVES-GALLERY OPEN HOUSE. The Lake Street Gallery and Curves of Miller, located a few doors apart on Lake Street, are having a joint open house on Friday, April 8 from 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm. During this time, all merchandise at the Lake Street Gallery will be 15% off. If you bring a non-perishable grocery item to curves, you will receive a raffle ticket for a Curves gift basket, and the sign-up fee for new members will be waived if you bring in a full bag of groceries. They are trying to reach a goal of 1200 pounds of food and toiletries collected during April, to be donated to Sojourner Truth House and the Good Samaritan Mission.

TURNING A HUNDRED! The Miller Town Hall, at the corner of Grand Blvd. and Miller Avenue, is one of two local buildings on the National Register of Historic Places. It will mark its hundredth anniversary this month, and the Miller Historical Society will celebrate the occasion by throwing a birthday party, with free food, music and memories at the first annual Founders' Day event, on **Saturday, April 30 at 1:00 pm**. Everyone is invited to stop by and join this festive celebration. Just attend and enjoy!

GREEN GARY CELEBRATION. The Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore will celebrate National Park Week and Earth Day with the annual Green Gary event on Saturday, April 30, from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm. The action is designed to make this a fun-filled day for visitors of all ages, at Marquette Park and at the Douglas Center for Environmental Education on Lake Street. Activities will be presented by the Chicago Field Museum, Gary Park & Recreation Department, City of Gary Environmental Affairs Department, Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore, and the Gary Community Partnership, and it's all free. For more information on the event or to have a booth at this year's Green Gary Celebration please contact Kip Walton of Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore at 219-395-1858/ Kipton_walton@nps.gov.

GALLERY GALLOP. The 18th annual **Gallery Gallop**, a Gold Cup Series Race sponsored by Miller's Lake Street Gallery, will take place on **Saturday, May 14, starting at 6:30 pm** at the Lake Street Beach. The event will consist of a competitive 8.5K run on the beach and in the dunes, and a non-competitive 3K walk. Veterans of the run will agree with its description as "strenuous and grueling". Prizes of \$250 each will be awarded to the overall first place male and female finishers and to the first place male and female masters. The entry fee is \$14 to \$16 in advance or \$20 on race day. Purchase entries at the Lake Street Gallery, 613 S. Lake Street. For more information, call 938-4566.

THE NEXT BOARD MEETING OF THE MILLER CITIZENS CORP. WILL BE HELD ON MONDAY, APRIL 11, AT 7:30 P.M. 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 call 938-8831 or e-mail mceaton@aol.com. You can also visit the MCC website at www.millercitizenscorp.org.

EMERSON JAZZ AND CONCERT CHOIR.

The **EMERSON JAZZ TORNADOES** will perform at the 26th Annual Valparaiso University jazz festival on **Tuesday, April 12** AT 6:30 pm in the Harre Union auditorium. Just show up and enjoy. The **EMERSON CONCERT CHOIR** will present its annual Spring Choral Gala on **Wednesday evening, April 20**. In the past, these concerts have been presented at the Marquette Park Pavilion, but this year the choir looks forward to performing in the remodeled school auditorium. For more information, please contact Marion Lynn Boynes, Concert Choir Director, at 938-1161, Monday through Friday.

MAYORAL FORUM A SUCCESS. On March 19, the MCC joined *The Coalition*, a one-time organization of Gary community groups, to present a forum of candidates for Mayor of Gary in the upcoming May election. All the candidates participated except for Mayor Clay, who was expected but did not appear. **MCC President Eric Reaves was the master of ceremonies** and the event was attended by a full house of about 500 spectators, eager to view and assess the large field of candidates for mayor. **THE NEXT STEP FOR GARY RESIDENTS IS TO COME OUT AND VOTE IN THE PRIMARY ELECTION ON MAY 3. MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD!**

MORE CANDIDATE EXPOSURE. Voters who missed the March 19 forum for mayoral candidates will have another chance to hear from candidates at the Mayoral/Judge Debate, sponsored by the Northwest Indiana Media Group from 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm on Sunday, April 17 at Plaza 1 Bistro in the Genesis Convention Center.

MCC BRANDING – A HEADS UP. Following up on suggestions at last year's "retreat" of MCC board

members, Eric Reaves has been working on proposals for a new MCC logo and letterhead, which would represent the current goals of our community organization 40 years after its founding. Reaves feels that the original tag-line “there’s no place I’d rather live” was appropriate in 1971, but does not adequately represent the interests of the MCC more than a generation later. So far, proposals have elicited a lot of discussion but no decisions, so it’s too soon to preview the new MCC trademarks, but don’t be surprised when we show up with new insignias.

RETREAT COMING UP. Speaking of “retreats”, the MCC is planning to bring board members together once again, to discuss long-term issues of the organization and the community. The provisional plan is to hold the 2011 retreat on Saturday, May 14, at the Douglas Center on Lake Street. The event is for board members only, but if you have subjects you think the board should consider, contact President Eric Reaves or any board member you know to make suggestions.

SPRING PLANT SALE. Looking ahead, the Miller Garden Club will hold its annual Spring Plant Sale at the Aquatorium in Marquette Park on **Saturday, May 20** from 9:00 am to noon. Plants, accessories, and baked goods donated by garden club members will be on sale at bargain prices. This is a good time to fill in your garden with plants which are certain to grow well in our climate – that’s why local gardeners have a surplus to give away.

MCC gripes

Postal Service failures and fears

The MCC has written to Post Office officials to highlight service failures following recent winter storms, and to protest the proposed transfer of mail sorting functions from Gary to South Bend. Local residents were incensed when mail delivery was suspended because carriers failed to report for work, and when mail was not delivered to individual mailboxes even though the snow around them had been cleared. Looking ahead, we are concerned that routine mail deliveries will be slowed even further if the sorting function is moved to South Bend. If you have concerns about these subjects, please pass them on to Joy Simmons, Consumer Affairs Manager, United States Postal Service, 3939 Vincennes Road, Indianapolis, IN 46298 and send a copy of your correspondence to US Representative Pete Visclosky, 7895 Broadway, Suite A, Merrillville, IN 46410. A copy of the MCC letter is displayed at the MCC website under Hot Topics – Postal Concerns – just go to www.millercitizenscorp.org.

DUAB conflicts of interest

The MCC has written to Governor Daniels, to protest clear conflicts of interest by two members of the Distressed Unit Appeal Board (DUAB) which is considering Gary's request for "relief" from state-mandated property tax caps. One member, Mark GiaQuinta, is an attorney who represents the corporation which owns our local trash collection company. He has publicly criticized our suit which challenges the legality of the Gary garbage collection fee. Another DUAB member, Ruschenberger, has used the contacts he made as a member of the DUAB to land a profitable job with the corporation which handles sale of repossessed properties in Gary. We feel that these individuals are not impartial arbiters of Gary's request for additional property tax funds.

C.O.P. promotes public safety

The First District C.O.P. office, at 601 S. Lake Street, assists residents in organizing neighborhood watch groups, and receives citizen complaints regarding city services, complaints regarding illegal activities, code enforcement and many other issues which affect our community. **CONTRARY TO SOME RUMORS, THE OFFICE SERVES ALL RESIDENTS OF THE FIRST DISTRICT, INCLUDING AETNA, GLEN RYAN AND THE EMERSON AREA, IN ADDITION TO MILLER.** To report problems or to seek information, call the office at 938-0281. Keep that phone ringing!

The COP office also has a new e-mail address, which will be used to broadcast bulletins about public safety and city services. If you would like to be included in the information network, send an e-mail request to lakest-cop@hotmail.com.

The COP office is the partner of the Gary Police Department in the Neighborhood Watch Initiative, which resulted in the registration of eight new neighborhood watch groups in 2010. **To increase the safety of your area**, contact COP at 938-0281 for informational packets and personal assistance in getting a neighborhood watch started.

Finally, **the COP office needs new volunteers**, law-abiding residents who are willing to spend a couple hours each week manning the Lake Street office. If you can help in this important work, call the COP office at 938-0281 to sign up.