

Johnsons Park Neighborhood News

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Johnsons Park Neighborhood Is Going Green!

By UWM Service Learner, Sarah Gribowski

You may be wondering why several of your neighbors have planted those odd-looking gardens in their lawns over the summer. Well don't worry; your neighbors are not landscaping-challenged. In fact, they are part of an initiative led by Milwaukee Riverkeeper, Cheryl Nenn of Friends of Milwaukee's Rivers to reduce stormwater runoff, which is one of the leading pollutants in Wisconsin. By disconnecting their downspouts, which route clean rainwater straight into the sewers, and installing rain barrels and rain gardens, your neighbors are helping reduce the occurrence of sewage overflows after heavy rainfall.

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A newly-installed raingarden at the Drame residence soaks in water.

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Our Vision

We believe in creating and promoting a safe and friendly neighborhood. We will provide opportunities to improve the quality of life for all residents.

Our Mission

We will implement and promote programs and services that foster neighborhood involvement, community growth, and economic and social stability within our community.

We need YOU, NEIGHBOR!!!

How can you get actively involved and engaged in making our neighborhood a connected, safe, and vibrant place to live?

- Participate in JPNA and other neighborhood events
- Attend JPNA monthly meetings
- Get to know your neighbors
- Participate in block watch activities, such as reporting crimes and being listed on our JPNA Phone Tree
- Volunteer to assist with planning neighborhood activities

And the list goes on...

If you would like to become more involved, please contact Mr. Tony Gibson at 414-333-7009.

Raingardens, continued from pg 1

The rain gardens provide a permeable surface area for rainwater to be absorbed back into the earth instead of flowing into the already over-capacitated Milwaukee combined sewer system.

Friends of Milwaukee's Rivers chose the Johnson Park neighborhood because of its strong neighborhood associations, which make projects like this easier to start. The rain gardens were installed in people's yards at no cost to them in hopes that they would serve as demonstrations of how average people can help minimize pollution and preserve the environment. **Liz Drame and her family**, who had a rain garden installed in their yard, were very excited to participate in this project, but they and many other neighbors felt some frustration about how unsightly the gardens actually look. Cheryl explains that in order for the rain gardens to truly serve their purpose, they must be large and composed of native prairie plants that are tolerant to water, deep rooted and resistant to periods of draught. She understands the frustration, but is hopeful that the rain gardens will look better by spring. She truly appreciates everyone's involvement and their patience.

Not everyone received a rain garden due to limited funding, but there are ways to get involved on your own. By sharing plants, you can cut the cost of installing a garden. If you're not ready to commit to your own garden, help a neighbor weed and tend to their garden. Words of encouragement and a helping hand (or green thumb!) will help your neighbors get through this transition period until spring. If you're interested in learning more, here's a great online manual on raingardens:

<http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/water/wm/nps/rg/rgmanual.pdf>

A Dream in Progress: Johnsons Park Agreement Approved by Milwaukee County

At long last our park project is approved! On Sep. 27th, the Milwaukee County Board voted unanimously to approve an agreement with the Urban Open Space Foundation (now called the Center for Resilient Cities). JPNA member **George Lewis** represented the neighborhood at the park on October 18th when County Executive Scott Walker signed a resolution of support. With these two formal approvals in place, our dream of creating a safe, beautiful park moves forward.

The Center for Resilient Cities will be meeting with Milwaukee County Parks to schedule berm (hill) removal for late winter 2008. We'll keep you posted as the time for berm removal nears. With this dream in progress, let the fundraising begin! The Center for Resilient Cities extends **special thanks** to all who signed letters of support, came to testify before the County Board, and showed your support in countless other ways—we couldn't do this without you!



JPNA Member, George Lewis, attended the Johnsons Park resolution signing with County Executive, Scott Walker, and County Supervisor Elizabeth Coggs-Jones.

Johnsons Park Health Alliance: **Active Living in Action**

Have you see us moving about the neighborhood? This year, the Health Alliance has been in action working to create opportunities for neighbors to be active and healthy. Read on, then join us!...

Walking Clubs: This summer, you may have seen the Wellness Walkers in green walking every Wednesday morning at the park. But, if you missed us, you're still in luck! We are walking indoors this winter (see info below) and will be back at the park this spring. Come join us and stay active this winter!

Bike Camp: Active and safe - that was the goal of this 2-week summer bike camp! Youth ages 11-14 learned bike safety skills and took group rides around town. Stay tuned for more on the 2008 Johnsons Park Bike Camp!

Alice's Garden Family Plots: Gardening is terrific exercise! And families interested in growing vegetables next summer can have a family plot at Alice's Garden, along with starter plants, access to tools, and help from experienced gardeners. Alice's Garden is located just across Johnsons Park on 21st Street. Having your own garden is just a few steps away!

If you're interested in any or all of these programs, call Jessie at 414- 727- 2293.

Walk Indoors With the House of Peace Wellness Walkers!

Sponsored by the Johnsons Park Health Alliance

When: Thursday mornings, 8:40–9:30AM.

Where: Milwaukee Renaissance Academy, 2212 N. 12th Street. This is the former YMCA building, not the new one. During winter, we walk in the school gym.

What to Bring: Comfortable walking shoes!

A water bottle is also a good idea. All walkers will receive a Johnsons Park Health Alliance T-Shirt.

Interested? To sign up, please call Jessie at 414-727-2293. (Please do not call the school.)

Renovations at the House of Peace

By UWM Service Learner, Sarah Gibowski

Many of you probably noticed all of the construction happening in and around the House of Peace on West Walnut Street earlier this year, but have you seen the results? I recommend that you take a look inside as you're walking by one day, because the fruits of their labors truly are amazing. The House of Peace has been serving the community by assisting families and individuals in meeting their spiritual, material and emotional needs for nearly 40 years, helping families remain together and promoting self-sufficiency. With monetary gifts from supporters of the House of Peace, a massive renovation project took place that doubled the square footage of this long-standing, community establishment. I walked in one afternoon and was greeted by a pleasant receptionist who buzzed me into the brand-new waiting room, which was spacious, vibrantly decorated and furnished with plenty of comfortable chairs.

As I waited to meet with Brother Mark, the executive director of the House of Peace, I immediately noticed the large and well-organized clothing center, which used to be located in a poorly heated, detached garage. The building is now accessible to people with disabilities, which was a major goal of the renovation project. Brother Mark is relieved now that the newly renovated and expanded interior provides a much safer environment,

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JPNA Resident Meeting

3rd Saturday Each Month

Dates: Jan 19, Feb 16, Mar 15

Place: Northside YMCA (Teutonia & North Avenues)

Time: 9:00 am

Community Planning Council

3rd Saturday each Month

Dates: Jan 19, Feb 16, Mar 15

Place: Northside YMCA (Teutonia & North Avenues)

Time: 10:30AM

Milwaukee Police District 3 Crime Analysis Meeting

Last Thursday of each month

Date: Jan 31, Feb 28, Mar 27

Place: 2333 N. 49th St. (Location may vary)

Time: 6:00-8:00 pm

<http://www.ci.mil.wi.us/DistrictThree373.htm>

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House of Peace Renovations

especially for senior citizens. Plus, the extra square footage provides a free meeting place for civic groups who call in advance to book a room.

Brother Mark is quite proud of the renovations because they truly reflect the dignity of the people who come to the House of Peace for help. He is also very appreciative of the support that you as neighbors have always provided and is proud to be working in a neighborhood full of good people and community spirit. Brother Mark is a very ambitious and busy man, but I'm sure that he or any one of the dedicated employees would be glad to give you a tour of the "new" House of Peace.

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