

Beadtown runs through February

Bead Town Northwest Indiana will continue its run at the Gardner Center on Lake Street until Mardi Gras – March 4. The exhibit consists of large artworks designed by Stephan Wanger, made of discarded Mardi Gras beads, to create colorful townscapes and designs. The show will be on display **daily throughout February (10:30 to 6:00 Monday through Thursday, 10:30 to 8:00 Friday and Saturday, and noon to 6:00 on Sunday). Two special events are included in the schedule:**

February 13 – BEAD MY VALENTINE. Adult workshop – guests will make and take home a beaded martini glass. Gardner Center, 6:00 to 9:00 pm. Refreshments will be served. Fee is \$25. RSVP to Judy Bielak at 219-764-9381.

March 1 – MARDI GRAS FUNDRAISER. Gardner Center, 6:00 to 10:00 pm. Tickets are \$65 per person or \$100 per couple. Dancing and refreshments are included; festive attire is encouraged. Buy tickets at the Gardner Center or send payment to MBACD, P.O. Box 2045, Gary, IN 46403. (With music, dancing, refreshments and festive attire, this sounds like a Mardi Gras Ball for people who can't stay up past 10:00.)

Make this remarkable display of art an occasion for fun and frolic in the midst of winter!

Dreaming of future summer

Neighborhood watch meets the beach

While waiting for a spring thaw, the MCC Shoreline Committee is sponsoring a meeting on “**Neighborhood Safety – Making Your Block Clubs Work**”, **Thursday, February 20 at 6:00 pm** at the Gardner Center on Lake Street. The MCC is organizing this meeting with the Federation of Block Clubs and our Gary Police Officers, to provide important information on keeping your home and neighborhood safe. Warm weather may bring a rise in crime, so we should be doing what we can to prevent this from happening. Everyone is welcome at the meeting. Please help get the word out to neighbors and block club captains. If you have questions, contact Carol Smith at 219-765-0298.

Some local residents see an upsurge of crime in Miller – especially burglaries. Others think the crime situation is just normal. In any case, police sources report that 12 burglaries have been reported in the past month or so, and 4 suspects have been apprehended.

Miller Garden Club is warming up

The Miller Garden Club is once again holding a **Winter Wine and Cheese Soiree**, with a program that appeals to people who are interested in **words** as well as **plants** – **Saturday, February 22 at 7:00 pm in the Aquatorium**. Beth Botts, who earned great reviews for her talk at last winter’s event, will be back again this year with an anecdotal talk on how plants got their popular and scientific names: why do we have “dandelions”, or “rattlesnake masters” or “roses of Lancaster”? – answers which reveal the interaction of humans and plants. As the name of the event suggests, wine and cheese will be served. This is not a fund-raiser, but guests are encouraged to bring a dish.

The first regular Garden Club meeting of the year will be on **Saturday, March 15 at 10:00 am in the Aquatorium**. The speaker will be Susan Eleuterio, beekeeper and master gardener, who will talk about bees and gardens. Everyone is welcome.

New brew-pub is a winner

Drew Fox, owner and operator of Gary’s first brewery, has just been named Indiana’s Best New Brewer by RateBeer.

After almost a year of public meetings and inspections, **Fox** finally made his way through the maze of bureaucratic obstacles and opened his brew-pub for businesses at the end of November. Gary’s first brewery is located at the corner of **Lake Street and Miller Avenue**, across the tracks from Miller Pizza. (The door is on the Miller Ave. side). The brew-pub offers a variety of distinctive beers and ales on tap, plus quart-size “growlers” to take out. There are also souvenir shirts and mugs for sale. For now, you can bring your own food to go with the beer, or order food delivered from Miller Pizza.

The 18th Street Brewery has been getting support from Miller neighbors and from micro-brew fans all around the region. Fox has also been working hard to publicize his brews, and his efforts have paid off with state-wide recognition as a quality producer. If you haven’t been there yet, give it a try. The beer is exceptional.

Finding Miller Beach web sites

Cullen Ben Daniel has created a new internet site: www.millerbeach.webs.com, whose main purpose is to list other Miller websites which people might want to visit. To use the site, click on the item "Why Visit?" at the top of the screen. The page which appears will have a list of websites down the right side. (There is also a separate page for listing properties for rent in Miller) A fair number of Miller web sites are listed, including organizations and businesses, but there are certainly other websites out there which should be added to the list. To add an item to either the web list or the rental list, just contact Ben Daniel at cullenbdaniel@yahoo.com.

Carmella Saraceno at the Miller Beach Market Place on Shelby St. has set up a Miller calendar, and is hoping for everyone to post their events there. Just go to www.experiencemillerbeach.com, and on the left side of the display select "Post Event" and fill in the blanks. You don't have to register or log on to post events, but Carmella will be watching.

Duly noted . . .

LITTLE LEAGUE REGISTRATION. Now that spring is almost here, it's time to sign up for the **Miller Little League**. Register any Saturday from February 1 to March 22, from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm, at the **Gardner Center, 540 S. Lake St.** The fee is \$65 per player (\$75 for late registrations, after March 31). Each player needs to present a **birth certificate**, to establish what age group he belongs in, and **proof of residence**. (Age groups are Tee Ball, 4-7; Rookie, 7-8; Minors, 9-10; Majors, 11-12; Junior, 13-14; and Senior, 15-16). If you have questions, call Tracy Brough at 938-5253 or Nakia Hemphill at 313-6605. Players can also register on-line at www.millerlittleleague.com.

A GOOD YEAR AT THE BATH-HOUSE. The Aquatorium Society has announced that 2013 was their most successful year, both for rentals and for fundraising. In the "good weather" months (which we all hope will some day return) the facility was booked every weekend, and there were events on other days as well. Customers are attracted by the beautiful facility and location, the reasonable prices, and the accessible personnel. For more information on renting the facility, call Jan at 938-1986 or e-mail info@aquatorium.org.

WIRT/EMERSON PERFORMANCE. The Wirt/Emerson Concert Choir and the Dance Troupe will

perform at the IUN Bergland Auditorium, 3400 Broadway, on Wednesday, February 12 at 6:00 pm.

FEBRUARY 2014 MCC MEETING

THE NEXT MCC BOARD MEETING WILL BE HELD ON MONDAY, FEBRUARY 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 mceaton@aol.com. You can also visit the MCC website at www.millercitizenscorp.org.

MEN AND BOYS \$\$. Joe Petras has forwarded his final tally for the Christmas Men and Boys lunch, which benefits the Miller Kids Park. This year's total came to \$1,040, including the sale of six memorial bricks. Good work, men and boys!

NATIONAL PARK FUN. The Douglas Center on Lake Street has an open house every Saturday from 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. featuring hands-on activities, exhibits, and a live animal room. Whenever there is snow on the ground, visitors can borrow cross-country ski equipment, get a quick lesson, and then explore the beauty of the trails surrounding the center. For more information, the Douglas Center at 219-395-1821 or check the park website at www.nps.gov/indu/planyourvisit

Miller is a subject of study

Gary in general and Miller in particular have been getting a lot of attention from students of urban planning at nearby universities.

The latest visitors, in January, were a bus-load of first-year graduate students in urban planning from the **University of Illinois at Chicago**. They were bussed around downtown Gary, ending up in Miller, where they enjoyed Miller Pizza at the Marquette Park Pavilion, talked about Miller with community leaders and Gary city managers, and asked pointed questions about the community. They are going to do a plan for Gary/Miller.

(Some of the UIC graduate students didn't go back to Chicago on the bus, but stayed to taste the beer at the 18th Street Brewery, and took the train back to the city later.)

Earlier last year, Miller people talked to personnel from **Purdue Calumet** and reviewed computer output they had generated for the University Park project and the airport in Gary. Their work got mixed reviews and they wanted to be paid for doing anything further, so this hasn't happened. Next, people from the **Chicago Art Institute graduate studies program** did an "infill, façade rehabilitation and restoration design" for Miller which was "like real" and is available as an inspiration for renovation work on Lake Street. Finally, students from the **Illinois Institute of Technology** have made a number of visits and may be back.

Hopefully, all this interest by academics will help convince people with money that investment in our community will pay off.

Marquette park project done

The Marquette Park renovation project is winding down. The advisory committee, which includes a number of Miller residents, hasn't been meeting and almost all the work is completed.

FINAL DETAILS. The new entrance sign has been constructed at Grand Blvd. and Hemlock, and the old sign will be removed when the weather is better. **Fencing around the center of the park and along Forest Avenue has been erected by the Gary Sanitary District**, to protect the wetlands which are being restored. Dan Vicari, the Executive Director of the Sanitary District, has been promoting the wetland development, along with aggressive tree planting, to capture groundwater so it will not reach the city sewers and need to be treated.

LAKE STREET LODGE. The Request for Proposal (RFP) for the lodge at the end of Lake Street is still pending. There will be opportunities for public comment on the project once a developer is selected. Meanwhile, the city and federal agencies are looking at the infrastructure which would support the lodge.