



2004-2005 Board Members: Jane Adams, Kathy Benedict, Lilly Boruszkowski, Caryl Cox, Bryan Crow, Yuki Kobiyama, Sandy Litecky, Hugh Muldoon, Mary O'Hara, Robin Russell, Scott Schuett, Ann Wallis

Winter Spring 2005

**News from the President - More Than Property:** OK, this neighborhood is on some kind of roll. We had a great clean-up day. The coffees with Council candidates turned out to be in-depth advocacy sessions for neighborhood values. The Study Circles-originated ordinance for transparency additions to rental property leases looks like a winner. An ambitious research project is underway. The problem with nuisance houses has been powerfully addressed. We have a newsletter, neighborhood watch groups, a functioning Board, a Web Site designed by D. Gorton, (<http://www.dgorton.com/neighborhood/nab/index.html>), and at this writing, we are on the verge of deciding on a new name.

And we have challenges. Near the top of the list is identifying the neighborhood. In my opinion, it needs to be more than a section of the City bounded by certain streets. It needs to be more than a homeowner's association, a special interest political group, a clique of friends, or a property values protection society. Neighborhood essentially involves, as I intimated in our last newsletter, people getting together to address issues affecting their common good. This is a qualitative dimension of neighborhood-that which I hear on the street is valued above the rest. I believe it is based on a social contract, usually unspoken, wherein we agree to work together on common goals in a spirit of mutual respect--in spite of the diversity in our social class, education, age, political orientation, and other lifestyle differences. It is an inherent quality that makes us feel good when we walk down the street and upset when there is a disturbance in the area, a blight, or a breach of the social contract.

Right now our geographical neighborhood boundaries are fluid and fuzzy. We have organized in the past mostly around special tasks and/or crises. Those who participated actively had a felt sense of commitment to the task at hand. Organizational cohesion has often waned and been renewed, as would be expected. Having well defined boundaries was generally less important than mobilizing active volunteer participation. Inclusion in the neighborhood was defined by willingness to show up and pitch in. This is a great place to start.

Neighborhood is first about people living and working together. This does not answer all the questions we have at this time but it is a great place from which to grow. People are first, their well being, their security, and their ability to develop neighborly relationships. Neighborhood is not first about property. If we get this straight, I believe we will continue to be on a roll.

Hugh Muldoon

**Late Breaking News: A New Name!** At a general meeting of the neighborhood on Sunday, April 3, neighbors chose a new name by an overwhelming majority. Discussion of a name had been going on since the fall of 2004. A number of proposals surfaced, but in the end, the winner was "Arbor District." Our association will be called the Arbor District Neighborhood Association. An Arbor District Web site has been constructed by D. Gorton and Jane Adams. The new name may take some getting used to, but Hugh suggested a way to begin by identifying the Arbor District as located in the historic central southwest neighborhood of Carbondale.

However long it takes to adapt to the new name, we can begin now to explore its potential for focusing our energies for neighborhood betterment. We can think about big things and little things to do for the Arbor District--from picking up its litter to repairing its homes, from fielding our own washer throwing team to obtaining a designation as a Preservation District, from starting our own Welcome Wagon to everyone appreciating their neighbor's story, from planting fruit trees to developing a Dome Museum, from circulating a regular newsletter to promoting regular dialogues with landlords. This is a new beginning, not a time for sitting on our good ideas.

### **Neighborhood Research Project:**

Throughout the 2005 spring semester two SIU student interns are pursuing a research project in our neighborhood. History professor Marji Morgan, our neighbor on Elm Street, set up the internship and worked with WCCNA to develop their project. The interns are history Ph.D. candidate Chris Strangemen and undergraduate anthropology major Margo Pulley. D. Gorton, assisted by Hugh Muldoon and Jane Adams, has been providing direct guidance to their research.

Chris and Margo began by gaining background knowledge of the area. They met with Tom Redmond, Carbondale's planning director. Tom generously brought out maps showing the area development as well as discussing the history of zoning in our neighborhoods. They met with Carbondale Community Hospital Director George Maroney who traced the growth of the not for profit hospital. George told the students about decisions that the hospital has made over the years to remain "community based". He also explained about the expansion of the hospital and the historic homes that were removed as a result. Architect Gail White spent several hours talking about the controversy surrounding the two-way-couple of Main and Walnut Street and the effects that decision had on the Historic District. Gail also outlined

many of the initiatives that the community has undertaken over the past 20 years that have served to bind it together.

Chris and Margo then began conducting oral history interviews with residents such as Mary Brown, Scott Schuette, and Yuki Kobayama using state of the art digital video cameras. These interviews are continuing. They are now assessing each house's physical condition in the WCCNA area, photographing every property and coding their assessments with property parcel numbers from Jackson County. Maps have been drawn that show which properties are occupied by owner/residents, rental/residents, landlords and rentals/absentee landlords. The data will be analyzed to understand if there are patterns in the upkeep and conditions of the parcels. The students will be giving a public lecture on their findings before the end of the semester.

Jane Adams has been instructing the students on techniques of oral history interviews, transcribing, and the collection of data. D. Gorton has worked with the students in teaching digital video acquisition and editing, scanning techniques and data collection, and has set up the interviews. The WCCNA Board has collaborated in identifying residents to be interviewed, and Bob Pauls provided background on the availability of county records. Tax assessment records are posted on the Jackson County website: <http://www.co.jackson.il.us/departments/assessments/reassessments/reassessments.htm>

D. Gorton

**Neighborhood Clean-Up Report:** This past January, some 20 twenty neighbors gathered in front of 712 West Elm to undertake the difficult task of cleaning up our neighborhood. We were joined by reporters from News Channel 3 and the Southern Illinoisan, whom we should thank for their wonderful stories about the event. We set out just after 1 pm with trash bags in hand to clean up litter along our streets and

in some of the yards. Two hours later, our yard served as the collection site for the more than 170 pounds of trash and recyclable materials. Some of the more interesting items collected were car batteries that were apparently leaking, and a set of men's and women's undergarments. With everybody's help we separated the recyclable glass, plastic and aluminum containers as well as bagged all the trash. Following all the hard work, coffee and tea were served along with some cookies that Sandy Litecky and Fern Strauz had kindly prepared for the event. Everybody that helped with the clean up came in for a warm drink, some sweets and lots of conversation. Even folks that were walking by stopped in for tea just wondering what all the commotion was about.

I must say that it was inspiring and heartwarming to see folks come together and show respect for the places where all of us live. That kindness and generosity are part of what constitutes a neighborhood.

It's been two months since then, and now the flowers are beginning to bloom, highlighting the beauty of this neighborhood. Spring is officially with us as the recent rains remind us that everything needs cleansing after winter. Our streets and sidewalks are not exempt from this necessary cleansing. Yes that's right, we have some litterbugs in our midst and it's time to get out there and pick up the trash they have orphaned. So I am calling on all those that helped last time to bring a neighbor this time. April is a month filled with activities that pay homage to the Earth including the citywide Carbondale Clean Up and Earth Day activities. So be on the look out for a message from me in your e-mail boxes and in your doors for the date and time of our next Neighborhood Clean Up.

One last thing, THANK YOU ALL WHO HELPED LAST TIME.

Scott Schuette

**Spring Bloom:** Spring has come. Everyday I see more and more traces that tell me spring is here. Just taking a walk in our neighborhood, we can come across blossoms of crocus, daffodil, hyacinth or star magnolia. Through our bedroom window I witness everyday the flower buds of saucer magnolia swelling up and awaiting to pop.

Looking back, I turn the pages of my garden journal, and find the first signs of the end of winter season in early February when I saw white snowdrops and yellow crocuses on Elm Street. That urged me to sow the seeds of spinach and snow pea, which have already come out from the soil. Now they are contemplating under the hay mulch whether it is safe for growing up. On February 14<sup>th</sup>, I sowed several sweet pea seeds along our wood trellises instead of purchasing things to celebrate Valentine's Day. My husband, Scott, loved this idea, but he will truly appreciate it when he smells the sweet fragrance in the garden and sees the edible flowers in his green salad.

Many people must have different ideas of flowers, associated with personal memories, which tell them spring has arrived. To me the symbol of spring is cherry blossoms. In my home country Japan, during the cherry blossom season, weather forecasts always end with the report of blooming days of cherry blossoms throughout the country. It is our tradition to have family and/or social gatherings under the cherry blossom tree to celebrate a fine spring day. Last year was my first spring on Elm Street, and I was welcomed by a joyful surprise when our neighbor's beautiful Yoshino cherry blossoms appeared in full bloom. I fully enjoyed those flowers until the wind blew away the delicate petals that created white carpet on the sidewalks.

Soon we will smile walking along our neighborhood seeing the spring blooms of tulips, red buds, dogwoods and Bradford pears. I am very grateful what nature offers to us in each season and living in a

neighborhood that finds value in nature's gifts and takes care of them.

Yuki Kobiyama

**Update on the Dome:** The following is an e-mail interview conducted by Mary O Hara, Board member for the Dome Project, with Gail White of White and Borgognoni Architects. White and Borgognoni Architects are responsible for the initial assessment and recommendations for the restoration of the Dome.

MO: What have you learned as a result of your work on this project - insights, you have had?

GW: We're still learning. However, I'm impressed by several things ---the efficiency of the Dome's structural system and its ability to stand in spite of the lack of maintenance over so many years, Bucky's progressive insight into the design of domes, the simple, yet elegant solution of the dome as a structural system.

MO: Is the report completed? If not, what remains to be done?

GW: The report is not completed. We have finished the verification of existing conditions portion. We will be working through the assessment and recommendations portion over the next few weeks. We will be meeting with Joe Clinton on April 5. Joe has had previous experience working on domes and a meeting with him has been facilitated by Bill Perk.

MO: What does the report set in motion in terms of the restoration of the Dome?

GW: The report will set forth preservation treatments for the various aspects of the dome and property. Because of the nature of the dome and the extent of the deterioration, there will be various treatments recommended.

MO: What are some of your finding thus far?

GW: We have opened up several of the interior faces of the panels that make up the dome structure. Where we have opened these up, the deterioration is significant in places, not so bad in others. We are evaluating with the structural engineer the methods that are most feasible for making the necessary repairs. We are anticipating that Joe Clinton's experience will also be of help in recommending the best procedures to follow.

MO: What in your mind will be the next steps?

GW: Our next steps will be to complete our analysis phase, prepare draft recommendations, and then meet with the RBF NFP Board to discuss our findings and receive their input.

Side note -- Joe Clinton is a student and friend of Buckminster Fuller, will be returning to Carbondale with Bill to examine the dome, meet with White & Borgognoni, and present a proposal for a work of art to the Carbondale High School.

### **Neighborhood Watch - Be "Watching" for Further Developments!**

With spring upon us, your Neighborhood Watch captains are beginning to stir from their winter hibernation. From Maple Street, Becky Baker reports that neighbors there are continuing their long-established tradition of watching out for each other. James Street block captain Lilly Boruszkowski reports that she will soon be out and about to talk to her neighbors about Neighborhood Watch. On Elm Street, we had a meeting on March 31st with Officer Randy Mathis. Six households were represented at the meeting, during which Officer Mathis detailed crime statistics for our area for the past year. We discussed ways of improving communication between our neighborhood and the police department, as well as police department policies in handling specific situations. We have captains signed up for Forest, Springer, James, Maple, Walnut, and Elm, and recently, Cherry. Fran Fanning

has volunteered to be the Neighborhood Watch captain for Cherry Street. She will be contacting her neighbors soon to meet with Officer Mathis. Thank you, Fran! Cherry Street needs you.

Robin Russell  
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**Odds and Ends:**

- Welcome to new neighbors! Please feel free to contact any board members at the following addresses with neighborhood concerns or questions:

Jane Adams  
702 W. Cherry  
457-8228  
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- Please send us your email address if you think we don't have it, or if it has changed recently. Send it to Mary O'Hara: [mohara@midwest.net](mailto:mohara@midwest.net)
- City Council Meeting, April 19<sup>th</sup>: Council members will be voting on the transparency in leasing resolution presented to them by the Human Relations Commission. Go to the meeting to show your support!
- Preservation Workshops at the Eurma Hayes Center, April 9<sup>th</sup>: Registration at 8:30 a.m.
  - 9:00 – Conducting and Organizing Oral Histories
  - 11:00 – Designating Historic Properties and Neighborhoods
- The passing of an era – The Hundley House has closed! We are all saddened by the loss of this neighborhood icon. There are “office for rent” signs in the window, so if anyone knows of persons seeking office space...
- We congratulate our neighbor Richard Best on his retirement from SIU. There was a wonderful gala in his honor by his former students, who came from around the country and Canada to perform. For those of us who had the opportunity to attend, it was a real treat. Way to go, Richard!