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THANK YOU

DSW 135656

NEW SPIRIT QUARTERLY

DECEMBER 21, 1994 EAST ST. LOUIS, ILLINOIS VOLUME III ISSUE I

DEMOLITION RALLY ROUSERS

October 10, 1994 marked the day that over 150 East St. Louis residents representing the 20 neighborhoods of the city rose up to say that "enough is enough". With well over 1,100 structures in need of urgent demolition the time was "now" to send a wake up call to every entity who has the power to make demolition happen.

It was abundantly clear that this group of lively citizens would not listen to rhetoric any longer. With ever-increasing crime, insurance, joblessness and hopelessness this cancer that has overtaken the city of East St. Louis must be eradicated, they said.

A packet containing over 1,100 signatures of the voting age population in East St. Louis along with a list of the following demands was sent to local, state and federal governing bodies.

1. **That all dangersous structures for which you bear responsibility be demolished within the coming year.**
2. **That the materials at the demolition site be disposed of immediately and properly.**
3. **That all open and overgrown basements or remnants of structures be cleared for the safety of children and others.**
4. **That each government leader, make this demolition demand a PRIORITY NOW on behalf of the residents of East St. Louis, who are constituents.**

A citizen watch group was to be formed to monitor progress at each level. The tone was very clear that East St. Louisians could not or would not allow this travisty of justice to continue in their neighborhoods.



Demolition Rally October 10th

CITIZENS' WATCH GROUP FOR DEMOLITION

If anyone thought that the action that took place on October 10th was just a show, one need to only contact any member from the Citizens's Watch Group For Demolition. This group of fine citizens have taken up the charge to make sure that demolition stays on target for East St. Louis residents.

Since that rally day, follow-ups have been and continue to be made to everyone who is responsible for making demolition happen in East St. Louis. So far, positive responses and/or action have come from: St. Clair County, Senator Braun, Senator Simon, Rep. Costello, Will McGaughy, the city of East St. Louis, East St. Louis Housing Authority, East Side Health District and East Side Levee District. Yet to respond either way is the Library Board, School District #189 and the Park District.

The Citizens' Watch Group for Demolition has set as its goal to make sure that all the list of demands are met and enforced.

This is for sure not a group that will disappear into the background.

GOOD "DEED"

Have you or anyone that you know had trouble with a bond-for-deed purchase of a home? If so, there could possibly be a solution to the problem.

Councilperson Deborah Powell and Diane Thompson and others from the Land of Lincoln Legal Services were key players in drafting an ordinance that protects bond-for-deed purchasers. Councilperson Powell was very instrumental in pushing that ordinance through the city council, thereby providing a law on the books that regulates the bond-for-deed home sales.

GOOD "DEEDS" (cont.)

If you have any questions regarding this matter, you may contact Diane Thompson, Land of Lincoln Legal Services, at 271-9140.

YOUTH + ENVIRONMENT + EDUCATION = KNOWLEDGE

Youth of East St. Louis are becoming more knowledgeable about the environment around them and how they will be able to make a difference in their city, thanks to a collaborative effort between the St. Clair County Alternative for at Risk Students Program and Operation New Spirit Neighborhood Office.

The neighborhood office through its organizer, Ms. Alandra L. Byrd has conducted environmental lectures and projects to sixth graders throughout School District #189. The major emphasis for this educational segment was "beautification". This project also gave many of the students the opportunity of designing landscape for planting daffodil flower beds.

The neighborhood office would like to commend all of the youth for taking on the challenge of helping East St. Louis become a more beautiful and environmentally sound place in which to live!

INTEREST-FREE EDUCATIONAL LOANS

For the fourth consecutive year, the East St. Louis Community Fund will offer interest-free loans to East St. Louis residents enrolled in accredited colleges, universities or vocational schools. Applications will be accepted until April 15, 1995.

Applications are available and may be picked up at the East St. Louis Community Fund Office located at 650 Missouri Avenue in Room G-31 or at the SIU-E East St. Louis Center: Educational Opportunity Office located at 411 E. Broadway. For additional information, contact the ESL Community Fund Office at (618) 271-2200.

"IN THE SPIRIT"

Round and round she goes, when she stops no one knows! Activated, energetic, community and neighborhood-minded are just a few words that describe the poetry in motion which is Mrs. Norvella Martin of the Lansdowne neighborhood.

Just one phone call and you know that you've reached one of the busiest women in East St. Louis because if you call past 8:00 in the morning she is usually already out and about. Listening to her agenda even makes you tired.

Mrs. Martin is involved on every level of the community. Whether its with the school board (even though all of her children are adults) or being active in her church (Friendship Baptist) you can find her hands busy.

Not only is Norvella involved, but she is well-informed. She makes it her business to know what is happening in her neighborhood and community.

We salute Mrs. Martin and say keep up the fine work. Lansdowne neighborhood is certainly a better place for having Norvella Martin as a resident.



Alandra Byrd, Norvella Martin, Richard Suttle

THE CCO PROJECT

The Metro-East Church-based Citizens' Organization is sponsoring "The Congregation Centered Organizing Project" on January 21, 1995, 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at Southern Mission Baptist Church located at 2801 State Street. Theme for this great event is "Congregational Outreach: A Strategy for Church Building".

Lay leaders must be trained and encouraged to intentionally and intensively build relationships through Congregational Outreach.

This training will be provided by professional congregation based trainers, from the Gamaliel Institute, Chicago.

Mark your calendars, you don't want to miss this! If you need further information contact the MECCO office at 874-0110.

FIFTH ANNUAL CLERGY CONFERENCE

"Responses to Addictions and Violence: The Role of the Church" is the theme for the Fifth Annual Clergy Conference which is to be held February 15, 1995, 9:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at St. Elizabeth's Hospital, Belleville.

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FIFTH ANNUAL CLERGY CONFERENCE (cont.)

This workshop is for anyone actively involved in the ministry of a church: ministers, religious instructors, lay leaders, etc.

Registration fee is $20. If you need additional information, contact Jacqueline Slaughter-Boyd at 482-5639 or 397-8930.

CODE ENFORCEMENT

The city of East St. Louis has hired several new code enforcers for the city in the sanitation and building departments. With the mounting code violations in the city, it is imperative that these gentlemen keep busy to help eleviate these various problems that plague the city.

The newly appointed code enforcers are: Stanley Vaughn, Bud Vales and Frank Clark in the building department and Myron Cason in the sanitation department. They may be reached at 482-6820 (building dept.) or 874-5400 (sanitation).

Now is the time to dispense with surveys and actually do some enforcing of the codes that are already on the books. Please be sure to call the above listed numbers to ensure that your neighborhood become a clean and safe place in which to live.

POWER OF THE PEOPLE

February 28, 1995 marks the time when citizens can flex their muscles by pulling down the lever and making their voice heard at the non-partisan primary election which will determine the final candidates for an April 4th general election in which five races will be decided..

In April the top two candidates for Mayor, Treasurer and City Clerk will face off while the top four city council candidates will face off for two vacant seats.

Remember YOU can make the difference. Exercise your power to make change happen in East St. Louis.

DAFFODIL DOINGS

The 1994 daffodil planting season has just been completed. Now the bulbs are doing their thing underground waiting to burst forth in bloom in the spring.

Diligent workers from the Illinois Department of Corrections, Don Beekman (Lincoln Correctional Center), Americorps Volunteers, ESL neighborhood volunteers and the New Spirit Neighborhood Office successfully planted 10,000 daffodil bulbs. Bulbs were planted at 26 sites throughout the city.

So, look forward to seeing blooms sprout up all over the city and in your neighborhood come springtime.

SPRING VEGETABLE GARDENS

Yes its time to start planning your spring vegetable gardens. Your first tilling should be done to help prepare the soil for the spring. Then your second tilling should be done right before planting in the spring.

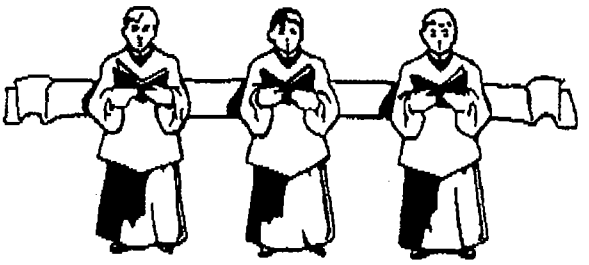
The New Spirit Neighborhood office is planning a January meeting for past gardeners and new gardeners. At this meeting, discussion will be centered around what each community gardener will be planting, what has grown the best in the past and what new seeds should be tried.

A new thing that will be happening is the installation of a raised bed in the Rush City neighborhood along with a composting area. This pilot project may eventually spread to other neighborhoods.

Watch your mail for further details on the January meeting!

THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!

The MECCO-New Spirit Neighborhood Office would like to give a special thanks to all of you who have made our year a great success! If we have omitted any donor, please forgive us and give us a call because you are very important to us!



Americorp Project~Anheuser-Busch~CADS Engineering~ Catholic Urban Programs~Dr.LeonMessi~ESLCommunity Fund~Fredericka Spruiell~Home Study Club of ESL~Illinois Dept. of Corrections~Illinois Department of Transportation~ Kaskaskia Sierra Club~Land of Lincoln Legal Services~ McKnight Foundation~Monsanto~Nancy Wallace~Operation New Spirit Neighborhood Volunteers~St. Clair County Alternative Offenders Program~St. Patrick Church~Senator Carol Mosley-Braun & Southern IL Aide Kitty Conner~SIU-Carbondale~Slay Industries~Union Electric~University of Ohio/Dayton~U.S. Attorney's Office~Waste Management of Metro East.

AROUND THE BLOCK

Dayton/Wedgewood: The Kingshighway Terrace Organization diligently worked with State and City government to receive major improvement in their neighborhood. Many of the overgrown lots in their neighborhood have been cut down making it safer and cleaner for all residents.

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AROUND THE BLOCK (cont.)

Goose Hill: This neighborhood was the second place winner for attendance at the demolition rally. The neighborhood was able to get a head start on their Christmas cleaning because of the generous donation from Waste Management - a free dumpster and landfill space!

Fairlawn: Citizens for Community Concerns successfully completed their fund raising activities for the 1994 year. With the money that was raised this organization will be able to offer environmental services and youth activities for their neighbors. Fairlawn also received a free dumpster and landfill space for being the first, highest neighborhood in attendance at the rally.

Winstanley: Because this neighborhood attended
big numbers, they received an attractive sign and da
that add beauty to their neighborhood. The sign wa
by the residents of Lincoln Correctional Facility. It is lo
on the corner lot near Mt. Paran Baptist Church, 14th & Mt. Luther King in the heart of the Winstanley Neighborhood.

YEAR END THOUGHTS

As we come to close for the 1994 year, The Neighborhood Office would like all residents to be mindful of the tasks we have ahead of us for the New Year. As we approach 1995, let us build upon the accomplishments we have made thus for by keeping the 3-A principle in mind.

Attitude: In order to make a difference in our community, we must continue to keep an attitude of hope, commitment, and willingness.



Beacon Heights: "A neighborhood that is moving higher", could accurately describe the organizing efforts that are taking place in this neighborhood. Some of the issues they will tackle are: drugs and crime; enforcement and not-for-profit status. You can expect to see and hear a lot from this organization in 1995.

Alta Sita: This neighborhood has successfully formalized a strong neighborhood organization. With three meetings under their belt and attendance still growing each time, there will be plenty of voices to cry out against the wrongs that need to righted.

Edgemont: Edgemont Citizens for Crime Prevention and Community Development have definitely made major steps toward becoming an even stronger force in the city. This organization has stepped to the foreground by making their voice heard at the city council meeting. Also they have worked and obtained their tax exempt status for a not-for-profit organization. Just goes to prove what good citizens and organization can do!

Aptitude: For the 1995 year, it is necessary that we increase our knowledge about our government, how it functions and how we will be able to make positive change.

Accountability: As we increase our awareness, we must hold federal, state, and local officials accountable for the decisions they make which will affect our homes, children, and communities.

The New Spirit neighborhood organizing is a MBCCO effort funded by the E. St. Louis Community Fund & the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

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