MERIDIAN STREET FOUNDATION

NEWSLETTER

www.meridianstreetfoundation.org "God Bless You, Mr. Vonnegut" SPRING 2007

FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT

Greetings to all of our neighbors from your Meridian Street Foundation Board: Happy Spring! Although the temperatures are cooler than we would like, and our flowering trees, shrubs, and plants are in jeopardy, it won't be long before we are hearing the hum of Indy cars making their way around the track at the Speedway. And then suddenly, it will be summer.

Ordinarily, our board president, Virginia Handley, would be addressing you in this letter. Unfortunately, Virginia has been ill; therefore, I am writing to you in her absence. She has asked me to extend her thanks to the board, and to friends and neighbors, for their support, prayers, and good wishes throughout this most difficult time. Virginia, we miss you , and look forward to your return. We need your leadership and guidance to help us realize the many ambitious goals that we strive to accomplish!

In spite of near freezing temperatures, our annual Easter egg hunt went as scheduled on Saturday, April 7th, at the home of John and Elaine Klein, 4343 N. Meridian St. Hundreds of treat filled plastic eggs were hidden, only to be found by more than one-hundred eager and enthusiastic children in record-breaking time. A special thanks to Elaine Klein, and all who helped her make this a fun and memorable event for all of our young families.

This year, your Meridian Street Foundation Board continues to lay the groundwork to create a northern gateway into our historic neighborhood. We hope to obtain the cooperation and support of the City of Indianapolis and its Departments of Planning, Transportation and Parks. We further wish to gain the endorsements of the Meridian Street Preservation Commission, Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana, and of course, the neighborhood communities of Butler-Tarkington and Meridian-Kessler. We feel that it is imperative that we work as an integral group, with combined resources and common vision. We are steadfast that this goal shall become a priority to each of us as we collaboratively embrace this challenge and bring it to fruition. For more information, please refer to the Fall 2006 MSF newsletter, Alice Carter Park Update, which you may view at www.meridianstreetfoundation.org; or you may contact Kathy Shorter at (317) 931-1935 or kathyshorter@gmail.com.

Whether you agree or disagree with the outcomes of the decisions to not allow Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church (4011 N. Pennsylvania St.) to become a charter school, and the denial of the most recent proposal for the north section of Crown Hill Cemetery to be developed as something other than a cemetery, it is noteworthy that our fellow citizens are interested and proactive in these important transitions. These are decisions that ultimately affect all of us and our neighborhoods. Whatever the final outcomes might be, we can be assured they will not be arbitrarily decided or without challenge.

It was only a couple of weeks ago that a reading of Kurt Vonnegut's book *Palm Sunday* was held at his childhood home (4401 N. Illinois St.), presently owned by Melissa and Vaughn Hickman. We are saddened by Mr. Vonnegut's passing, and are proud of our fellow Hoosier and former neighbor for all of his literary achievements and notoriety.

Be on the watch for upcoming MSF events:

- We are planning the annual summer picnic.
- We are organizing a fall "garage sale" to benefit Alice Carter Place Park.
- A future "Upstairs/Downstairs" home tour is under consideration.
- Our Annual Meeting will be held in October.

Thanks to a grant from Keep Indianapolis Beautiful, you will begin to see the planting of fifty deciduous trees along Meridian St. They will not only add beauty, but will also have ecological benefits.

If you are not currently a member of the MSF, please consider joining us soon. We need your help and support. You are always welcome at our meetings.

Enjoy the good spring weather – that I am sure will be here soon, and the blossoms that have yet to bloom. And have a safe and fun summer!

John Peoni
Vice President

Watch for further info

Two events to fund our North Meridian Gateway Project (aka Alice Carter Park) in September and/or October, 2007.

MERIDIAN STREET FOUNDATION

5354 N. Meridian Street Indianapolis, Indiana 46208

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2-4-6-8! WHO DO WE APPRECIATE?

By Peggy Sabens, Editor

I am an unabashedly avid Butler fan. Where can one go almost every night of the year to a lecture, play, musical event or guest speakers at very little or no cost? Where can one go many times during the year and see some of the finest basketball played "the Butler way" anywhere? Where can one attend or send family or friends to one of the finest colleges anywhere? All this is right on our doorstep at Butler University. Call Butler at 940-8000 and ask to be placed on the mailing or email list for event announcements. Also we were pleased to learn that Butler is joining with IPS in helping to mentor and instruct students at the reopened Shortridge High School (Rah, Rah) starting in 2008 or 2009. They have just completed a magnificent health and recreation facility. At present membership is limited to students, faculty, staff and alums, but at the end of the summer they will evaluate whether they can extend membership to the neighbors (that's us). There is much more I could say about this great neighbor, but I hope you find out for yourself.

GO DAWGS!

BUTLER NEWS

By Marlyn Strawbridge

Superintendent of Indianapolis Public Schools (IPS) Dr. Eugene G. White will provide the keynote address at Butler University's commencement ceremony scheduled for Saturday, May 12, at Hinkle Fieldhouse. Graduation is open to the public.

On April 13, the university hosted 450 students from around the Midwest for the 19th annual Undergraduate Research Conference, a full day of research paper and poster presentations. Topics as wide-ranging as "The Sexual Attitudes and Behaviors of College Students," Is it True that an Orb Pattern on a Windshield Means the Occupant was Unbelted During a Collision?" and "Analytical Analysis of Schubert's 'Die Liebe Hat Gelogen'" were presented.

Butler's Alternative Spring Break and YMCA sponsored trips that allowed students to participate in meaningful service activities during their spring breaks. Thirty-six students and three faculty members visited rural New Iberia, La., to help with Hurricane Rita rebuilding efforts. They worked at different sites to clear one residential area of debris and to begin building and painting a new house at another. Butler also sent 38 students to Mandeville, Jamaica, where, among other activities, the students helped in an orphanage.

Upcoming Events

Butler Theatre closes its 2006-07 season of comedies April 18-22 with Steve Martin's "The Underpants," a broad satire adapted from a story about German life before World War I. Show times are 8 p.m. April 18-21 and 2 p.m. April 21 and 22. Call (317) 940-9247 or go online at www.butler.edu/theatre/current.aspx for tickets.

Butler Ballet closes its 2006-07 season with the comic love story "Coppélia," April 20-22 at Clowes Memorial Hall. Show times are 8 p.m. April 20 and 21, and 2 p.m. April 22. Tickets are available at the Clowes Hall box office, (317) 940-6444.

And it's your last chance to catch "The New Solar System" at Butler's Holcomb Observatory and Planetarium. The show is presented, rain or shine, from 8:15-9:15 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays through the end of April. Telescope viewing of Uranus, Neptune, the moon and various star clusters follows from 9:15-10:15 p.m., weather permitting. Doors open at 7. For more information, call (317) 940-8333.

Editor's note - just a sampling.

AROUND THE BLOCK

By Helen Oguinn

You may have spied the business changes in the neighborhood. Dramatically, the old Atlas building is gone and the new structure that will be Fresh Market is beginning to crop up out of the ground. At 56th and Illinois, Gary Thrapp is expanding into the old Dog Food shop, and we are all holding out hope for another ice cream shop in the former Baskin-Robbins location (Graeter's, Cold Stone Creamery: Where are you?)

At 49th and Penn, Hoaglin's has moved out and the Barking Dog Café, popular downtown at City Market, has moved in. Two doors down, Clubhouse Cuts for Kids offers haircuts, pedicures and manicures for kids and adults, plus the shop carries organic skin care products for babies, as well as gifts, such as Thomas the Tank and stuffed animals for youngsters. Welcome to all!

Alexandra Planje, daughter of Ted Planje, is graduating from Denison University with a double major and is considering a career in philanthropy.

Kathryn Crabb, a Park Tudor student and daughter of David and Ellen Crabb, is heading to Northwestern University this fall.

Martin University conferred an honorary doctorate of Humane Letters on neighbor Marion Stuart, founder of Stuart's Moving and Storage. Elements restaurant, co-owned by another enterprising neighbor, Greg Hardesty, has been chosen to represent the Colts in Taste of the NFL. Last but never least, Neil Handley, who has been commended in the Butler University magazine for his help and friendship to Butler Scholarship contributor M. G. Blackmon.

We welcome Ann Rosebrock as the incoming senior minister at Meridian Street United Methodist Church starting 7/1/07. We will miss John Wantz and his family who have been neighbors for nine years.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Meridian Street Foundation News & Views published three times a year is the communication arm of the Meridian Street Foundation, a 501C3 not for profit neighborhood association. We welcome comments and ideas from our neighbors. Our main thrust is to reinforce the idea that while a certain degree of discipline and commitment is necessary to live in a unique and significant neighborhood, the rewards far outweigh any disadvantages. Peggy Sabens ph. 257-3741, fax 475-0224, email jmsabens@indy.net

John Peoni, Raul Burciaga, Phil Cox, Kathy Shorter, Vaughn Hickman, We will gladly accept letters or comments for inclusion in upcoming issues.

SAFETY TIPS

Because of recent abductions in daylight hours,refresh yourself of these things to do in an emergency situation... This is for you, and for you to share with your wife, your children, everyone you know. After reading these 9 crucial tips, forward them to someone you care about. It never hurts to be careful in this crazy world we live in.

1. The elbow is the strongest point on your body. If you are close enough to use it, do!

2. Learned this from a tourist guide in New Orleans. If a robber asks for your wallet and/or purse, DO NOT HAND IT TO HIM. Toss it away from you.... chances are that he is more interested in your wallet and/or purse than you, and he will go for the wallet/purse. RUN LIKE MAD IN THE OTHER DIRECTION!

3. If you are ever thrown into the trunk of a car, kick out the back tail lights and stick your arm out the hole and start waving like crazy. The driver won't see you, but everybody else will. This has saved lives.

4. Women have a tendency to get into their cars after shopping, eating, working, etc., and just sit (doing their checkbook, or making a list, etc. DON'T DO THIS!) The predator will be watching you, and this is the perfect opportunity for him to get in on the passenger side, put a gun to your head, and tell you where to go. AS SOON AS YOU GET INTO YOUR CAR, LOCK THE DOORS AND LEAVE.

a. If someone is in the car with a gun to your head DO NOT DRIVE OFF, repeat: DO NOT DRIVE OFF! Instead gun the engine and speed into anything, wrecking the car. Your Air Bag will save you. If the person is in the back seat they will get the worst of it. As soon as the car crashes bail out and run. It is better than having them find your body in a remote location.

5. A few notes about getting into your car in a parking lot, or parking garage:
A.) Be aware: look around you, look into your car, at the passenger side floor, and in the back seat

B..) If you are parked next to a big van, enter your car from the passenger door. Most serial killers attack their victims by pulling them into their vans while the women are attempting to get into their cars.

C..) Look at the car parked on the driver's side of your vehicle, and the passenger side. If a male is sitting alone in the seat nearest your car, you may want to walk back into the mall, or work, and get a guard/policeman to walk you back out. IT IS ALWAYS BETTER TO BE SAFE THAN SORRY. (And better paranoid than dead.)

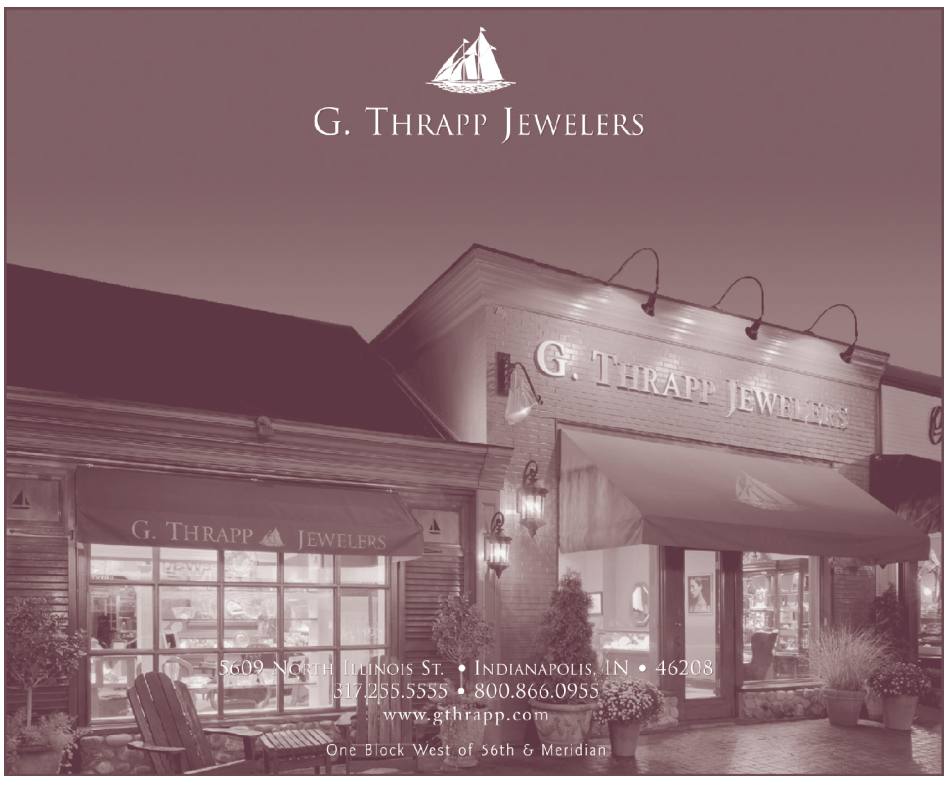
6. ALWAYS take the elevator instead of the stairs. (Stairwells are horrible places to be alone and the perfect crime spot. This is especially true at NIGHT!)

7. If the predator has a gun and you are not under his control, ALWAYS RUN! The predator will only hit you (a running target) 4 in 100 times; And even then, it most likely WILL NOT be a vital organ. RUN, Preferably ! in a zig -zag pattern!

8. As women, we are always trying to be sympathetic: STOP. It may get you raped, or killed. Ted Bundy, the serial killer, was a good-looking, well educated man, who ALWAYS played on the sympathies of unsuspecting women. He walked with a cane, or a limp, and often asked "for help" into his vehicle or with his vehicle, which is when he abducted his next victim.

9. Another Safety Point: Someone just told me that her friend heard a crying baby on her porch the night before last, and she called the police because it was late and she thought it was weird. The police told her "Whatever you do, DO NOT open the door." The lady then said that it sounded like the baby had crawled near a window, and she was worried that it would crawl to the street and get run over. The policeman said, We already have a unit on the way, whatever you do, DO NOT open the door." He told her that they think a serial killer has a baby's cry recorded and uses it to coax women out of their homes thinking that someone dropped off a baby He said they have not verified it, but have had several calls by women saying that they hear baby's cries outside their doors when they're home alone at night.

Please pass this on and DO NOT open the door for a crying baby ----



IMPD Metro North Contact Information

3120 E. 30th Street 327-6100 (main)		
Major John Conley	327-6991	c2495@indygov.org
Capt. Donald Bee (Days)	327-6152	b4587@indygov.org
Capt. Robert Turner (Late Tact)	327-6112	t6861@indygov.org
Day Shift		
Lt. John Pridemore	327-6133	p6778@indygov.org
Lt. Timothy Motsinger	327-6133	m0710@indygov.org
Day Tact NRO Unit		
Lt. Albert Hauck, Jr.	327-6139	h4340@indygov.org
Sgt. George Burge (Community Relations)	327-6168	b1148@indygov.org
Sgt. Mark Dorsey (Supervisor)	327-6132	d4397@indygov.org
Sgt. Scott Brimer		b5645@indygov.org
Catherine Moore (Crime Watch)	327-6168	m1433@indygov.org
Middle Shift		
Lt. Terry Eden	327-6165	e5559@indygov.org
Late Tact NRO Unit		
Lt. Christopher Mosier	327-6165	m1674@indygov.org
Late Shift		
Lt. Pat Commiskey		c3825@indygov.org
Detective Unit		
Lt. Brain Clouse	327-6106	c0494@indygov.org
Community Prosecutors Office		
Mike Price (Prosecutor)	327-6116	mprice@indygov.org
Anne Rinker (Paralegal)	327-6115	arinker@indygov.org
Christopher Warren (Family Advocate)	327-6114	21015@indygov.org

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CONGRATULATIONS, BUTLER-TARKINGTON NA – 50 & COUNTING

By Neil Handley

The Meridian Street Foundation would be derelict if it did not recognize the important historical fact that the Butler-Tarkington Neighborhood Association (BTNA) attained what no other neighborhood association in the United States has: Survived 50 years of "continuous" service to our community.

Saturday, March 17, was the date for the black-tie celebration. Held at the Reilly Room at Butler University, it was attended by nearly 100. Truth be told, there were moments of doubt, but someone always stepped in to provide the necessary glue to keep the group together, namely Dr. William Cupp, first elected president, Dr. Robert E. Henderson, president twice for total of five years, and Steven R. West, president one year before becoming our City-County Councilman. Steve was more than glue. He was the Epoxy-man, leading by example and exhaustive hard work.

Those living east of Meridian Street may be unfamiliar with BTNA. BTNA borders extend north from 38th Street to the Canal and west from the middle of Meridian Street to Michigan Road. In short, BTNA protects our Western Front. Without BTNAs staunch defenses against commercial encroachment, zoning/code violations and blight, the cumulative demands upon MSF would be staggering. At the moment, all seems "Quiet on the Western Front" now that the Crown Hill Cemetery development plan was voted down by the Metropolitan Development Commission.

BTNA germinated from a seed planted in the minds of Frances and Dr. Alexander "Mel" Moore when they attended a Jewish Community lecture, circa January '56. This lecture was followed by a neighborhood social event (bi-racial) where others attending expressed concerns about loitering at the commercial node, 40th and Boulevard, vacancies and flight to the suburbs. The Moore's foresight and initiative brought forth the first official meeting at 110 West Hampton Drive, home of Rev. Fredrick and Marjorie Williams.

Dr. Moore and Rev. Williams became the first co-chairmen of the Butler-Tarkington Neighborhood Committee. Dr. Moore was Principal of Crispus Attucks High School and Rev. Williams was Canon of the Episcopal Diocese. Others at this founding meeting: Dr. Roland and Alice Usher, 169 W. 44 Street and Lowell, M.D. and Elaine Thomas, 28 W. Hampton Drive. Dr. and Mrs. Moore, in '58, lived at 330 Harvard Place. At the next meeting, Louis and Odessa Hill, 3824 Rookwood Ave. joined the Committee, Louis as Secretary…Louis, was a teacher, coach at Crispus Attucks.

(I) dotting, (t) crossing meetings followed every other Friday evening, 8:00 p.m. at North United Methodist Church. Attending those meetings was a group of graduate students and Professor William Biddle, Director for the Community Dynamics Institute at Earlham College. The Institute's purpose was to, according to Director Biddle, "find means for stabilizing the neighborhood, possibly as a model for other sections of the city which may be suffering from urban blight or the threat of blight."

Like most organizations, a crisis of sorts becomes the catalyst that brings large numbers of people together. Tarkington Park was that catalyst for BTNC. Commercial expansion threatened to turn the park into a parking lot. BTNCs efforts via meetings with the Parks Department plus collecting over 800 signatures on a Partition requesting retention of the park as a playground SUCCEEDED.
Accolades to those who have served and who are now serving to protect, preserve and promote the causes of BTNA and MSF. Both serve similar purposes and fill particular needs, which go towards making our community more livable. It is especially noteworthy that volunteers staff both BTNA and MSF boards and committees throughout the histories of both associations. Lets hear it for volunteers!

The above may reflect what American historians, Will (1885-1981) and Ariel Durant (1898-1981) were quoted as saying, "History is mostly guessing, the rest is prejudice." I have tried to select snippets of what are considered facts, not guesswork. Readers' choice. Article by Neil S. Handley, former Collector of BTNA History, BTNA/MFS resident since '67 and spouse of Virginia.

Above: Mayor Bart Peterson and Callie Sanders, president of BTNA

Left: Mrs. Phillis West

Historic Vonnegut/Hickman Home for Sale

4401 North Illinois Street, Indianapolis

Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.'s childhood home was designed and built in 1923 by renowned Hoosier architect Willard Osler for the Vonnegut family. This stunning Arts & Crafts home is nestled on one of the few remaining wooded lots in the much-desired Butler-Tarkington neighborhood. Current owners, Vaughn and Melissa Hickman, have blended the best of the home's past with all the comforts needed for a family today.

This home features: Three stories with full basement • Four bedrooms • Three full baths and a powder room • New kitchen with hardwood floor and stainless steel appliances • Hardwood floors throughout entire house; fully restored • Original rook wood tiles throughout the first floor • Original leaded-glass windows; fully restored • Original oak woodwork throughout; fully restored • Third floor carpeted family room • Screened-in back porch • Sleeping porch off master bedroom • Heated, two-car garage • Central air, gas-fired boiler and heat pump • Slate roof fully inspected and repaired • Brand new copper gutters • Partially wooded one-half acre lot with mature trees and landscaping • Original cement fish pond; fully restored and operational with lots of fish • Lots of extras too numerous to mention here.

To schedule a private showing of the historic Vonnegut/Hickman Home please call Lorraine Price today at 317.722.4350 (office), 317.549.5107 (cell) or 317.638.8343 (home office).

EASTER EGG HUNT

By Elaine Klein

Remember three to four years ago when the temperature was so-o-o warm that the chocolate in the eggs started to melt. Well, we did not have that problem this year! The Meridian Street Foundation 7th Annual Easter Egg Hunt was a huge success despite the very cold weather of 30 degrees and very windy! We had 105 adventurous children oblivious to the freezing temperature to join in the hunt, but the adults were not quite as enthused. We had hot chocolate and coffee to warm up the crowd and cookies to give energy for the hunt. The bubble machine actually quit due to being "frozen"!! The make-your-own kite and make-your-own flower were a little neglected due to the cold temperature, but we will save them for next year when it has to be warmer!

Huge thanks to Stacey McCarthy for personally "stuffing" 750 eggs and providing crafts for the hunters. Also big thanks to Alice Berger, Ted Planje, Cindy Zweber Free, Linda Gilman, Neil Handley, and Qwen Harvey for passing out flyers! Also many thanks to Ann and Rich Rich, Linda Gilman and son Adam, Roberta Lamberson, Emily Burke, Jennifer Hendrian, Laura Daly and daughter Allison, and Alice Berger for helping on the very very cold day of the Hunt!

Editor's Note - And a great big thank you to John & Elaine Klein for hosting this fun event.

Ophthalmologist Richard Rich eyes the frozen bubble machine

"PALM SUNDAY" ON PALM SUNDAY

The boyhood home of Kurt Vonnegut in our Meridian Street Foundation neighborhood was filled with his fans including his cousin, Richard Vonnegut, thanks to Vaughn and Melissa Hickman, the current owners, who opened their home for this event. We were all captivated by the beauty of the home built in 1923 which has been lovingly cared for by its owners. In the sunlit two story gathering room guests were welcomed by the Hickmans and introductory remarks by Angie Mulholland, librarian at Spades Park Library. Then the participants read excerpts from "Palm Sunday", Mr. Vonnegut's autobiographic novel about his German ancestors and his early years in Indianapolis. Many stories were shared about personal remembrances and thoughts about the author. Those present were of all ages, came from all walks of life and many parts of Indiana.

Kurt Vonnegut: 1922-2007

Interior Pictures of The Vonnegut/Hickman House

"I don't know what it is about Hoosiers, but wherever you go, there is always a Hoosier doing something very important there" - Kurt Vonnegut

MEMBERSHIP SPRING 2007

By Alice Berger

Our spring membership drive has been amazing! Thank you to all who have renewed their membership and to all our new members. Your, tax deductible, membership dues are the reason we can have this wonderful newsletter, the Easter Egg Hunt, Ice Cream Social and parties to gather the community together. Your generosity makes it possible to work on safety issues, a walking tour and a gateway to the historic district. Because of your membership dues we can pay for Calling Post to give you immediate notice of events and crime watch information, pay for beautification such as our River of Flowers, Christmas decorations, Lawn of the Season, and much, much more

If you are not a member, please use the enclosed membership envelope to send in your dues. Don't forget to include your email address and phone number.

Some of our members go above and beyond when sending in membership dues. They generously become Benefactors by giving $100 and more, sometimes much, much more. As a special thank you to our Benefactors, we are going to start a benefactor list to be included in each newsletter. If your name appears incorrectly, please email me at sharp2577@aol.com with the correction. If you are a Benefactor and your name is not on this list, email me so I can be sure it will be in our next newsletter. Or call me, Alice Berger, 283-2453.

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This list is in order of checks received. Some benefactors ask that their name not be included.

FIRST LADY CHERI DANIELS URGES WOMEN TO HAVE A HEART TO HEART

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (January 30, 2007) – February 2, 2007 was National Wear Red Day- a simple, powerful way to help the American Heart Association raise awareness of heart disease and stroke. First Lady Cheri Daniels encourages all Hoosiers to wear red, whether a red handbag, red tie, red scarf, or red dress pin, to raise awareness of the risks of heart disease and to support leading a heart healthy lifestyle. Daniels will not only wear red, but will also to turn the Governor's Residence red by illuminating it in red light. Effective February 5, 2007, the Governor's Residence will "Go Red" to put women on red alert.

"We turned the Residence blue in support of the Colts, so when the American Heart Association asked if I would turn the Residence red to put women on red alert and help raise awareness of heart disease, I instinctively said yes," Daniels said. "Heart disease takes too many precious lives each year. It's up to us to tell the women we love about the risks of heart disease and to encourage them to live heart healthy lifestyles."

Heart disease, the number one killer of women, takes more lives each year than all forms of cancer combined. Half of all women will be affected by heart disease at some point in their lives. Sadly, most women are not aware of this staggering statistic.

Daniels is also participating in heart healthy events, issuing several public service announcements, and continuing her heart to heart program to entice women to take a "Heart to Heart" pledge. Daniels continues, "Heart to Heart encourages women to have heart to heart conversations with each other about heart disease. Let's all help remind the women we love to work out, eat right, and stop smoking. Let's ensure the women we love live healthier, longer lives."

For more information about heart disease and First Lady Cheri Daniel's Heart to Heart pledge, visit www.hearttoheart.in.gov.

BEAUTIFICATION

By Stacey McCarthy

Spring had sprung; tulips and daffodils came to life, then just before Easter, mother nature decided she wasn't quite ready for us to come out of hibernation. As I write, winter continues to linger longer than expected. Hopefully, within a few weeks we can enjoy the sunshine without the low temperatures. We definitely found ourselves with plenty of snow in the winter season.

Glories of the Snow –The little purple blooms up and down Meridian looked so refreshing.

PLEASE: Do not to put broad leaf weed killer or mow over the foliage until it dies off on its own (mid-May). Many bulbs were buried in the salt/snow too long & didn't make it. Another order will be placed for the fall. Email if interested…

2) Keep Indianapolis Beautiful Grant- We're excited to share that KIB has granted 50 trees to MSF to plant along Meridian!

**Mark your calendars:

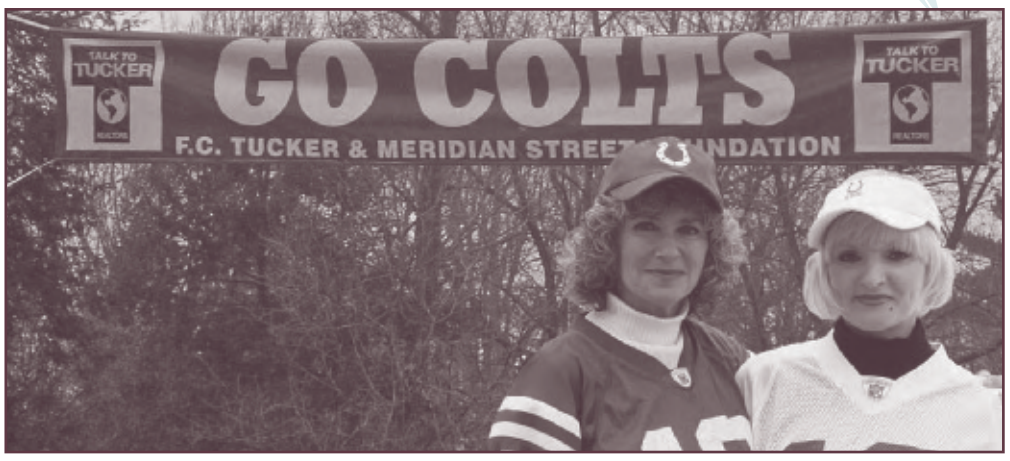
- Meeting for Planting Locations: June 16, 2007, 9:00 am (5655 N. Meridian)
- PLANTING DAY: October 20, 2007, 9:00 am

VOLUNTEERS are needed for the Planting Day!! 50 people to plant 50 trees!!

**Pitch in lunch for volunteers…Great way to meet neighbors.

Lawns of the Season: Take a look at three great lawns chosen this past winter. Thanks for your efforts in decorating & keeping your lawn neatly manicured, throughout the seasons. Due to the inclement weather, Spring/Summer 2007 awards will be announced in June 2007.

4420 N. Meridian-Wayne & Rees Olander-Seen from Meridian and Hampton, the historic windows of the Olander home were donned with gorgeous holiday wreaths on the East & West sides. Red bows, garland, & white lights tastefully wrapped their garden's wrought iron arbors and lamp posts . Since living in their home for 10+ years, the Olanders' passion for gardening combined with assistance from Naturescape Lawn & Landscape Care...and Rob Dury, mowing, has resulted in a lawn for many to admire. A side note, after their stop sign was hit many times, at their own risk, the Olanders re-painted their own worn



Ella Tunnell and Alice Berger celebrate the Indy Colts!

out curbs. Talk about going above and beyond ! We like their passion for beauty and safety! Way to go!

5008 N. Meridian-Earl Townsend- 'Santa and his sleigh' have been parking in front of the Townsend home for at least 40 + years during the holiday season. Lots of history accompanies this life size seasonal décor. Being a city wide attraction to the neighborhood and coveted by many, one year Santa was stolen from his sleigh! Fortunately, a desperate plea from the family made sign guilted the 'Bah Humbug' prankster and Santa was returned by Christmas. Children giggle with excitement when they see this well lit, life size Santa, his sleigh, & 9 Reindeer. Rudolph's brightly lit, Red Nose certainly completes the enchanting experience for those traveling through Meridian Land during the holidays. As one of the neighborhood's favorites, 'many thanks' go to Mr. Townsend & his family for weathering many storms and continuing such as neat tradition. We are honored to have such a treasure in the neighborhood.

5417 N. Meridian-Kevin & Karen Kelly Brightly colored bulbs neatly light the grand evergreens on the hilly, front lawn of this home. Beyond the pilasters of this Red Brick Colonial, festively colored ornaments, lights & ribbons dress large, wreaths which are hung across the front of the home. Wreaths and garland adorn the wrought iron gate. All details complete. The family has resided in the home since May 1995. The lights have been their project, but they've had help from Lemke Landscape keeping the lawn and landscape in top shape. These evergreens haven't always been easy. Previously, their evergreens died and since were replaced with the current more mature trees similar to the older trees in the neighborhood. They strive for a matured landscape which complements and is appropriate for their historic home. Thanks for your efforts! Great Job!

Colts' Décor- The Colts' achievements fueled the efforts of a few crafty neighbors who created the "Go Colts" letters placed in the grass at the North & South end of the Historic District just before the playoffs. While mainly seen during the day, the glittered "Go Colts" & bows which adorned the Historic Plaques, were featured at the beginning of a local news segment on City wide support for the Indianapolis Colts'. Great idea for quick turn around from Sunday to Sunday! The Patriot's certainly knew we were on board.

Thanks to the efforts of F.C. Tucker that donated a more professional looking banner for the neighborhood to show our organized support prior to the Super Bowl. In addition, Ella Tunnell funded the purchase of 144 flags which were placed on all lamp posts with Zip Ties.

Special Thanks to the Volunteers who hung the flags for 5-6 hours in the cold.

Nancy & Gary Whitaker rented a truck, bundled up, & worked as a team for hours placing flags on the northern half of the lamp posts along Meridian. Laura Daly & Stacey McCarthy teamed up and put flags on the South half lamp posts along Meridian.

Fortunately, the FOUR were able to get all 144 done the Friday before the huge snow storm hit.

Note: Pictures of homes lost in digital land

To make complaints to the IMPD Traffic Enforcement web page on a regular basis:

http://www.indygov.org/eGov/IMPD/Enforcement/Traffic/traffic-problem.htm

ALICE IN MERIDIAN LAND

By Alice Berger

Considering we are an historic community, I'm surprised most of us have little memory of our past. Few remember the people who came before us and fought the good fight to preserve this wonderful neighborhood. Some have no idea how close our homes came to becoming apartment buildings or businesses, unaware this was not always a desirable location. I'm going to take this opportunity to tell you about one of the pioneers of preservation who certainly deserves our appreciation and remembrance.

Her name is Jane Nolan. She lived in our district for most of her life, growing up in Meridian Kessler as Jane Ransel. She married John DeVoe, who also grew up in Meridian Kessler. He was a founder of the Indiana Pacers as well as president of the franchise when he died at a Pacer game in 1968. In 1970 Jane married Alan Nolan and moved into Alan's big old house at 4118 N. Pennsylvania in the Meridian Kessler neighborhood. With her three children and Alan's five, they needed every inch that house and carriage house had to offer.

Alan was deeply involved in the effort to protect Meridian Street from commercial encroachment, and because of the historic significance of Meridian Kessler, what could be a more perfect home and community for Jane? Alan helped fight the battle to create a state law designating our neighborhood an historic district and the creation of a commission to insure its preservation.

Jane, who has a Master's degree in history, taught at Broad Ripple High School and worked with Weintraut & Nolan, Historians Inc. between 1988 and 1998. She was involved in conducting oral histories, designing historical exhibits and preparing National Register nominations. In addition to numerous entries for the Encyclopedia of Indianapolis, she and Linda Weintraut also wrote two books: "In The Public Interest" and "Pioneers in Banking."

When I met Jane, she was involved in research for the "Main Stem," a book about Meridian Street. I found her to be warm and interesting, with a passion for preservation and a love of her community. From then on, anytime I had a question about our history, I knew just who to call.

From 1997 until 2006, Jane was a Commissioner on the Meridian Street Preservation Commission, a volunteer position that is both rewarding and difficult, rewarding because one is helping to preserve history, difficult because your vote is not always popular. Jane served on the MSPC during one of the most notorious times in its history. She was always well informed, professional and staunchly supportive of the preservation law. She gave freely of her time and energy to this community we all love.

After 34 years, Jane moved from her beloved community, but not without leaving her footprint in the history of the Meridian Street preservation area and in the hearts of those who know her. Let us all say a little thank you to Jane and all the others who made sure our homes are still standing, and ask ourselves what footprint we will leave behind.

Thanks to Jane Nolan

CLOUDS OF WITNESS

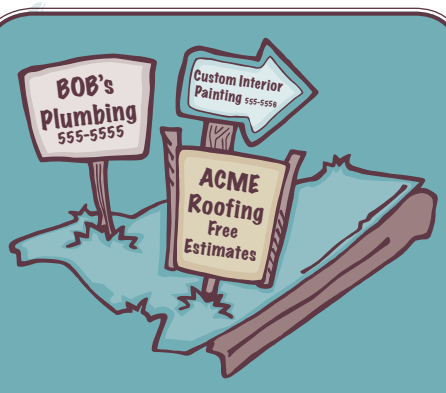
Mardenna J. Hunter, age 96, died recently. She wasn't a neighbor but was one of the last descendants of Joel Wright. Who is Joel Wright? For those of us who have read our properties' deeds Joel was the original recipient from the government in 1816 of the 80 acre tract on which many of our neighborhood homes have been built. In his last will and testament (tradition says he fell off a chair and shattered his leg) he states "due to my desperate condition I will not survive many days" he bequeathed all his property to his wife and children. He was not an old man with many small children, they say. Over the years the Wright family became the Emsley Johnson family of which Mardenna was a member. Mardenna was a student of genealogy and was said to have traced her ancestors "back to Adam and Eve". Get out your deeds and read the interesting history of the early years of the Meridian Street Foundation. Mardenna was a lifelong Indianapolis resident, attending Butler University where she met her late husband, Curtis Hunter. She was a friend to many, and was very supportive of many social and philanthropic activities in the city. She is survived by 3 children and quite a few grandchildren. She was active until her final illness.

NEW NEIGHBORS / OLD NEIGHBORS

Named from Left to Right

David Stahl
Kevin McCarthy
Jim & Peggy Sabens
Julie O'Brien
Meredith Mitchell

Also Present (Not Pictured)
Lance Mitchell
Denise and Bruce Courdingley



Contractor Signs

Neighbors, ask your contractors to advertise in your newsletter rather than in your front yards. This will help our neighborhood both financially and visually.

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SPOTLIGHT ON LAURA DALY

'Thank you' is often an afterthought when volunteers make things happen. Forgetting that a person is doing something for 'you' for 'free' is easy to do. Criticism comes much easier especially from bystanders who don't see behind the scenes. Reaching those who aren't already involved means doing something different to reach those people. Laura Daly knows how. One of her mottos is "Enthusiasm is Contagious…"

In 2005/2006, Laura Daly joined the MSF Board. At the time she was relatively new to the neighborhood, but full of enthusiasm. Laura, her husband, Jeff, and their two girls purchased their home at 4375 N. Meridian in 2004 and moved in, summer of 2005. With a degree in Art History, past experience volunteering for many non-for-profit organizations, and recent experience as a mediator, Laura brought some invaluable experiences and talents to MSF. As a new board member, she agreed to Co-chair the Social Committee and be on the Beautification Committee. Within a few months, her co-chair had to resign from the board due to other obligations. Without being asked or pushed, Laura took on the challenge as Social Chair. During her year as Social chair, Laura not only executed MSF's previous annual events , such as Annual Easter Egg Hunt, The Annual Meeting, & the Holiday Party, but Laura built upon these events by adding a new flavor to each event. Her hopes were "reaching new people" to join the alliance and aligning all neighbors. "Mom's night out" before the annual Easter Egg Hunt sparked enthusiasm amongst neighbors. In addition to the hunt, Laura came up with the idea to have a "craft" for the children. At least 100 children attended the Egg Hunt and the craft seemed to be enjoyed by all.

The "Ice Cream Social" was put together to share the plans for Alice Carter Park. Crafty plant displays raised awareness of other efforts of MSF for neighbors who didn't regularly attend MSF events or faithfully read the newsletter.

"Gingerbread House Building"-An idea, Laura embraced from one of our members, in hopes of pulling in new neighbors to the alliance. Even new neighbors who didn't even have children to bring came to join in the fun. What a success!
"Holiday Party"-From start to finish, Laura handled planning, decorating, catering, & even stayed to clean up. A creative event with a "Feliz Navidad" theme, drew new neighbors to join in this social event.

One would ask, "Did any of these events contribute to new members or create interest amongst new people of our current efforts? How many more people have joined the MSF alliance and will be willing to support future efforts made by MSF?" It would be hard to say that these events did not reach new people; therefore, strengthening MSF's alliance. The long term vision for Alice Carter Park, traffic calming, etc. will happen. But every amount of support will be needed from neighbors to make it happen.
Unfortunately, Laura has become very busy with her own personal obligations and will no longer be able to take on the task of making all of these things happen in 2007. Her enthusiasm and creative mind, as well as abilities to mediate challenging situations, is a huge loss within the organization. While Laura had committee members helping her execute these events, it was her persistence and patience that ultimately completed the jobs.

Side note: During the time Laura was doing all of these things for the neighborhood as Social Chairman, she also played a huge part in Beautification, etc. In addition, she & her husband have completely renovated their Historic Home's interior, mostly themselves. They have revealed History within their home that was once covered up & lost. Their beautiful home will be featured on the 2007 Meridian-Kessler Home Tour as well as the 2007 Crossroads' Guild Holiday Home Tour. Last year, even though she didn't know me well, Laura was the only neighbor who offered to help me, who had a new baby and was at the tail end of renovations, be prepared for the MKNA home tour.(A wonderful event which contributes to the prosperity of our neighborhood.) Laura not only helped, but spent an entire week of her time working with me. She brought countless coffees, lunches, dinners, decorating tips and items, etc.

Thank you, Laura, for all of your efforts and time. You have made a difference!!!
Good luck! S.M.

CRISTO REDENTOR

We were fortunate this winter to go a full circle around South America. One high light was seeing the Cristo Redentor or Christ the Redeemer standing with his arms outstretched atop Corcovado in Rio De Janeiro. Standing 125 feet tall, it is the work of a team of artisans headed by French sculptor Paul Landowsky and was completed in 1931. Since then it has been competed with Sugarloaf for the title of symbol of Rio. Many passengers who had been there several times had not seen the upper part of the statue because of the cloud cover. As you can see, our prayers were answered for our visit. South America is a beautiful and diversified continent. We would highly recommend this for a winter cruise. Richard and Ann Rich.

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A ROOF IS A ROOF IS A ROOF....

By Josephine Banks

As you all know roofs have become very noticeable in the area for the past year of so. New slate roofs of multip-colors, shingle roofs with their variegated little grey squares, copper roofs shining like a mosque or Russian basilica dot the landscape. I've never really paid that much attention to roofs, but walking my dogs and watching workmen busy replacing them at all hours of the day - and night over the past year has made me consider the importance of roofs.

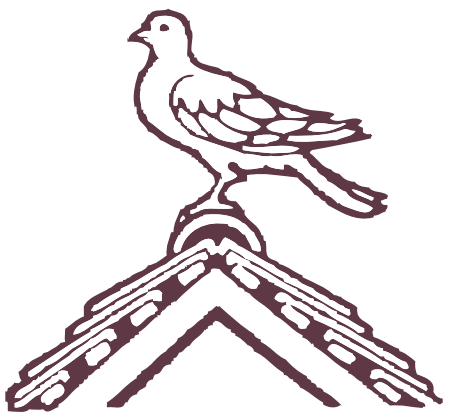
Generally roofs around our neighborhood here are not generally used for anything other than as covering to keep out elements – and look good. However, around the world roofs have many more uses. They can be sleeping quarters in the summer, symbols of venerations to the god of one's belief, places for gardens, or even a holding area for various utilities to name a few.

This last usage is one I know quite well. Because it takes a lot of pressure to get water to rise in high buildings, water is stored in water towers atop the roofs to provide water for the upper floors. I never knew this until one morning a number of years ago the fact dropped – quite literally -- on me. I was standing my shower letting the hot water run through my hair and when I open my eyes I saw feathers on the bottom of the shower stall. At that time I owned a little bird, Sunday, who I used to let fly around the apartment at night. Thinking something had happened to her, I jumped out the shower to search her out! But there she was in her open-doored cage munching on seeds.

Happy about Sunday but puzzled – and still wrapped in a towel --I went back into the bathroom to check out the feathers. They were grey. I look up at the showerhead and saw a tiny feather sticking through one of the spout holes in the showerhead. I turned on the bath faucet and more feathers come out. By this time I felt really creepy, my skin was starting to burn. I got on the phone to the superintendent of the building. He came up, looked, and professed ignorance. (Surprise! Surprise!) The building agent followed. After him came the plumber. Finally the health inspector was summoned and after a week of investigation (and me showering at friends), he checked out the water tank on the roof. To his triumph and my dismay and disgust, he found the remains of the couple of decayed pigeons!!! -- A poor nesting choice I'd say.

You may wonder what this has to with the new roofs in our neighborhood. What could bring up this incident to my mind? Quite simple. One day as I was out walking my dogs looking up at our Easter-Bonnet-Parade of new roofs –gabled, gambrel, hipped, shed, flat --, I noticed one of those large imitation owls people around here use to ward off varmints perched atop a barrel-slated red roof. Wondering who had put it there and why, I kept passing by the house until I caught the owner weeding her garden. When I enquired about the owl she said the roofer had put it there to keep pigeons off the roof!!!

I'm not sure that 'a roof is a roof is a roof ' makes quite the same point as Gertrude Stein's pun on Shakespeare: "A rose is a rose is a rose is a rose….". But judging from my experience in New York and my neighbor's precautions in Indianapolis I would venture to guess that it might. I believe I finally I have the answer to the ultimate connection that binds all roofs throughout the world together – the common pigeon!!!!



REFLECTIONS ON 100 YEAR OLD HOUSES

By Kathy Shorter

My husband Fred and I spend a lot of time in Maine, where we are part of a vacation community that is also "historic." Because many of the homes in New England have lasted over 200 years, it has provided us additional perspective on the subject of adherence to historic preservation "rules." It reminds us that the care given to our Meridian Street area homes that are approaching age 100 is critical if these homes will ever be enjoyed a century from now.

A Maine publication, Down East Magazine, featured this subject in its March, 2007 edition. The following summarizes key points that were made in one article:

Old houses are built with fine materials. It is important to maintain these materials. If the materials are well maintained, they will last. The expense comes if they have been neglected.

There is a mindset that is required of old house owners that requires long term, not quick-fix thinking. People need to adjust to the house, not the other way around.

Remember what attracted you to the house (like your spouse) in the first place. Resist the urge to change everything.

Try very hard to "do nothing." Live in your house for awhile and appreciate its historic qualities. Resist the urge to get a dumpster and start ripping things out.

Resist the urge to replace windows. New windows almost always look out of place on older homes. Window companies are way too anxious to replace, not repair. People are usually compromising quality in a big way when they replace their wooden windows. Getting your windows repaired and restored is generally a much better idea all the way around.

Beware of energy efficiency ideas that trap moisture and are ignorant of old house quirks.

Get to the root of a problem---don't just fix a symptom. For example, find out why the paint is peeling. It is probably a moisture issue.

Resist the trends of today's lifestyle. Do you really need a bathroom for every family member or an addition that belongs in suburbia?

Have a maintenance plan for your house, just like you would for your car. Be patient, and repair, don't gut. You can never replace what you have lost.

If you would be interested in reading the entire article, reprints are available from:
Mr. Anderson from Down East
toll free 1-800-766-1670 for $9.^{00}.

Note: Copyright did not allow us to reprint entire article.

A WORD ABOUT OUR NAME

Some have questioned why we are the "Meridian Street Foundation". Blame it on some well meaning and forward looking residents of this neighborhood back in the 1960's or before. When the very future of this area was in question, the Meridian Street "Foundation" was formed. Later in the mid-80's this organization was resurrected and is active to this day. Under the name of the MSF, we applied and obtained a 501C3 status so that all funds donated could be tax deductible and we do not have to pay sales tax, etc. A "foundation" to many people's minds conjures up some type of stuffy and archaic group who sit around in smoking jackets. This is not further from the truth. The Meridian Street Foundation is a very up to date, forward looking and friendly not for profit neighborhood group serving the mission of the MSF as repeated in each MSF newsletter issue.

MERIDIAN STREET FOUNDATION

ALICE CARTER PARK/HISTORIC NORTH MERIDIAN GATEWAY UPDATE

Yes! The City of Indianapolis has given the nod to most of MSF's vision for the area that includes Alice Carter Park and the north entrance to the historic district. The Alice Carter Park design that committee chairman Brent Harvey and his team have developed over the past couple of years with Indy Parks/Ball State/our neighborhood is now officially in the City master plan. Work is being done now with Department of Public Works and others to finalize additional plans, including a landscaped center median where Meridian is 5 lanes wide. All of these improvements are going to help slow traffic, connect neighbors, and encourage walking and bike riding. In addition, the improvements will beautify the neighborhood and celebrate our history.

Now what? We are moving into a new phase, which will be securing final approvals and funding the project. Although some public funds will be available for this project, it will largely be paid for through grants and contributions from individuals and organizations.

As we move into a new phase, committee chairmanship has changed. The new leadership will be Cindy Zweber-Free and Kathy Shorter. They will be greatly assisted by the MSF board and the Alice Carter Park/Gateway Committee. As always, if you have interest in this exciting project, your creative energy and active participation would be most welcome! Contact Cindy at 921-9571 or Kathy at 931-1935. Email: czwebfree@aol.com/kathyshorter@gmail.com.

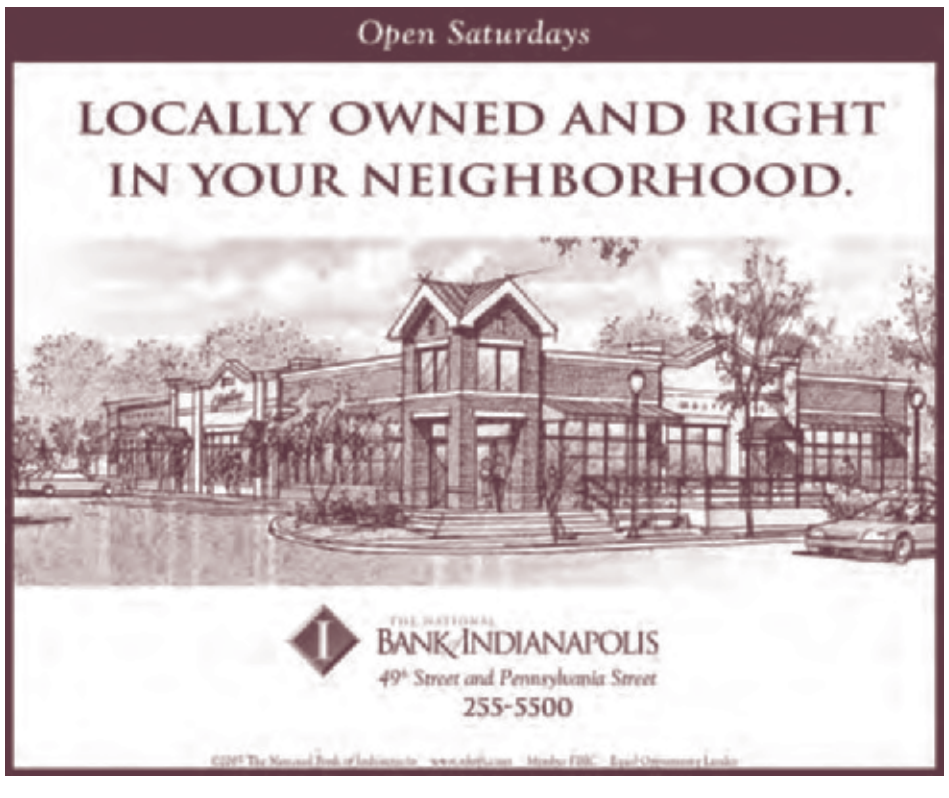
Be watching for more information over the next couple of months!

RACEHORSES AND ROSES

By Jim Sabens - reprinted from the 1989 News & Views

During the running of this year's Kentucky Derby, a commentator said it was appropriate that a blanket of roses to be to the winning horse since it is said that all of nature's creations, man has successful improved on only two -- the Racehorse and the rose. However if you ask anyone who has tried to raise either of these. They will tell you that in exchange for larger and more consant bloom, the modern rose must be cared for almost like babies since it is so sensitive to weather and disease. Racehorses bred for speed with spindly legs which barely support their large bodies, can easily shatter their frail legs

By the same token, for many years I often wondered why with all the advances in chemistry, physics, engineering and materials handling, that there was never any change in the basic family home. Many of us realize the homes in the Meridian area are treasures. They seem to represent what he majority of people consider "homes" and I wondered about why this heard interview with Witold Rybczynski (yes, that's his real name), and architect. Author of The Most Beautiful House In The World, {which I recommend to all of you). Selfish cities like Los Angeles in which everything is turned inward-away from other people-just sort of isolated without "fitting in" or belonging. A house is part of its site where it can be part of the site and from which the inhabitant can view his site. No one can improve on the embodiment of the human body, entrance is the mouth, entry is the heart, rooms of to both sides are arms and legs and this is what people feel most comfortable with. Said we can inhabit boats or caravans and even now space stations (how appropriate on the 20th anniversary of man's landing on the moon), but all of these lack the specificity of a fixed place. A building is part of a setting but also a place from which the setting is observed, everyone loves commodity, firmness and delight. An auto is object in a landscape, a building becomes part of the landscape, hence a landmark. Buildings like cars have doors but to enter a home is to arrive at a special place. Building is part of the landscape but also protects against natural elements; states that any room only when natural light comes from 2 sides of a room can glare and harsh contrasts be avoided must have natural light. When no natural light and no view a room is disagreeable.



REAL ESTATE ROUNDUP

By G.B. Landrigan, Realtor

Even if one were not a dedicated reader of real estate-related news items, it would be difficult to dodge the latest national and local statistics. News from the coasts and very large metropolitan cities is quite distressing. The Indianapolis area, normally a region of subtle appreciation, has also seen a fall in the number of sales and sales prices. Interestingly, however, we have noticed a better market absorption rate since early March. And, as always, the Meridian Street Foundation area continues to show reasonable strength in comparison to the metropolitan area as a whole.

All information from the Metropolitan Indianapolis Board of Realtors for the period 1/1/2007 to 4/17/2007.
More detailed information is available in The Landrigan Quarterly which can be downloaded at www.landrigan.com

North Meridian Street
Number of Homes on the Market: 11
Average List Price: $836,133
Number of Pending Sales: 2
Number of Closed Sales: 2
Average Sales Price: $294,250
Note: The two closed sales were for smaller homes. The two pending homes are in the $700-$850,000 range.

North Pennsylvania Street
Number of Homes on the Market: 7
Average List Price: $504,185
Number of Pending Sales: 3
Number of Closed Sales: 3
Average Sales Price: $756,166

North Illinois Street
Number of Homes on the Market: 8
Average List Price: $367,649
Number of Pending Sales: 2
Number of Closed Sales: 3
Average Sales Price: $408,000

East-West Cross Streets
Number of Homes on the Market: 6
Average List Price: $382,250
Number of Pending Sales: 5

DID YOU KNOW?

Back in the 1950's and 1960's, no one wanted the big old houses on Meridian Street. The houses in Butler Tarkington and Meridian Kessler were still selling but not the "oversized" mansions on Meridian. By the middle of the 1960's, it looked like the N. Meridian Street corridor would become commercial like Meridian Street south of 38th Street. When Tarkington Tower went up at 40th and Meridian, the Meridian Street Foundation and the residents of the area knew they must take action.

Property owners from 40th Street to the canal appealed to the state to create legislation to form the Meridian Street Preservation Commission. The protective legislation, passed in 1971, requires property owners to get "Certificates of Appropriateness" from the Commission for exterior changes to their properties. The MSPC can stop attempts to change the single-family residential character of the street or alter the houses and landscaping in ways unsympathetic to their historical appearance.

The residents gained further protection when the North Meridian Street Historic District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The "Main Stem" (copyright 1992 by Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana) says of Meridian Street: "North Meridian Street's future as an Indianapolis showcase appears secure. The city's most publicly observed neighborhood, Meridian Street presents an attractive image of Indianapolis to passerby and residents, a pastoral garden where country and city, past and present live together harmoniously."

The very first chapter of the Meridian Street Preservation Statute, created in 1971 by the Meridian Street Foundation and this community, states: 36-7.11.2-1 Section 1.

(a) The purpose of this chapter is to preserve: from deterioration; from improperly conceived or implemented change; and for the continued health, safety, enjoyment, and general welfare of the citizens of Indiana; a historic, scenic, esthetically pleasing, and unique part of a street lying within Indianapolis constituting the backbone of a unique residential area.

(b) The general assembly intends, by passage of this chapter, to:
(1) encourage private efforts to maintain and preserve that part of the street and other similar streets and areas in Indiana;
(2) promote orderly and proper land usage; and
(3) preserve significant tourist attractions of historical and economic value in Indiana; by limiting and restricting unhealthful, unsafe, unaesthetic, or other use of unique areas that would be inconsistent with their character as tourist attractions and the general welfare of the public.

Alice Berger, Commissioner, MSPC

KEEP POSTED

Since our Meridian Street Foundation newsletter is issued only three times a year and we have many activities and items of interest to our neighbors, we want to keep you all informed so----Please let us know your phone #'s and email addresses so we can keep you up to date on what's going on in our neighborhood. Be assured this will be used only for MSF business and your information will be kept confidential. If you haven't given your contact information, call Alice Berger at 283-2453 or email sharp2577@aol.com or Peggy Sabens at 903-8839, 257-3741 or email jmsabens@indy.net or Sheila Little at onelastnerve@gmail.com.

OUR MISSION

MERIDIAN STREET FOUNDATION

The Meridian Street Foundation is a charitable (501C3) foundation originally organized in 1960. The Foundation's chief purposes are the maintenance and improvement of existing health, safety and ecological standards, and the preservation of the architectural, historic and aesthetic significance of residential North Meridian Street and the neighborhood in which it lies.
Please Note: We live in the North Meridian Street Historic District, governed by the Meridian Street Preservation Act of 1971, administered by the Meridian Street Preservation Commission. Before undertaking any changes in structure or usage of your property, please check with either the MSPC or the Land Use Committee of the Meridian Street Foundation.