MERIDIAN STREET FOUNDATION
NEWSLETTER
meridianstreetfoundation.net
"IF WINTER COMES, CAN SPRING BE FAR BEHIND?"
WINTER 2008-9

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Hello Neighbors and Members of the Meridian Street Foundation. Happy New Year!

I, Stacey McCarthy, am your new President for 2009. I am honored to accept this position for the Meridian Street Foundation. I can only promise to do my very 'best' as we continue to preserve the integrity of the Meridian Street Foundation and the neighborhood. I have served on the board since 2005 and prior to that worked on the Alice Carter Park Committee. My husband and I moved to Indianapolis 8 ½ years ago from Alabama. While my husband, Kevin was born in Indianapolis, moved away, and came back here for the last year of high school, I am basically a transplant. We bought our home on Meridian St in the Fall of 2004 and took on a major restoration project of our home. We were quite green going into the process of Historic Preservation. I have always liked the character of older homes and have always enjoyed reviving something old. This home had at least 8 different owners. Over the years, many things were done to the home inappropriately and did not align with the simple, modern architecture of the home with emphasis on clean lines and curves. Looking back, I am thankful to the Meridian Street Foundation's Land Use committee as well as the Meridian Street Preservation Commission. Both steered us down the right path in our efforts to reveal the true beauty of our home. We realized that changing 'everything' was not 'how' to do it. Hence, I became passionate about the neighborhood and committed to the cause. I do have a three year old son, Mac and a 1 year old daughter, Mary Claire. Because of them, I admit to you upfront that I am very busy and am not perfectly organized all of the time. All of that being said, whether the need is Land Use, Public Safety, Traffic Calming, Taxes, or Beautification, the efforts put forth by the Meridian Street Foundation maintain our property values and work to improve our quality of life. By collaborating with other neighborhoods, such as MKNA and BTNA as well as organizations such as 'HARMONI', the Meridian Street Foundation is working toward these basic reasons most people choose to live where they live.

Our Annual Meeting took place November 11 at Woodstock Country Club. Thank you goes to Meredith Mitchell and Ryan Fisher who have once again been hosts for a lovely social, yet educational event. Nelson Price, Gary Chilluffo, and Joan Hostetler presented "Indianapolis, Then & Now". Their book, magnificent photos, and presentation beautifully merge the history of our city and our neighborhood; a great way to tie into the purpose of the Meridian Street Foundation. I would also like to thank our Public Safety Committee chairman, Sheila Little and our visitors from the IMPD. Ben Hunter and IMPD Chief Allender graciously addressed concerns about the recent crime activity in our neighborhood. Keeping neighbors abreast of specific public safety concerns creates a safer environment for everyone. At our Annual meeting, MSF also wished our longtime neighbor, volunteer, and friend, Alice Berger the best as she moves out of the neighborhood. As John Peoni mentioned in the newsletter last quarter and at our meeting, Alice has been tireless in her efforts to protect our neighborhood's integrity. MSF will always be thankful for your efforts and our neighborhood will forever be changed because of you. The good news is that Nancy Whitaker has taken Alice's position as Membership Chairman. On behalf of the Meridian Street Foundation, Nancy Whitaker and Neil Handley have been nominated as candidates to be a Commissioner for the MSPC.

**Nancy and her husband Gary have also been responsible for revamping our website. If you haven't visited the website, take time to see the improved www.meridianstreetfoundation.net.

December marked our first New Board meeting and was called 'Back to the Basics'. Reviewing MSF's history, purpose, our operation as an organization and the fundamentals of each committee was a great way to prepare for the New Year and get our new board on the same page. We will fine tune our 'goals' at a 'strategic planning session' on January 10. Elise Heslin, who has a fantastic attitude, professionalism, and tenure in our neighborhood has accepted the role of Vice-President. Fortunately, Raul Burciaga and Lisa Haynes-Whorley return as secretary and treasurer respectively. We welcome first time board members Ann Thompson Brock, Tim Button, Neil Handley, Gaylon Melton, Kristy Sherman, and Rob Sloan. In addition, we are excited to have our returning board members Beth Deane, John Countryman, John Failey, Linda Gilman, Bertie Lamberson, Sheila Little, John Peoni, Elaine Klein, Nancy Logan, Meredith Mitchell, Ann Rich, Peggy Sabens, Nancy Whitaker, and Cindy Zweber-Free. Each of you brings unique perspective, tenure, experience, and passion for historic preservation and / or our neighborhood. Passion is what drives many of us to volunteer time away from our busy lives.

Despite times of financial crisis, many homes in our neighborhood have continued to sell, yet many are waiting to be embraced by someone new. Continuing to maintain and to restore our homes according to the Preservation law makes each of us 'stewards' for our homes. Homes in a historic district have at least 20% greater value than the same size homes in other areas. Hopefully, you are pleased to have such an investment, especially during a time when many homeowners in our country do not. Stay tuned for more to come on taxes this year. Thank you for generously supporting the Meridian Street Foundation. We hope you will join us for a great 2009. I look forward to working for you.

Respectfully,
Stacey McCarthy

MERIDIAN STREET FOUNDATION

5354 N. Meridian Street Indianapolis, Indiana 46208

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UPCOMING EVENTS FOR MSF

- **March 25, 2009 - Adult night with 1000 eggs** @ 5655 N. Meridian
  - bring a bag of candy/stickers/trinkets
  - help us fill eggs for the hunt
  - refreshments provided
  - 7-9 pm RSVP: stacey@themccarthy.com

- **APRIL 11, 2009 - Annual Egg Hunt** @ 4343 N. Meridian
  - 3-5 pm RSVP: beheslin@aol.com

- **May 20, 2009 - Tree Planting on Meridian**
  - neighborhood volunteers needed to help plant in teams
  - notice will be give to neighbors if selected as a planting site
  - 100 total American Elm, Sycamore, & Red Oak trees planted
  - one of several Lilly day of service/KIB/HARMONI projects
  - 9am-1pm meet at Governors' residence, equip provided
  - RSVP: bedeane56@hotmail.com
- June 14, 2009 - Summer Picnic @ 4266 N. Pennsylvania
  - 4:30-7pm RSVP: beheslin@aol.com

- **October 13, 2009 - Annual Meeting**
  - Location & Time: TBA

- **November 2009 - Bow prep for 'Sponsor a lamp post':**
  -Date, time, location TBA
  -317-903-8839

MERIDIAN STREET FOUNDATION
9th annual neighborhood
EASTER EGG HUNT

A tradition dating back to the 1950's when the Governor of Indiana Sponsored an Easter Egg Hunt on the lawn at 4343

At 3:00 pm, Saturday, April 11, 2009. Preschool and elementary children. On the front lawn of the Old Governor's Mansion, 4343 North Meridian Street

Bring your own basket and camera for photos with the Easter Bunny

$3.00 donation at the door-Space Limited!
Parking on 43rd Street or Hampton Drive
RSVP Required Elise Heslin beheslin@aol.com or 694-8855
Rain or Shine or Snow

MSF WEBSITE

Nancy Whitaker, Website Chair

Did you know that MSF has a website? If so, have you logged on lately? Besides having a page which houses the up-to-date reference materials for the Meridian Street Preservation Commission (MSPC) for filing applications to the Commission along with the Design Guidelines, the website is useful for finding the names and email addresses for the current MSF Board of Directors along with those for MSF committees and their members.

Recently a new page has been added which lists local, state and federal governmental officials along with phone numbers and a direct link to each official's website. You just click on the link and you go straight to the official's website. (To try this, go to the MSF website (www.meridianstreetfoundation.net) and click on the Site Index and then click on Governmental Contact Information). We will continue to expand and update this section in the future.

Do check out the Site Index to see all the items on the Website. Did you know that if you happen to misplace the membership envelope which comes with your Newsletter, you may print a membership form from the site to use with your own envelope? There is also a Calendar of Events on the home page for checking the dates and times of MSF Board meetings, MSPC meetings, social events, etc. And, as many of you know by now, the complete copy of the "Main Stem: The History and Architecture of North Meridian Street" is on the website for viewing at your convenience.

Did you attend the 2008 MSF annual meeting? Check under the Event Photo page and see if you happened to get "caught" in a picture! We try to post photos from all our social events on the site.

We also have a page on the Website which gives a copy of front page from the MLS listings for homes currently for sale on N. Meridian St. in the primary preservation area. Click on the FOR SALE icon in the upper right corner of the MSF home page or find this page under the Site Index. This page is updated at least bi-weekly or as homes sell or come onto the market.

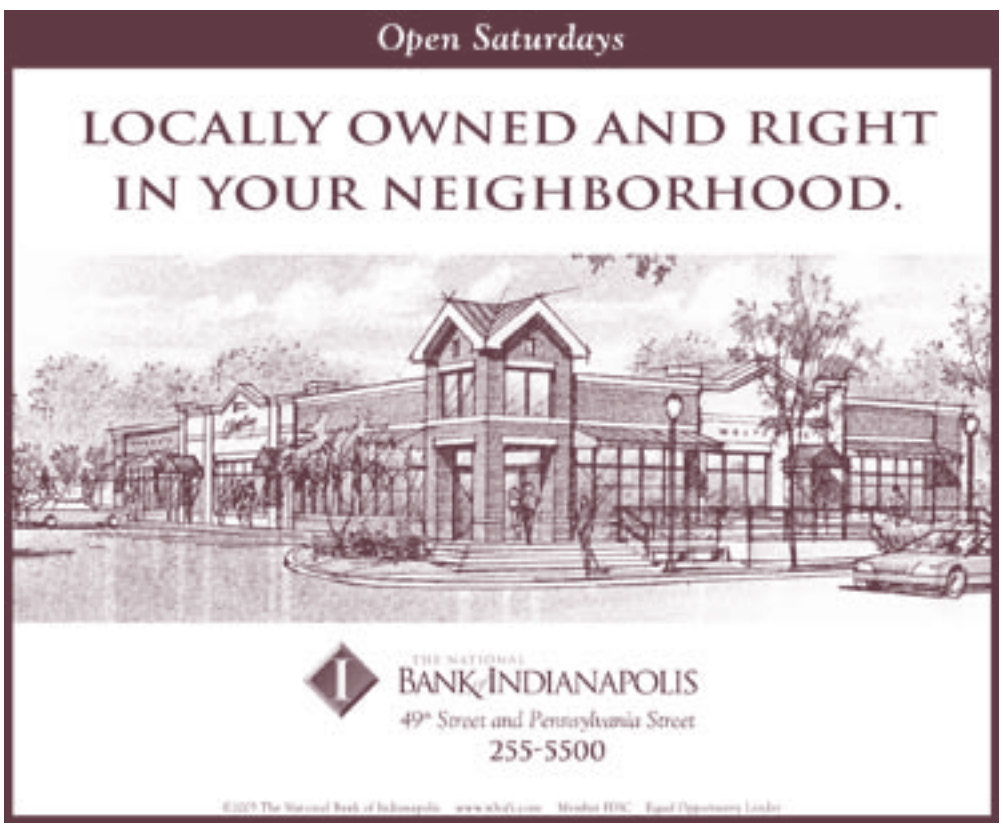
For those of you who are interested in statistics on the MSF population as compared to the rest of Washington township and Marion County, check out the 2004 Meridian Street Preservation Area Plan on the MSPC home page (www.meridianstreetfoundation.net/mspchome.html).

Please contact the Webmaster (whitakergww@yahoo.com) or the Website Committee Chair (whitakerng@yahoo.com) for any input or questions. And keep checking the site periodically for new developments.

"Man makes a living from what he gets--

He makes a life from what he gives--

Winston Churchill



A TOUCH OF ITALY

By Abe Aamidor – Article and pictures reprinted with the kind persmission of the Indianapolis Star

One of the most remarkable attributes of our Meridian Street Foundation homes and neighbors is our inclusiveness. We are on view without apology or embellishment to passersby and each other. In addition we are always willing to open our homes to benefit various community organizations and causes. Recently neighbors Dr. Richard and Ann Rich opened their home for the 20th Easter Seals Crossroads Annual Holiday Home Tour in early November. We are reprinting with the kind permission of the Indianapolis Star some pictures featured in the Sunday Star along with a picture of the Riches' exquisite rose covered dining room table for the event. Also on our

website www.meridianstreetfoundation.net you can find more pictures from the article. We commend the Riches and so many other like minded and caring neighbors who selflessly share our irreplaceable pieces of history with others.

Ann Rich says she and her husband, Richard, bought so much during a trip to Italy 20 years ago you might just say they "went crazy."

But the bounty of such madness, if that's what it was, is proudly on display

inside their historic North Meridian Street home. On one wall, there's an original oil painting of doves with matching mosaic tile done by a Vatican artist. A 24-inch, green glass rearing horse figure is on a pedestal near a window with southern exposure.

Such accessories fully complement their home, which also features crystal chandeliers, heavy draperies with full valances throughout, and an assortment of Italian and French provincial furniture.

The home, built circa 1929, includes original parquet wood flooring and a formal wooden staircase and balustrade to the second floor, as well as all original interior doors, which appear to be made from walnut.

All of the doors and the railing have a medium finish, which makes the house look less heavy than it might otherwise.

The Riches bought the house about five years ago and soon began major renovations. The screened-in back porch already had been fully enclosed with a series of French double doors.

But the couple added a third bay to the two-car garage, and then converted the attic above it to a room, with two new windowed dormers, for visiting grandchildren.

The blacktop driveway and large paved area in back of the house was completely torn up and converted into a courtyard. Blacktop was replaced by manufactured stone pavers; new trees and other landscaping were planted at the edges; and a large pergola with seating also was installed.

Laying stone instead of new blacktop or even concrete was mandatory, Ann says. "It had to be done with something interesting. It's such a big space."

They also went through a total kitchen overhaul. Instead of trying to make things sleek and modern, they tried to re-create a rural French country manor kitchen, at least in part.

The kitchen features a deep copper sink, paneled cabinets with a medium stain, and even a hand-painted hood over the commercial-grade stove. The refrigerator is hidden behind wood panel doors.

Weathered-looking new tiles line the backsplash, adding to the country feel. Only the red granite island can be considered a concession to modern design.

"It went with the house," Ann explained.

A showpiece in the front parlor is a grand piano they bought used years ago. It came complete with an interesting

story.

"A young couple had it from their mother and they didn't want it," Ann said. "The story was that Liberace played it. Their mother was involved in the symphony."

Upstairs, the master bedroom has been converted into a master suite by knocking out part of the wall separating two bedrooms.

The smaller of the two bedrooms now is a sitting area.

Older homes generally had far less closet space than what has become the norm in recent decades. They also combined the closets from the two rooms so they now have a substantial walk-in closet.

They also finished the basement; it now features wide tongue-and-groove pine paneling along one wall, stained glass over the cellar windows and a wet bar at the foot of the steps. It all adds a lodge-like feel to the space.

The exterior design of the home is hard to categorize. It features a full stone facade, but also a strong Arts and Crafts influence in the eaves, which have a significant overhang, with sturdy-looking brackets, and a swoopy, concave shape to parts of the roof itself.

There's even an Art Deco-influenced bas-relief creation, half frog and half winged scarab, carved into one exterior wall.

A very tall hedgerow lines the sidewalk along Meridian Street in front of the house. This cuts the view, but has one major advantage, says Ann.

"It gives me a front yard," she said.

Editor's note: The Rich home will be part of the Easter Seals Crossroads Annual Holiday Home Tour, but the upstairs will be closed to visitors.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Meridian Street Foundation News & Views published three times a year is the communication arm of the Meridian Street Foundation, a 501(c)(3) 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@att.net

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

AROUND THE BLOCK

By Helen O'Guinn

As we say goodbye to '08 and welcome '09, we also welcome a number of new families, including Gary and Kristy Sherman, who bought their home more than two years ago but have spent their first holiday season there. The couple spent two years renovating the home, a project that included a new master bedroom, kitchen, and family room. The two have four young children: Anna, Cross, Sam, and Cooper. Drew and Janet Warner, along with their two young daughters, Martha and Emma, moved to Meridian Street from Pennsylvania Street. Although the couple looked in the suburbs, their love of old homes kept them in the neighborhood. Other new families include the MacDonalds, the Williams, and Gaylon Melton and Len Pilarski.

MAPLE ROAD "VISIONING"

By Michael McKillip, President, MRDA and Kathy Shorter, President, HARMONI

Maple Road Development Association, HARMONI, and surrounding neighbors north and south of 38th Street are working together with partners at the Department of Metropolitan Development on a "re-envisionment" of the 38th Street Corridor between the IMA and the Fairgrounds. Many have been concerned that the original objectives of the project to improve Maple Road/38th Street (such as connectivity of neighborhoods, traffic calming, and economic development) have not yet been completed.

A large group of neighbors from areas surrounding 38th Street and community resource people met in early October for a 2 ½ hour "visioning" session. This group defined the following

"TOP 10" focus areas for the visioning process:

Lifestyle/Retail

Public Transportation

Building Community

Green Spaces

Housing

Walkability and Bikeability

Public Safety

Neighborhood Resources

Great Schools

A 2 ½ hour session on December 4 drew together 35 people to begin discussions regarding Lifestyle and Retail, specifically at 38th and Illinois and at 38th and College intersections. Bob Wilch and Kathleen Blackham of the planning division of DMD presented materials on a similar corridor in Columbus, Ohio that had been transformed. Kathleen also showed 70 slides of the corridor as it is today---leaving the judgment of which areas were positive and which were not to the eye of the beholder.

With that inspiration, groups worked intently to define possibilities for each of the areas.

Exciting ideas such as a Midtown "center of town", anchored by North Church and Tarkington Park, were discussed and sketched on aerial photographs. There was considerable consensus among the ideas presented by various groups.

The next session will be held at North Church on Thursday, January 8, 5:30-8pm. Pizza and drinks are provided. Please come prepared to work hard, and make sure that you tell others who would be interested.

The first step in transformational change is defining a collective vision. Defining this vision will be helpful in pursuing zoning changes, establishing district design guidelines, and in attracting public and private investment dollars to this corridor.

Left to right
Brian Williams, Bob Wilch,
Kathleen Blackham, Adam Garvey

Left to right
Netetia Walker, Tom Gallagher, Clara Warner,
Caroline Farrar, Sarah Larkin

There will be a monthly session for the next several months to work on this vision and ultimately sub area plans. Please email kathyshorter@gmail.com or mmckillip@callcarpenter.com if you would like to be on the mailing list for future meetings and to receive notes from these meetings. Your thoughtful participation is encouraged.

Next session: January 8, 5:30-8pm, North United Methodist Church

OUR 30 MINUTES OF FAME

-Peggy Sabens, Editor

By the time you read this the former and current presidents of the MSF John Klein and Stacey McCarthy along with yours truly will have had the opportunity to showcase "our" neighborhood on Nelson Price's live Indy History radio show on 88.7 fm Saturday, December 27, 2008. We hope to have had a calling post to let everyone know of this event and also will endeavor to get a tape of the program for those interested to hear. We are very appreciative of Mr. Price and his staff allowing us this exposure. Please let us know if you want to hear the interviews or have any comments. Cell 903-8839 or jmsabens@indy.net.

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WELCOME BACK BENJAMIN HUNTER

By Sheila Little

Benjamin Hunter, who previously served as our IMPD North District Community Liaison, was installed as the Butler University Director of Public Safety and Chief of Police on November 10, 2008. In addition to representing District 21 in the City Council, he was a sergeant and training academy instructor for IMPD.

I had an opportunity to ask Ben a few questions about his new position at Butler and his goals for interaction with our community:

What are your goals for BUPD this year?

"My immediate goal is for BUPD Officers to become more visible on campus and the surrounding neighborhood. As our primary responsibility is to protect the campus, we have many students, faculty and staff that live in the Butler-Tarkington and Meridian Street Foundation area. It's important to have a pro-active law enforcement agency working in this area to protect the community.

My secondary goal is to increase "community-policing" efforts by our officers. Attending student and faculty functions on a regular basis and attending neighborhood meetings will be a priority. BUPD will be placing together a bi-weekly E-Newsletter in the near future that I will invite the greater BTNA and MSF residents to join."

What will you enjoy about your new job?

"I am going to enjoy working on the Northside again. I have known many residents and Butler staff over the years from when I was in IPD's Community Relations office. The environment on campus and the surrounding neighborhood made this an easy decision in accepting the job."

Does Butler support community policing -crime watch?

"Butler University has a rich history in working with communities and I want to contribute to that. BUPD will support crime watch efforts and assist with the neighborhood efforts to communicate and find solutions to reduce crime and fear. Overall the neighborhood is safer than most in Indianapolis, and that is a direct reflection of BUPD's continued partnership with IMPD. I look forward to creating a stronger partnership with neighborhood groups."

Can Butler provide visibility (runs through the MSF neighborhood) to deter daytime burglaries?

"BUPD has and will continue to proactively patrol the surrounding neighborhoods near campus. The same criminals that make poor decisions to commit break-in's within BTNA and MSF, often attempt to commit crimes on campus. It only makes sense we remain in an active partnership with the surrounding community."

For those that have worked with Ben Hunter in the past, we can certainly appreciate his return to the Northside.

INDIANAPOLIS OPERA'S PLANS FOR THE BASILE OPERA CENTER

Indianapolis Opera has been moving ahead with plans to fully utilize the Basile Opera Center (formerly known as the Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church, located at 40th and Pennsylvania Street). The company just completed a full three week schedule of rehearsals of Hansel and Gretel in the Basile Opera Center, and the results and comments from artists and patrons alike has been overwhelmingly positive.

"This facility is as good as any in the country for rehearsing opera", stated baritone Victor Benedetti, who sang the role of the Father in Hansel and Gretel. "I've sung in virtually all of the major regional opera companies in the United States, and the Basile Opera Center is a wonderful and user friendly space for singers."

Indianapolis Opera Artistic Director and Meridian Kessler resident Jim Caraher agreed. "The entire facility, from ample parking, good storage space, and of course lots for room for staging and rehearsals, is a major improvement for Indianapolis Opera. We even had rehearsals with the Indianapolis Chamber Orchestra in the Basile Opera Center, and the acoustics were great. It's a dream come true!"

The number of participants for Hansel and Gretel, which included members of the Indianapolis Children's Choir, reached nearly 70 performers and production personnel.

John Pickett, Indianapolis Opera Executive Director commented on the process. "The environment was safe and very productive for the cast, and it worked very well for the Children's Choir. I was delighted to hear from the professional singers that they were so positively impacted by the Basile Opera Center. Providing this kind of environment for them really allows them to focus on their craft, and not worry or be distracted by their surroundings."

Indianapolis Opera will be conducting all rehearsals for their next production, Gilbert and Sullivan's Pirates of Penzance, at the Basile Opera Center beginning in late February. Performances of Pirates of Penzance will be on Friday, March 13 at 8:00 p.m. and Sunday, March 15 at 2:00 p.m. at Clowes Hall on the campus of Butler University. For tickets to this tuneful comedy, call the Indianapolis Opera ticket office at 283-3470.

Indianapolis Opera has mounted a campaign to raise an additional $2 Million to create an "endowment fund" aimed at providing necessary income for ongoing building maintenance as well as another $500,000 to provide for building stabilization and improvements. "We hope that neighbors see the benefits of the Opera Center and its future programming and will help us achieve our fund raising goals," states Bill Ryberg, the Opera's Director of Institutional Advancement. For confidential conversations about how you can support Indianapolis Opera, please contact Ryberg at (317) 283-3531 or via email at billr@indyopera.org.

BIOGRAPHY OF NANCY WHITAKER

Nancy was born in St. Louis, Missouri and then grew up in Southern Illinois. After completing graduate work at University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana, Nancy ran the U of I undergraduate chemistry labs, taught chemistry at Parkland College, and started biochemistry program for School of Nursing at Champaign-Urbana campus. After doing fulltime biochemistry research, she decided to pursue a career of pharmacology and drug metabolism research at Eli Lilly and Co. and moved to Indianapolis. Here, Nancy met her future husband who was already employed by Lilly, is a native of Southport, IN and had 2 sons. While working at Lilly, her career led her to also work in Medical Plans (endocrinology and cardiology clinical studies) and then later to head up Industrial Sales, being responsible for worldwide bulk sales of chemicals for non-pharmaceutical use. In recent years, Nancy and Gary have been busy carrying for Nancy's parents and attending to Nancy's health.

Prior to moving to N. Meridian St., the Whitakers initially lived in the Castleton area, eventually building a home at Admiral's Sound at Geist Reservoir. They employed an architect to design their Geist home but became their own builder and construction site managers. While growing up, Gary and Nancy had been exposed to home building/remodeling by their fathers. (Footnote: Prior to moving to Indianapolis, Nancy's love of architecture/construction led her to apply and be accepted to the graduate program within the School of Architecture at Ohio State University.) When the drive from Geist to the Lilly Corporate Center became too much of a daily burden, the Whitakers sold their custom home they thought they would live in for the rest of their lives and decided to move to the Meridian-Kessler area, buying a home on N. Meridian St. After extensive renovation of this home, they are now beginning to repeat the process once again at their new N. Meridian St. address. (Footnote: They moved to their second N. Meridian St. home in order to accommodate the needs of Nancy's mother prior to her mom's death.) Altogether, the Whitakers have lived on The Street for 13 years to-date.

The Whitakers enjoy and appreciate the architecture in the area and feel the area is "more neighborly" as compared to Geist. Nancy has been a volunteer at the IMA and at St. Vincent's Hospital, and during the last several years, has been a member of the MSF Land Use Committee. This past fall she became Chair of the Land Use Committee and a member of the MSF Board. Upon becoming a Board member, she immediately "volunteered" her husband to revamp the MSF website, www.meridianstreetfoundation.net, and develop a MSF membership database. Gary gladly complied with the assistance of Nancy (or should that be "insistence"?). At the end of 2008, Nancy is stepping down as Chair of Land Use Committee and becoming Chair of the Membership Committee, while still remaining Chair of the Website Committee.

ANNUAL MEETING ON NOVEMBER 11TH

The Place: The Woodstock Club, established in 1915, was the backdrop for the Meridian Street Foundation's Annual Meeting on November 11th.

The Highlights: Nelson Price gave an fascinating lecture covering "Indianapolis: Then and Now" to an audience of more than 70 members and neighbors. After the presentation, a short meeting took place in which John Peoni, Alice Berger, and Marilyn Strawbridge were honored for their service. A door prize of an original oil was donated by neighbor Ellen Crabb.

The Finale: After a short cocktail hour, guests enjoyed a wonderful dinner completed by flourless chocolate cake.

Thank you very much to all that attended!

WHY I LOVE MIDTOWN ADS/MIDTOWN INDY GUIDE/AND MORE...

By Kathryn Shorter

HARMONI, Historic Midtown Initiative, has brought focus in Indianapolis to the 100 year old part of Indianapolis that includes Butler-Tarkington, the North Meridian Street Historic District, Meridian-Kessler, Broad Ripple Village, and immediately surrounding areas—now known as "Midtown."

As part of an intense effort to "brand" this area as Midtown and to promote business and tourist destinations here, a guide was developed and circulated by HARMONI called Midtown Indy. It has been made available at area restaurants and coffee shops, to real estate professionals, and to Downtown hotels. It has been in great demand, and a second printing is now required. Many thanks to G. Thrapp, the Children's Museum, and the Indiana State Fairgrounds for their strong initial support for this publication.

In addition, HARMONI supported the production of two 30 second ads which visually presented the highlights of quality of life and destinations in Midtown. These ads ran on Channel 59 and Channel 4 in September and October and featured many area residents and business owners. To see these ads, log onto www.indyharmoni.org.

Kudos to the Patachou who supported HARMONI and the Midtown initiative through a holiday promotion entitled Peace, Love and HARMONI. At all six Patachou restaurants, patrons were presented menus that featured choices such as the "Midtown Omelette" and

"HARMONI hot chocolate". The menu suggested that while you were enjoying these you should "talk to your neighbor about what a revitalized Midtown could mean to our city."

The Pacer organization initiated a "Midtown HARMONI" night at the Pacers on December 30. Participation from all area schools was enthusiastic.

SCHOOL NEWS

By Kelly Bentley, IPS Board of School Commissioners

Indianapolis Public Schools' 2008-09 school year got off to a great start! Families in the IPS district have several new school options including the Merle Sidener Gifted Academy located at Kessler and Keystone. ISTEP scores for students at the Sidener Academy are among the highest in the state, with passing rates of 100 percent at third grade, 94 percent at fourth grade and 99 percent at fifth grade. Also, nearly a quarter (21 percent) of third-graders earned Pass Plus on the test.

Rousseau McClellan School #91 located at 51st and Evanston, is one of the district's three Montessori options and was named a National Blue Ribbon School, a testament to the school's academic achievement. Montessori education will celebrate 30 years in IPS next year and we all should be proud of the students and staff of the school for their dedication to success.

Center for Inquiry at School 84 students aren't finding the chaos of construction to be hindering their education. Passing rates for ISTEP are: 62 percent at third grade, 72 percent at fourth grade, 65 percent at fifth grade, 68 percent at sixth grade, 81 percent at seventh grade, and 70 percent at eighth grade. The school continues to be a popular choice for parents in the Meridian Kessler, Butler, Arden and Broad Ripple neighborhoods and like its sister school (CFI at School #2), CFI at School #84 is on track to be certified as a Primary Years International Baccalaureate program! Special accolades to Center for Inquiry Principal Chris Collier who received the YWCA Woman of Achievement Educator Award, earlier this year. It was a well deserved honor for this exceptional educator and school leader.

IPS is already is eagerly anticipating 2009-10 school year, when the new Shortridge Magnet High School for Law and Public Policy, and the Broad Ripple Magnet High School for the Arts and Humanities will launch. Deadline to apply for these programs is Friday, Dec. 19 (late applications will be accepted). Call 226-4670 for more information.

A special thank you to all the voters who supported the IPS Referendum Question on November 4th. An astounding 78 percent of voters said "yes to IPS" and our request for $278 million to fund Phase III of our capital improvements program. A majority of voters in every precinct voted yes, even in areas like Meridian Kessler and my own Butler Tarkington that were hit hard by the property tax increases. This vote of confidence will allow IPS to air-condition every school, make improvements that meet the needs of the Americans With Disabilities Act, and provide the infrastructure needed to provide a 21st-century learning environment for students across the district. Schools included in Phase 3 are Rousseau McClellan School #91 Montessori, Mary E. Nicholson School #70, Merle Sidener Gifted Academy, and Eliza A. Blaker School #55 just to name a few.

On a very serious note, IPS is facing significant funding challenges as the economy slips into a recession. It is important in these difficult times to be reminded of a public school system's core mission--K-12 education--and to make necessary cuts as far away from the classroom as possible. IPS will be closing six schools on top of the schools closed last year. Staff will need to be reduced, either through layoffs or attrition. Budget reductions need to start with the central administration and include a freeze on administrative salary increases, cuts in senior administration, and cuts in programs/initiatives/departments that are not part of the core mission.

Strong public schools in our neighborhoods are good for our neighborhoods. Indianapolis needs strong public schools in order to keep families in the city--schools like Center for Inquiry at School #84. We owe it to our students, families, and taxpayers to make the necessary cuts while protecting one of our most important public assets--the education of our youngest citizens.

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Estate Landscape Management
Landscape Design & Installation
2008 Decorators' Show House People's Choice Award Winner
2007 Orchard in Bloom Rooms in Bloom People's Choice Award Winner
Paver Patios - Retaining Walls - Decks
Fire Pits - Water Features - Ponds
Fall Clean Up - Mulch Delivery and or Installation
Lawn & Plant Fertilization Programs
Property Maintenance Pruning, Bed Maintenance, Seeding, Sodding
Annuals & Perinneals, Trees & Shrubs
Lawn Mowing Weekly, Specialty Mowing, Special Events Mowing
Irrigation - Landscape Lighting - Decorative Concrete
Lot Clearing Excavation, Drainage, Tree & Stump Removal
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10 % OFF Spring Clean up & Mulch Installation
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10 % OFF
Entire 2009 Season of Lawn Mowing when you sign up for ELM's lawn mowing service by April 15th

BEAUTIFICATION

Colors: The bright colors of summer are now gone. Fall gave us time to enjoy the warm colors of the changing autumn leaves, yet allowed us to stay outside a little longer this year. Halloween brought lots of fun décor and great weather for trick or treating. As winter finally set in, many of us were ready for it. Holiday Seasonal Décor temporarily brought bright colors back to the neighborhood. Holiday bows on the lamp posts reminded us 'tis the season. Often winter is referred to as being the season which is cold, dark, and drab. Winter actually can bring warmth and comfort to our souls. There is something about curling up in front of a fire in socks, a blanket, and a hot cup of cocoa (or even a 'hot toddy' if you've had the sniffles.) Bare, mature trees reveal their unique silhouettes and their incredibly textured and/or colorful bark. Winter allows us to observe the contrasting hues of the now more visible evergreens especially after a snowfall. While spring can be exhilarating, I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge the beauties of winter we should enjoy right here in our neighborhood.

Lawns of the Season- 'Lawns of the Season' are selected by the Beautification committee but our timing is somewhat at the mercy of Indiana weather. There is a 'nomination period' in which you can nominate your neighbor. We have a timeline defined but this continues to vary somewhat. Pictures and articles are always in the newsletter during the following season. So if you want to nominate a neighbor for the Winter season, 2008/2009 please send an email to Stacey@themccarthy.com.

This issue we have 6 lawns to feature!

Summer 2008

• 4404 N. Meridian-Pink and White were the theme colors for this elegantly manicured lawn of Alan and Terri Symons. An abundance of boxwoods line the perimeter of the driveway and walkway up to the front door. Pink and white begonias create a beautiful garden for pedestrians on the sidewalk to enjoy. In addition, multiple mature trees have clearly been professionally pruned and maintained; leaving the the home still visible. Well established pink hydrangeas are classic historic landscape plantings which welcome arriving guests. While the Symons use a greens keeper for weeding and fertilizing, all of the landscape plantings and maintenance-including mowing the lawn is done by the homeowners. They have lived in the neighborhood for 12 years.

PHOTO NOT AVAILABLE

•40 E. 43rd St. - The homeowners Mike and Suzy Dilts have a variety of plant materials on their property which create a unique balance between a natural and free spirited landscape and an immaculately manicured, traditional landscape. Eclectic is another way to describe this lawn. Texture, color, and scale created a masterpiece this season. Large concrete planters explode with red geraniums and various shades of greenery which spills freely over the edge. Both flank the stairway and walkway to the front entrance. This home has a large corner lot lined with trees, shrubs, and very natural looking perennials. A vast, vibrant well manicured green lawn wraps around the home. All of which is plenty of room to roam; yet provides the privacy which many homeowners enjoy. The Dilts have lived within a few blocks for 22 years. They have spent 11 years here at 43rd/Penn and 11 years at 45th/Penn. A lawn and landscape service helps them keep their lawn picturesque.

• 5212 N. Pennsylvania-The front lawn of Johna and Ron Cripe creates a quaint cottage feel. While the landscape appears relativity low maintenance, a palate of green grass is surrounded by wrought iron and planting beds full of boxwoods, hostas, and groundcover. A mature cherry blossom provides a lovely backdrop for a garden bench and planters filled with complementing red impatiens. The Cripes have lived in the neighborhood for 15 years and have a lawn service assist with maintenance as well as someone to keep their grass cut.

Fall 2008

• 4359 N. Illinois-Ted and Lynn Kramer have mastered the team approach to keep their property elegantly beautiful from season to season. The curved driveway mimics the curvature of the turret on the front of this French Eclectic home. The lawn is broad and deep which leaves plenty of room for their children Catherine and Teddy to play. They have classic white hydrangea bushes at the drive entrance along with evergreen bushes. Mature trees surround the property and provide shade; one of which a baby swing hangs. Along the front wall of the turret, a planting bed of white impatiens which Lynn does herself creates a dramatic curvilinear design. A backdrop of more white hydrangeas, mature evergreen bushes and shrubs softens the Indiana limestone. For the fall, Lynn displayed stacked bales of hay, several pumpkins, and fall festive corn. While the Kramers have been in the neighborhood since 2000, they have lived in this house only since 2004. I imagine they figured out the team approach during their 1 ½ year renovation. For the interior the couple worked with designer David Webster and Associates, while Bly Bennett did the work. The exterior landscape design was done by Walton and Vetor. As mentioned, Lynn does all of the flowers, while Mahan Turf does the lawn maintenance.

• 5145 N. Meridian-Andy and Madonna Wolf have lived in their home for 14 years. Each season Madonna is tireless in her efforts to create a beautiful lawn. She is festive in her décor for each holiday. This year for Halloween Madonna decorated the front entry with bales of hay, pumpkins, Frankenstein, and a pumpkin-head man. Their two teenagers, Zachary and Megan

BEAUTIFICATION

By Stacey McCarthy

always have lots of friends over to visit so a festive home certainly is in order. The mature trees in front have been meticulously maintained. Madonna planted red and white impatiens circling each of their three mature trees. The planting beds run across the front of the home and create the shape of a 'comma' toward the side. The Wolfs definitely have created a lot of curb appeal with their mature plantings and fresh flowers each season. The Wolfs also planted two red oak trees during MSF's tree planting in the fall of 2007. They definitely work hard to keep this magnificent estate in check. While the front of the home's lawn is the only contender for the award, the Wolfs also have an amazing lot of mature trees in back of their property. Lots of green space for running and playing, but most notably is a GREAT hill for sledding during the snowy winter months!

• 5519 N. Meridian- After almost two years of restoration on their home, Kristy and Gary Sherman finally moved in Summer 2008. The Shermans' property was previously overgrown by shrubbery, sick trees, a chain link fence and an overgrown hedge which lined the sidewalk. The fence definitely was not historically appropriate for the home. It was merely one of the many obstacles which blocked the view of the home. Overall, the home and its landscape has completely been restored. The Shermans have lived in the neighborhood for over 10 years . Now with four children under the age of 5, the couple must be happy to have the renovation behind them. The family rented a home in the neighborhood while contractor, John Haines completed their project. One unique piece in the design of their home is that their driveway has an entry and exit on Meridian. Kristy and Gary created a very formal hedge as the focal point for their new landscape. Conical evergreens are uniformly spaced between large shrubs. New trees create a nice back drop for it all and eventually will provide a nice canopy over the driveway. Boxwoods line the restored front patio and perfectly scaled yellow mums fill large urns on either side of their front entry. What an improved vision for the neighborhood!

• Keep Indianapolis Beautiful-May 20, 2009 from 9-1 pm MSF will take part of the KIB/Lilly/ HARMONI project and will be planting 100 Trees along Meridian Street. We will plant more of the American Elms, Sycamores, and Red Oaks like we planted in the fall of 2007. What a great opportunity to beautify our neighborhood, while also adding value to our homes. Not only do trees make an area more beautiful, as trees mature in an urban neighborhood like ours, studies have shown: 1) a reduction of pollution because there is more oxygen in the atmosphere 2) cleaner water because trees prevent runoff 3) traffic noise is reduced for homeowners 4) heating and cooling costs are reduced because tree's absorb more solar energy 5) pedestrian safety is improved because trees act as a protective buffer between the road and sidewalk 6) traffic slows down when trees line a street because visible friction triggers a psychological response to the driver which causes the driver to slow down; All of which improves the value of our homes. Join in our planting day and look for a letter and door hangers sometime in January or February which will notify you if your right of way has been selected for tree planting.

• Sponsor a Lamp Post-Thank you to everyone for your generous contributions to the 'Sponsor a Lamp Post' campaign! Fortunately this year, we were able to have all of our lamp posts dressed by the lighting of the Circle of Lights downtown. In addition to adorning the lamp posts, we were able to provide new bows for the all wreaths needing replacements at Meridian Street United Methodist Church as well as the North Meridian Methodist Church. We Estate Landscape Management prepared most of the bows this year as well as adorned all of the posts with garland. Six students from St. Thomas Acquinas worked for four hours prepping the last forty bows. Thank you Nancy Logan for the tip and Mindy MacAnally for scheduling the students. I appreciate each student: Emma MacAnally, Charlie Gates, Larry Gates, Savannah Madden, Olivia MacIsaac, and our own Peggy Sabens' grandson, Matt Sabens. You all were such a delight to work with and did a great job helping me get the bows done!

5331 N. ILLINOIS

By Janet Payne

Elliott Korr and Janet Payne purchased the home at 5331 N. Illinois in June of 2008. Elliott purchased a home on Kenwood Avenue in 1978 and since marrying Janet in 1993, this has remained their home. They both love the neighborhood and have been searching for a home to create together. 5331 fit perfectly.

Elliott is a Manufacturers Representative in craft, floral and lawn and garden. Janet is a professional photographer.

Our goal was to use as many existing components of the house while updating it as well as build it to suit our lifestyle and in keeping with the neighborhood. To this end we have Bly Bennett as our general contractor who understands the neighborhood, our goals and how to achieve these goals.

Here are a few examples:

An inner brick wall was taken down and recycled to rebuild the crumbling and leaking chimney.

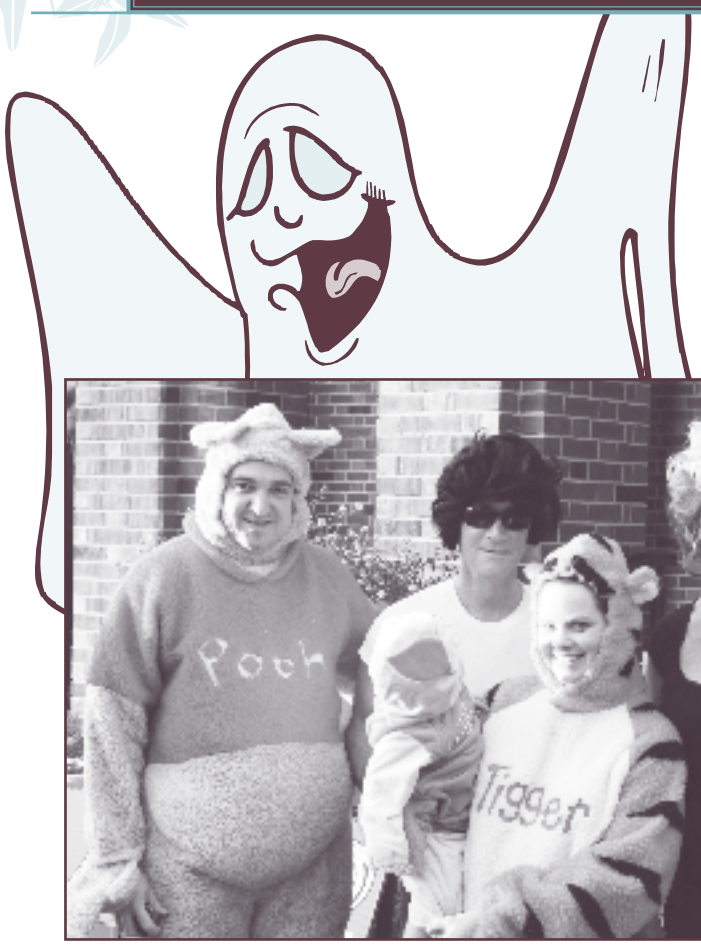
All original hardwood floors have been saved and are being reused. The west wall of the living room with built in book shelves has remained intact.

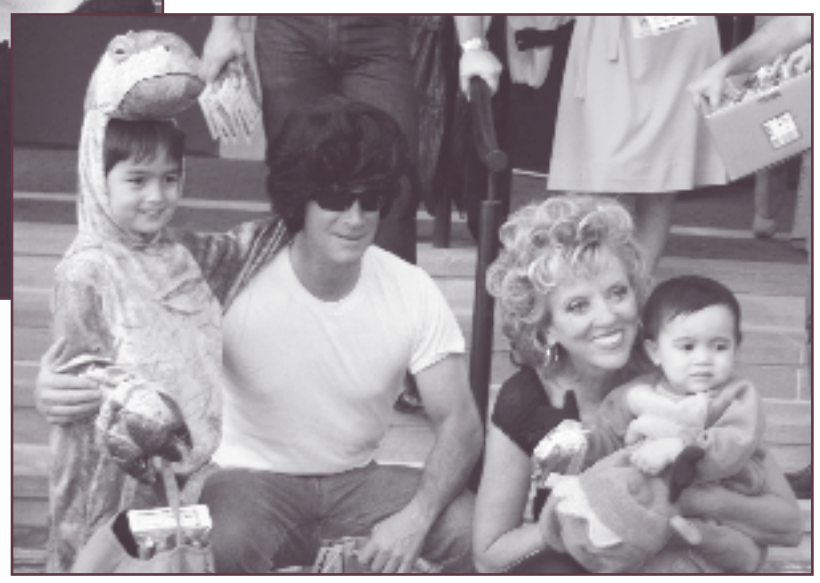
All existing doors including the front entry door are being reused.

As with any renovation project we found areas within the house that required updating and reconstruction. Areas, such as leaking roof, crumbling chimney and walls led to mold and mildew that had to be removed. The original front porch could not be saved and has been quite a challenge to reconstruct. We've also replaced the old wiring, plumbing and mechanicals with updated and more efficient ones.

We are looking forward to moving into our new/old home in mid January.

HALLOWEEN AT GOVERNOR'S RESIDENCE





This year's Grease-themed Halloween at the Governor's Residence

TRUNK OR TREAT

Halloween at the Meridian Street United Methodist Church.

INDIANAPOLIS OPERA ENSEMBLE PREMIERES FUMBELINA

When: Saturday, January 10, 2009 at 10:30 a.m. (performance lasts 45 minutes)

Where: Basile Opera Center (formerly Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church @ 40th & Pennsylvania Street)

What: The premiere of Fumbelina – an opera for the entire family!

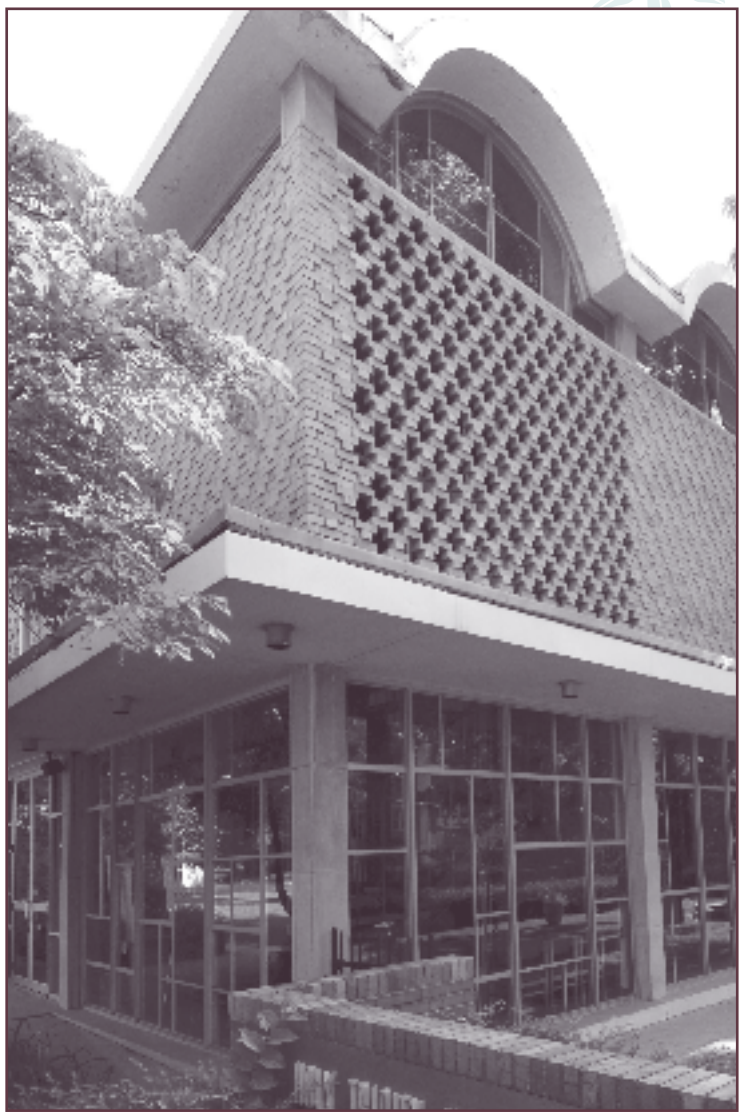
Join us for the world premiere of FUMBELINA, performed by the Indianapolis Opera Ensemble at their final dress rehearsal, open to the public free of charge!

Fumbelina, a story adapted by Denise Page Caraher from Hans Christian Andersen's story Thumbelina, tells the tale of poor, clumsy Fumbelina. She doesn't do well in sports, in cooking class, in school—in anything, so it seems. Set to the frolicking music of Gilbert & Sullivan, Fumbelina's adventures abound with mishaps and lots of memorable characters such as the charming rodent, Mr. Mole. When she finally performs an unselfish act of kindness, Fumbelina realizes that doing something for others is more satisfying than doing something for herself. In the act of truly helping someone else, she no longer worries about what people think of her. We all have that something special inside of us, and when we discover and use it for others, we soar!

Seating is first come first served and is limited to the first 350 people.

This special performance for our MKNA, BTNA, MSF, Broad Ripple-all our Midtown neighbors is our way of saying "Thank you for welcoming us to our new home!" Join us for coffee and cookies after the performance, and tour the Indianapolis Opera's new Basile Opera Center!

A study guide for Fumbelina is available through our Education Department and can be emailed to you. Contact Patty Harvey, Director of Education: 317-283-3531 x 116 or pattyh@indyopera.org.



MSF LAND USE COMMITTEE

By Nancy Whitaker, Outgoing Chair

It has been a very busy year for the Land Use Committee. Members were John Failey, Linda Gilman, Neil Handley, Elaine Klein, Roberta Lamberson, Ed Madden, Jodie McLane, Ann Rich, Austin Ritterspach and I, Nancy Whitaker. Nine of the ten members have lived in the Preservation Area from 13 to over 40 years; all are concerned about preserving the homes and residential neighborhood in which they live.

The Committee members study (1) the State Statute which governs the North Meridian Street Preservation Area, (2) the administrative rules which also govern the Meridian Street Preservation Commission (MSPC), (3) the Commission's Design Guidelines, (4) the instructions for applications as well as (5) pertinent city ordinances and other resource materials. They also attend MSPC hearings to be familiar with the hearing process and to gain experience with how the Commissioners apply the Design Guidelines, etc. to a case.

With this knowledge and experience, the Committee hopes to help property owners and guide them through the process of applying and seeking approval of their petitions with the Meridian Street Preservation Commission (MSPC).

Since I became Chair in October, 2007, the Committee has had over 30 formal meetings with various residents and business owners in the North Meridian Street Preservation Area. In addition, numerous informal meetings at residences, phone conversations and emails took place which cannot be counted.

Although applicants are not legally required to seek our help or meet with us, most find it helps to better prepare them before they go before the Commission. The interactions also aid the Committee since the Committee reviews all petitions and offers MSPC a report of the Committee's majority opinion on the proposed changes.

Our neighbors continue to impress us with their genuine concern for their homes and their desire to help maintain the historic details that make their homes and neighborhood a treasure for us and for future inhabitants. Per Mr. Bob Wilch, the current MSPC Chair, during the period of November 2007-2008, "the Commission heard from 17 different applicants. These applicants filed . . . a total of 28 applications. Of the 28 applications, 23 were approved, 1 was denied, 2 were withdrawn before they were heard, and 2 cases are continued and still pending. Twenty-three (23) out of 24 completed cases were approved, making an approval rating of 96%."

The Committee also reports possible violations of the MSPC rulings or when it appears a property owner has violated city zoning code. We hope fewer of these violations will happen in the future. One way MSF helps provide information about MSPC is by hosting a webpage for up-to-date resource materials provided by MSPC (see the MSPC home page at www.meridianstreetfoundation.net). To review city ordinances, one can find an online library for Indianapolis-Marion Co. at www. Municode.com. If in doubt or just to double check, before you make any changes to your property, contact the MSPC Chair (317.327.5155) and/or MSPC Staff person (317.955.0377). Both are more than glad to discuss whether you need to get MSPC and/or city zoning approval.

My thanks go out to all the neighbors and the Committee in their efforts to maintain our wonderful neighborhood. I will miss the wonderful opportunity I had to meet so many neighbors that chairing this Committee affords one. I hope that chairing the Membership Committee will be as rewarding.

REAL ESTATE ROUNDUP

By G.B. Landrigan, Realtor

When I think of "New Year", I first think of my late father's birthday. He was the first baby born in the city of Indianapolis in 1935. Apparently babies weren't all that anxious to enter the world in those days as it was nearing 1 a.m. by the time my father made his appearance at the old St. Vincent Hospital. Today, of course, it is something of a competition. Mere seconds noted on the birth certificate determine the following morning's front page Indianapolis Star infant portrait. I'm told that baby food suppliers now often arrange contracts, with publicity, to supply First Baby with a year's worth of nutrition. All is forgotten, of course, when the next First Baby is born 365 days later.

Forgetting is not always a bad thing. It allows us to concentrate on the present and future. We take stock, see what mistakes we made, and get on with life. The snarky year of 2008 brought with it some consternation for us in the MSF area, but not as much as others in Indianapolis or the rest of the country. While our absorption rate still stands in the 10+ month range (the 5 or 6 month range is a "good" market"), our agents report that there is higher interest in buying now that mortgage interest rates are almost ridiculously low and home prices are increasingly attractive. Sellers seem now to be seeing that receiving less for their current home still translates into a lower price on their new one. For those of us who remember literal celebrations when rates dipped below 12% (after periodic leaps to 18%), the prospect of something below 4% is nothing short of remarkable.

So, let's see what happened in 2008 and welcome the First Baby of 2009!

All statistics were pulled from the Metropolitan Indianapolis Board of Realtors database on 12/10/2008.
Please note that this is the first time we have used the more accurate "median" prices rather than "average" prices.

North Meridian Street
Now on Market: 10
Median List Price: $837,450
Pending Sales: 1
Closed Sales: 8
Median Sales Price: $496,000

North Pennsylvania Street
Now on Market: 5
Median List Price: $459,900
Pending Sales: 0
Closed Sales: 12
Median Sales Price: $480,000

North Illinois Street
Now on Market: 5
Median List Price: $219,900
Pending Sales: 0
Closed Sales: 11
Median Sales Price: $285,000

Cross-Streets
Now on Market: 2
Median List Price: $364,900
Pending Sales: 2
Closed Sales: 9
Median Sales Price: $300,000

MEMBERSHIP

By Nancy Whitaker

If you or your family are not current members of MSF, please consider joining or renewing your annual membership in the Foundation at this time. Members are entitled to attend all MSF meetings and events and vote (must 18 years of age or older) on all matters brought before the general membership.

Members are eligible to volunteer to work on one or more MSF Committees. To find out more about our committees and about volunteering some of your time to help the Foundation, go to the MSF Website (www.meridianstreetfoundation.net) and click on the Site Index and/or contact the MSF President, Stacey McCarthy (410-9580).

Members are also eligible to be nominated and elected to the Board of Directors of the Foundation at the annual meeting.

Membership Dues

Your dues help fund costs associated with our many activities including but not limited to the following:

- Printing and mailing of the tri-annual MSF Newsletter
- CallingPost ™ automated phone messages for timely announcements (e.g., crime alerts, event reminders)
- Fees and services associated with the MSF Website and the membership database
- Printing of flyers and printing and mailing of event invitations
- Internet service fees for mass email management
- Beautification projects (e.g., Yard of the Season plaques, seasonal decorations, etc.)
- Printing of copies of the Meridian Street Preservation (MSPC) Guidelines and other MSPC resource documents for property owners in the Preservation Area who do not have internet access and/or prefer a hard copy
- Duplication of printed materials needed for Committee meetings where review of printed documents and plans is necessary for successful communication (e.g., Land Use Committee monthly meetings with property owners planning to petition MSPC)

We all share the responsibility for maintaining our wonderful neighborhood and improving the way of life in it. We invite you to join the MSF.

Enclosed in this Newsletter is an envelope to use to join or renew your membership. If you have any questions, please feel free to call (259-0978) or email (whitakerng@yahoo.com) Nancy Whitaker, Chair of Membership. Thank you for helping to support your neighborhood.

OUR MISSION

MERIDIAN STREET FOUNDATION

The Meridian Street Foundation is a charitable 501(c)(3) 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.