

The last Gallery Gallop

The 18th (and last) Gallery Gallop, sponsored by Miller's Lake Street Gallery, will take place on **Saturday, May 14, starting at 6:30 pm** at the Lake Street Beach. This is a Gold Cup Series Race which consists of a competitive 8.5K run on the beach and in the dunes, and a non-competitive 3K walk. Both events are strenuous. 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.**

LIKE A DEATH IN THE FAMILY. This will probably be the last "Gallery Gallop", since Joyce Davis, whose Lake Street Gallery sponsors the event, is moving her shop to Chesterton. Especially since the Miller Bakery Café closed, there are not enough visitors to Lake Street to keep the gallery operating in its present location. **The final opening and show at the Lake Street Gallery will be after the race on May 14. It will feature, appropriately, the works of local artists.**

HOPES FOR REBIRTH. Eric Reaves has announced that some local residents are making tentative plans for a Miller Beach Arts District, to use art, culture and creativity as catalysts to reinvigorate Lake Street. The proposed district would include Lake Street from the South Shore to the Douglas Center, along with the next blocks on each side. It would be modeled after the successful districts in Miami, New Orleans, and Dallas and would be structured as a not-for-profit Community Development Corporation (CDC) with by-laws, a board of directors, and an Executive Director. Persons who are interested in participating in the early planning of this project should contact Reaves by e-mail at EricEReaves@aol.com.

Duly noted

CLEANING UP MILLER. The MCC, the Miller Business Association (MBA) and other local organizations will be combining their efforts for the annual community cleanup on **Saturday, May 7 from 7:00 am until noon.** Control center for the cleanup is at the former Ralph's parking lot (Miller Ave. and Grand Blvd.), and groups of workers will be dispatched from there as people arrive. Volunteers will spread out to Old Hobart Road, Grand Blvd., Lake Street, and the three-pronged corridor from Lake Street to Clay Street. The MCC will provide trash bags, safety vests, and some "grabbers" to pick up trash. **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!

SPRING PLANT SALE. The Miller Garden Club will hold its annual spring plant sale at the Aquatorium in Marquette Park on **Saturday, May 21, from 9:00 am to noon.** In addition to plants donated by club members, the sale will include garden accessories and baked goods, as well as rain barrels and bird houses. Plants will be available at reasonable prices and are certain to thrive in this area – that’s why they have increased and multiplied and are available to give away. This is a major fund-raiser for the garden club, and the proceeds help beautify Miller with plantings at the South Shore station, Lake Street, the Aquatorium, and other locations.

LORDLY TEA. St. Barnabas in the Dunes Episcopal Church will present its annual afternoon of **Scones and Tea and Literary, from 1:00 to 3:00 pm on Saturday, May 14.** Tea will be served with scones, Devonshire Cream, and jams, with entertaining presentations in the background. On the side, there will be a Sweet Shoppe with scones-to-go and toffee; a Colectable Cupboard, and a raffle with a basket of goodies and a hand-made lap quilt as prizes. Tickets are \$10 or \$18 for two. You’ll need to make a reservation by calling Sarah Hensel at 938-3027.

THE NEXT BOARD MEETING OF THE MILLER CITIZENS CORP. WILL BE HELD ON MONDAY, MAY 9, 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 mcceaton@aol.com. You can also visit the MCC website at www.millercitizenscorp.org.

AS FOR THE MUSICAL ARTS . . . The students at the Wirt-Emerson Visual and Performing Arts Academy on Grand Blvd. are preparing to display their talents at the **Spring Concert on Tuesday, May 10 starting at 6:30 pm** in the Wirt Auditorium. The Concert Band, the Middle School Band, and the Jazz Tornadoes will all perform under the direction of Band Director Daniel Keith Lemmon. For additional information, contact Lemmon at the school by calling 938-1161.

WASH THOSE CARS! The Miller Dunes Sons of the American Legion are holding a car wash at the **Flamingo Pizza**, on Locust Avenue at Shelby Street, on **Saturday, May 7 from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm**. The cost is \$5 per vehicle, and proceeds will benefit veterans and their families.

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE. The Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC) has released a number of draft planning documents, for review and comment by the public during May. These include the **Draft 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan**, which has been developed with extensive public participation beginning in December, 2008. It deals with transportation, economic development, land use, the environment and social equity. It can be viewed on-line at www.nirpc.org. Also involved are the **Draft Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)** dealing with highway, public transit, railroad crossings, and related subjects and the **Draft Air Quality Conformity Determination**, to assure that the above plans are compatible with air quality goals. Public meetings have been scheduled throughout the Region to permit comment on the plans. The two Gary sessions are on **Friday, May 13 from 10:00 am to noon at Ivy Tech Community College on 35th Avenue and on Monday, May 16 from 5:00 to 7:00 pm at the Main Public Library on Fifth Avenue**. For more information, contact Steve Strains, NIRPC Director of Planning, at 219-7763-6060 or by e-mail at sstrains@nirpc.org.

Getting in touch with nature

Douglas Center for Environmental Education on Lake offers exhibits and presentations which highlight the resources available for families and visitors at the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore. Have fun participating in free, hands-on family activities and enjoy the special guests and programs scheduled throughout the season. **The center with its new exhibits is open from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Monday through Saturday, and every Saturday is family day** with art activities, hikes to the ponds, and seasonal nature watching. **The following Saturday events are all scheduled from 1:00 to 3:00 pm:**

May 14 -- Frog expert David McGowan will showcase the huge diversity of frogs living in Miller Woods.

May 21 -- Develop your listening skills with members of the Society of Acoustic Ecology, giving tips for hearing nature's symphony.

May 28 -- Build your own kite inside the Douglas Center and then fly it outside. Supplies are furnished free of charge.

June 4 -- Take a hike in the rare oak savanna forest of Miller Woods

Work is finally starting on Marquette Park upgrade

After a year and a half of planning and approvals, actual construction is about to begin on the \$28 million renovation of Marquette Park. On the chilly afternoon of April 15, city dignitaries and planners assembled in front of Fr. Marquette's statue, to break ground (symbolically) and mark the beginning of construction after a year and a half of planning and a lengthy approval process.

The construction trailer has been positioned in front of the "Recreation Pavilion" for more than a month, but we should now begin to see actual work being done. The present **Phase IIC calls for redevelopment of the Father Marquette Monument and Site, restoration of the Oak Savannah, and renovation of the Pavilion**, all between May and November of 2011. We can look forward to a busy summer in the park.

Contracts have been signed for much of this work, and units of work have been broken down so that smaller Gary firms have an opportunity to bid on many sub-contracts. At the same time, the Regional Development Authority (RDA), which is funding the project, will not permit contracts to set quotas that require a set percentage of workers to live in Gary.

FINDING MORE INFORMATION . . .
People who are interested in more detailed information concerning the Marquette Park project can visit the City of Gary website, www.gary.in.us. On the left side of the initial screen under **Downloads**, choose **Marquette Park Lakefront Master Plan**. Here, you will find a Project Overview, a Project Schedule, a list of Events, and lists of board members overseeing the project. Then, at the very end under **Project Documents**, go to **April 18, 2011, First Quarter Report**, which shows the schedule for current activities. Information on the website will be updated periodically as the project moves forward.

Anyone who is interested in seeing the detailed drawings for the project can contact MCC president Eric Reaves, who has a copy which was obtained (and paid for) by Councilwoman Marilyn Krusas. The plans describe, in hundreds of pages of detail, exactly how the pavilion, the Fr. Marquette statue area, and the oak savannah will look. Make arrangements with Reaves through his e-mail account, EricEReaves@aol.com.

PLANNERS WIN AWARD. The American Society of Landscape Architects, Chicago chapter, presented its President's Award for 2010 to the Hitchcock Design Group, the city of Gary, and the RDA for the Marquette Park Lakefront East Master Plan. Congratulations to all!

THE ROAD THROUGH THE PARK. Configuring the traffic lanes through the park is a subject which continues to arouse controversy. During the planning phase of the renovation project, members of the public have requested that the design include traffic lanes, a bike lane, a sidewalk or walking path, and a lane for parallel parking. To accommodate all these functions, the through traffic would be limited to a single lane, and a traffic study shows that this would be more than adequate to handle the low volume of cars driving through the park under normal conditions. However, many Miller residents use the road through the park on a daily basis as a principal city street, and they see problems if there is only one lane for automobile traffic. In addition, the aim of the park renovation is to attract more visitors, and if it succeeds the traffic will increase. Moreover, the standard for lanes of traffic needed to handle the volume of vehicles is based on two-way streets, where drivers can avoid obstructions by driving around stopped cars into the opposite lane. Here, there would be no "opposite lane". The project planners intend to have an additional public meeting (to be announced) to discuss this issue further.

MCC INVOLVEMENT. In the background, the members of the Regional Development Authority have been favorably impressed by the continued interest and involvement of Miller residents in the project. Within the MCC, the Lakeshore Committee deals with park and beach affairs, and they welcome participation from the community. The committee meets on the third Thursday of each month. **The next meeting will be on Thursday, May 19 at 6:00 pm in the downstairs meeting room of St. Barnabas Episcopal Church on Potawatomie Trail.**

BEACH PATROLS. Sgt. Brazelton, who heads the Gary Police Department's Beach Patrol, spoke at the last Shoreline Committee meeting. He revealed that his officers issued hundreds of citations last year, principally for **alcohol consumption on the beach** – so, beachgoers be warned! Questioners wondered why the patrolmen on their ATVs keep racing up and down the beach as a group, rather than focusing on smaller areas as individual officers. Brazelton explained that the officers need to stay in pairs or groups for safety reasons, so they can provide backup for each other when they encounter hostile members of the public.