



October
2009

Bates Hendricks Neighborhood Association

Bates Hendricks Newsletter

Vigilantes Clean Up On Sanders Street

On Saturday, September 26th, Bates Hendricks residents took the law into their own hands. They solved a problem. 422 Sanders is one of the worst houses in our neighborhood. Unfortunately, the high weeds, peeling paint, collapsing porch aren't going to change soon. The city has fined the owner \$7500, but they can't find them. The building can't be demolished. It's not due for seizure for back taxes. Essentially, this house was going to continue to blight our neighborhood. When asked what we could do, a city official replied, "There is no more you can do legally."

So we did something illegal. We cleaned the front yard, tore down some of the porch, weatherized the building, and painted the front exterior. Several neighbors came and thanked us. We had a good time. In less than four hours, we took an eyesore and made it into an example of what people can do when they decide they aren't powerless.

Thank you to Jim, Gordon, Gail, Chris, Mary, and Robyn!



Neighbor Power Conference

**Friday, October 16th and Saturday, October 17th
University of Indianapolis**

The Great Indianapolis Neighborhood Initiative (GINI) is sponsoring a citywide conference for engaged neighborhoods and their leaders. This event begins on Friday, October 16th, with an awards ceremony celebrating some of the most innovative initiatives of the past year and continues on Saturday at 9 a.m. with presentations and workshops on housing, infrastructure, crime, environmental concerns, and other issues. Kevin Johnson, former NBA star and the mayor of Sacramento, California, will be the guest speaker.

Two of the initiatives to be highlighted in the workshops will be from the Bates Hendricks Neighborhood. Both the South New Jersey street transformation and the Dirty Thirty abandoned housing campaign will be presented as effective approaches. The event is open to anyone who cares about their neighborhood. The event is free and lunch will be provided. For more information see the visit online at www.greatindyneighborhoods.org/neighborpower/index.html or contact Shawn Thomas by at (317) 396-0588 ext. 19.

October Meeting Highlights Water and Sewer Issues

On Monday, October 5th, at 6:30 p.m. the Bates Hendricks Neighborhood Association will meet at the Immanuel United Church of Christ at the corner of East and Prospect. Our speakers will include Mike Huber, Director of Enterprise Development, and a member of the Mayor's Infrastructure Commission. While reviewing the city's overall plan for infrastructure repair, their presentation will focus on the serious disrepair of our present water and sewer systems, the Federal government's requirement for their repair, and the possible impact on costs to residents.

As always, we will also have reports from IMPD, the Abandoned Housing Task Force, the Economic Development Committee as well as information about other activities in our neighborhood. Come and be informed and empowered to make a difference.

This newsletter is sponsored by:

Sister's Restaurant Campbell Ventilation Screenmobile

Regions Bank Immanuel United Church of Christ

Dr. Philip Heller, DDS

From the President:

I received an e-mail this month from a Bates Hendricks resident asking who was responsible for the broken security light in her alley. She had called both IPL and the city. They both claimed they weren't responsible. Could that be true? Didn't someone have to be responsible?

I told her she was. The city is responsible for street lights, but not for lights on the alley. IPL offers the security lights on alleys for about six dollars a month to residents.

(I pay for the one behind my own garage and consider it a good investment.) Most of the inoperable lights in our alleys are a result of a resident no longer paying this fee. I suggested she contact IPL and ask to pay for the light in her alley. She said she would.

Our exchange got me to thinking about responsibility. Too often, when there are our problems in our neighborhood, we ask, "Who is responsible?" We assume the responsibility for solving our problems belongs to someone else - the city, the police, SEND, or some outside corporation or foundation. While all of those entities are resources for our neighborhood, I have learned that we are the ones who are ultimately responsible for our neighborhood.

This is our neighborhood and we are responsible.

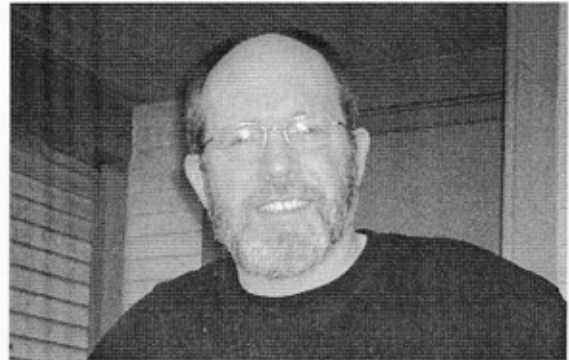
This is easy to forget. Think about the last time you were walking in the neighborhood and saw trash on the street. Did you wish someone would take responsibility for picking it up? Who might they be? The person who threw it down - though responsible - won't. The police can't fine them unless they see them litter. The city can't clean every street. Keep Indianapolis Beautiful will give us trash bags, but they won't pick up the trash. In the end, you and I are responsible to pick it up. If we don't and if we walk past it, we become part of the problem instead of part of the solution. We too become irresponsible.

This doesn't mean we shouldn't expect the city to repair sidewalks and streets, or the police to respond to calls, or SEND to repair houses, or foundations to contribute to our causes. Most of them have some responsibility to address these needs. But none of them are concerned solely about our neighborhood. None of those other people live in our neighborhood. None of them, as much as they may sympathize, have the energy we have to see something happen. They can dodge responsibility. We can't.

This acceptance of responsibility is at the core of much of what we've accomplished these past couple of years. We aren't waiting on the city, or the police, or SEND any longer. This is why we cleaned up the abandoned house on Sanders Street. None of those entities could do anything, but we still could. And we did.

Bates Hendricks is our neighborhood. It belongs to us. We are responsible!

Jim Mulholland



Garfield Park: A Brief History

By Robert Carey

In 1873, the efforts of the Southern Racing Association to bring a horse racing track to the outskirts of Indianapolis failed miserably because of economic turmoil. Hoping to recoup their losses, the investors sold the land along Pleasant Run to the City of Indianapolis. This land was to become the first city owned park – Garfield Park.

In the 1800's, this area – known as Bradley Woods – contained a few houses and farms. On the east side, ran the Shelbyville Road (now Shelby Street) and on the west was the Madison and Indianapolis railroad tracks – whose president was Harvey Bates of which our fair neighborhood is named. However, the land was largely empty prairie.

The “Park” movement that produced New York City’s Central Park had shown how a scenic oasis could beautify a city. Indianapolis native George Kessler, following the lead of New York City, envisioned a great city with many green areas strung together by idyllic waterways. The land on Pleasant Run was to be the first step.

This great park, later to be named for the late President Garfield, was planned for exhibiting large floral gardens and a conservatory that could provide plants to the entire city. The large plot of pastoral prairie on beautiful Pleasant Run seemed the perfect locale for a park.

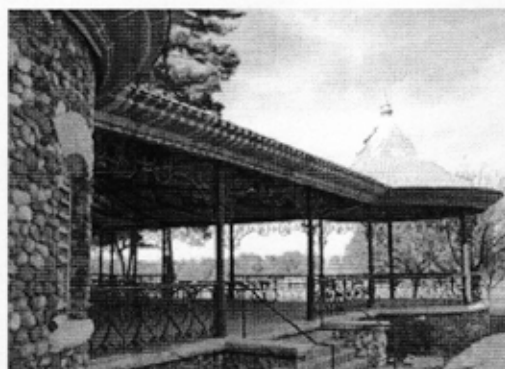
However, there were many critics. It was ridiculed for the price. Opponents said, “It’s laughable to put a park so far from town.” They argued, “There isn’t any way for people to get there.” This was partially true. One had to hitch a horse and buggy and make a day of it. Some sarcastically suggested people could ride there on the new invention called the safety cycle (bicycle).

As the naysayers neighed, Indianapolis moved ahead on building the park. It would take decades to fully complete and truly became successful with the invention of the streetcar. For a pittance anyone could travel down to the great green space. (The south station for the trolley still stands in its original location as a picnic shelter in the southwest corner of the park.)

Over time, the park saw many events and additions. In the park is a statue to General H. Lawton that originally stood at City Hall and was dedicated by Theodore Roosevelt. Another monument memorializes the many southerners who died as prisoners of war here in Indianapolis during the Civil War. It too was moved from its original location to the park. The Family Center was once the Indianapolis Children’s Museum. There once was a small zoo. There are even pictures of a time when Pleasant Run was damned and the park surrounded Lake Garfield. The once maligned park became the jewel Kessler imagined.

Yet time never stands still. In the 1950's, the city was struggling financially again. The Southside had filled with immigrants. Poverty and crime were on the rise. Garfield’s wooden structures had rotted away. There was talk of demolishing the Pagoda.

However, local residents like Majorie Nackenhorst refused to allow the park to disappear. In time, more and more people recognized the asset that we call Garfield Park. Thanks to their efforts we can still stroll in that great green space!



Bates Hendricks Neighborhood Association

The Bates Hendricks Neighborhood Association will work to improve the quality of life of those living in the neighborhood through efforts to assure safety, to maintain or improve the living environment and to enhance the spirit of cooperation and neighborliness among all residents.

We meet monthly on the first Monday of the month at the Immanuel United Church of Christ at the corner of East and Prospect at 6:30 p.m. Annual dues are \$3 for individuals, \$5 for families, and \$25 for businesses. Please mail dues to Emily Vanest, 720 Sanders, Indpls. 46203.

October Calendar

October 3 – Paper Jam, 11 - 3:00 Come to Garfield Park and learn how to fold, cut, and make paper-and even make it soar through the air! You can make and fly paper planes and kites at the Burrello Family Center, make “plantable paper” at the Conservatory, and study the art of paper folding and paper cutting at the Arts Center. You can also make paper instruments and jam along with live music at the Arts Center! Free

October 5 - Bates Hendricks Neighborhood Association Meeting, 6:30 p.m. Immanuel United Church of Christ

October 8 – Book Discussion: "Away" by Amy Bloom, 1:30 p.m. Fountain Square Library. Registration required, call 275-4390 for more information.

October 10 – Worm Bin 101, 10:30-11:30. Garfield Park Conservatory. It's easy to start recycling your food waste; just let worms do the work! Come find out how easy it is to “vermicompost” or compost with worms. Learn what kind of worms to use, how to set up a worm bin, and see a living example. Registration required. \$2.00 Ages 18+

October 10 - Need a Job? Beginner Resumes, 2:00. Fountain Square Library. Adults and teens are invited to learn the basics of formatting and breaking down each section of a resume, what should be included and how to put all the pieces together. This program will be presented by Lisa McDonald of Career Polish. Please call 275-4390 to register for this program.

October 17 - Day of the Dead: Sugar Skulls, 3:00. Fountain Square Library. Individuals ages 5 through adult are invited to celebrate Day of the Dead, which uses ancient rituals from Mexico and Central American to honor the dead and the continuity of life, by decorating a pre-made, molded skull with colored icing, metallic foils, buttons and feathers. Children 5-7 must be accompanied by an adult. This program is presented by the Indianapolis Art Center. Please call 275-4390 to register for this event.

October 29 – Ghoulish Garfield - Oct 29 & 30, 7-9pm - Put on your creepiest costume, and take part in a family-friendly Halloween celebration at Garfield Park! Enjoy goblin games and treats at the Burrello Family Center, creepy crafts at the Arts Center, and get spooked on your tour of the Haunted Conservatory. If you dare! All ages, *some activities will require a fee.*

