

Recap of Lakefront issues

The Gary lakefront is the most significant natural feature which draws visitors and residents to Miller, and this summer there is good and bad news for the people who use the beach and who live nearby.

The good news is – the major renovations to the Pavilion and the Aquatorium are being completed, after a year and a half of work. Both facilities will be fully functional for summer events and ever after. The bad news is, the rest of Marquette Park will be a mess, as parking lots, roads and trails become the scene of continuing construction. The beach and the recreational buildings will be inviting visitors to come, but finding places for them to park will be a challenge.

Meanwhile, the **MCC Shoreline Committee**, headed by Carol Smith, has been coordinating the plans of the Gary Park Department, the Gary and Lake County Police Departments, the Miller residents, the beach users, and other interested parties. Their aim is to make the lakefront clean, safe and friendly for visitors. Underage drinkers and rowdiness are being targeted.

As a first step, the city has been collecting and summarizing all the ordinances which affect use of the lakefront.

Ordinances prescribe that **swimming** is allowed only at guarded areas – at Lake Street east of the parking lot and at Marquette Park, around the Aquatorium. Police will **not** be preventing people from swimming on other areas of the beach, but swimmers wade in at their own risk.

Boaters are permitted to approach the shore everywhere except at Marquette Park, but they are only permitted to come straight in at low speed – no cruising parallel to the shore inside the marker buoys. The police will be paying more attention to noisy and rowdy boaters.

No **drinking** or possession of alcoholic beverages is permitted, on the beach or in the park, except for special events with explicit permits. Police will be looking for violators who are visibly drinking or are acting drunk. However, unless they have “probable cause” police are **not** authorized to look into coolers or other closed containers to see if they contain alcoholic beverages.

Dogs are allowed on the beach, under the same conditions that apply to any other public space: they must be leashed, some specific breeds (like pit bulls) must also be muzzled, and owners are required to pick up after their dogs. Apart from the city’s ordinances, owners

are discouraged from bringing their dogs to the beach in the heat of the afternoon – it is painful for the dogs.

In the vicinity of the beach, on-street **parking is allowed**, parallel to the curb, unless there are “no parking” signs authorized by the city. The police are prepared to enforce the parking rules, especially in the easements leading to the beach.

Fires are **not** allowed in the park or on the beach, including campfires or barbecues.

In the background:

Police patrols on the beach will be expanded, and police officers will be instructed to patrol individually or in pairs, rather than having four officers racing up and down the beach together.

The City is making plans for trash control – having trash cans to collect rubbish and having workers to clean up at days’ end.

John Pickford is working with the Park Department and the Police Department to design and install signs at access points, which summarize the beach rules and identify the street or area of the beach, so people calling for help can tell where they are located.

As usual, Mike Chirich is working to have buoys positioned in the lake to segregate the swimming area from the boating area. His efforts are being undermined by the failure of the city to pay the provider of buoys for the services he performed last year.

Several aspects of the park renovation are still the subject of controversy. 1) The roadways through the park will be the same width as at present, neither wider nor narrower. But, as of now, this space will include a separately lined-off bike lane and just one automobile lane, which many residents find inadequate. There will be walking trails off the road. 2) An asphalt trail is planned over the dunes from Lake Street to Grand Blvd. Many see this as a desecration of the dunes and an invitation to blowing sand. 3) The parking lot east of the Aquatorium will be virtually eliminated, while the parking space west of the Aquatorium will be expanded. If the park actually attracts users, parking could be a problem. 4) There is still no support organization or plan to assure that the park will be properly maintained after construction is completed. 5) The Park Department is still working on acquiring lifeguard stands.

The MCC Shoreline Committee will host a public meeting at the Woodson Library on Lake Street, Thursday, May 17 at 6:00 pm, to discuss the summer plans and to invite comment by the community.

Farmers market opens May 5

The fence is down and several tables with benches have appeared at the one-time schoolyard on Lake Street across from the end of 7th Avenue – harbingers of the coming **Farmer's Market**, which will operate at that location **every Saturday from 8:00 am to 3:00 pm starting May 5.** The Miller Farmer's Market is being reorganized under the auspices of the Miller Beach Arts and Creative District, with contributions from the MCC and the MBA. It will offer organic produce, ethnic foods, arts and crafts, artisan breads, meats, and live entertainment. The cost of booth space will be \$30 per event. Vendors who are interested in participating can contact Mary Dugger at mduguerre@aol.com to obtain an application form.

Duly noted . . .

COME SEE A DREAM. The renovation of the Aquatorium is nearing completion, and the grand opening is set for Friday, May 11 from 5:30 to 9:00 pm., with the dedication ceremony set for about 7:00 pm. The event will be marked by a reception with wine, cheese and hors d'oeuvres and will give attendees a chance to see the new Chanute garden and museum space. This is a fund-raiser, and tickets are \$25 per person. A commemorative plaque is also being created with the names of persons contributing \$150 or more.

GARDEN CLUB EVERYTHING SALE. The Miller Garden Club will hold its **annual spring sale at the Aquatorium on Saturday, May 19 starting at 9:00 am. Plants donated by club members** will be on sale at bargain prices, but that is not all. **Garden decorations, tools, and baked goods will also be available.** This will also be your chance to buy **rain barrels** will help you stretch the natural rainfall and reduce water bills.

SCONES AND TEA. St. Barnabas in the Dunes will hold its popular **English Tea on May 19 from 1 - 3.** An afternoon with sweet and savory scones, tea sandwiches, tarts and hot tea will be interspersed with literary treats. Also featured will be a Sweet Shoppe with scones-to-go, and English Toffee, a Unique Boutique with "one-of-a kinds" and a Raffle Basket generously filled with special

gifts. For reservations call Sarah Hensel 219-938-3027.
Admission \$15.00

GALLERY GALLOP. The **Lake Street Gallery**, 613 S. Lake Street, will again present the annual **Gallery Gallop** on **Saturday, May 19**, starting at 6:30 pm. The event consists of an 8.5 K run and a 3.0 K walk along the beach and into the dunes. There will be four prizes of \$250 each for the fastest men and women runners, and commemorative T-shirts for everyone. Pre-registration (prior to May 8) costs \$14 to \$16 per person; race-day registration is \$20. The Miller Business Association and the Miller Community Fund are also sponsors of the event. Proceeds go toward community projects.

THE NEXT MEETING OF THE MILLER CITIZENS CORP. BOARD OF DIRECTORS WILL BE HELD ON MONDAY, May 14, 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.

TENNIS INSTRUCTION. Chester Baran is once again offering tennis instruction for young people, ages 8 to 12. They will be using the courts at Banneker School, on dates and times to be determined. Participants will need a racquet, a water bottle, and an accompanying parent. (Chester has a few racquets available to lend). If you are interested, call Chester at 219-384-4863 or e-mail to chet1bar@hotmail.com.

CLEANING UP LAKE STREET. The Miller Business Association has arranged with Cozey Weatherspoon, Director of General Services, to have a team of supervised work-release persons (who are required to do community service) sweep Lake Street from the Miller School north to Third Avenue on a regular basis. On cleanup days, parking will be restricted on the side of the street being swept. The Miller Garden Club, with support from the MBA, will be responsible for growing flowers and shrubs in the center flower beds and in the dozens of corner planters on Lake Street.

Cleanup planned for May 5

The annual spring cleanup has been on the MCC calendar for the past 40 years. This year, the event is also

supported by the Miller Business Association, the Miller Garden Club, and other local groups. Everyone is invited to help clear trash and debris from the byways of Miller, from **7:00 am to noon on Saturday, May 5**. At the same time, Garden Club members will be planting flowers, principally on Lake Street. As usual, volunteers will be dispatched from the command post at the corner of Montgomery St. and Miller Avenue, under the “Miller sign”.

This is also the day to dispose of hazardous waste, like aerosols, batteries, motor oil, or expired medications. Drop them off between 9:00 and 2:00 at the parking lot of the Hudson-Campbell Center, 5th and Massachusetts.

Gary Police brass introduced

With support from the MCC and the Glen Ryan Neighbors, the Gary Police Department (GPD) conducted a public meeting at Beyond 4 Walls church on Lake Street, to introduce the new police command team and to discuss their crime-control efforts. Public Safety Director Richard Ligon presented our new Chief Wade Ingram, along with Deputy Chief Larry McKinley and Commanders Kerry Rice and Pete Sormaz.

The Chief discussed a number of activities designed to reduce crime in Gary:

-----With the help of surrounding communities, 96 officers conducted a “sweep” which identified and arrested 34 “wanted” persons. Additional “sweeps” are planned to check up on parolees, probationers and sex offenders.

-----To make more effective use of police manpower, patrol officers are being rescheduled to match the number of officers with the number of calls coming in. The Chief is also clamping down on absenteeism, so that officers who are scheduled to work will be on the job.

-----The police are working with pawn shops and junk yards, to identify persons who are trying to dispose of stolen goods.

-----The GPD is increasing the enforcement of curfew laws, which restrict the hours when minors (under 18) can be on the street without parents or guardians.

As a management tool, the GPD is generating maps showing where crimes are being committed, and these can be viewed at the COP office, 601 S. Lake Street.