



## Neighborhood Notes from the CWNA President May/June 2005

Summer Greetings! - A tad late.

May is turning into an annual ritual of not only tending to individual gardens, but for some residents to look after gardens contained in neighborhood traffic circles. As one of the neighborhood 'Circle Keepers', I have received many comments while tending to the circle located at Kenwood and Bartlett. Comments include *'it looks nice'*, *'thank you'*, *'do you work for the city, or is it some group that manages the circle?'* I even heard, *'you're such a stud'*, but that unfortunately that came from a known male resident. Due to the lack of rainfall in June, I needed to carry a large water container to water the marigolds and black-eyed susans I planted. This chore resulted in a much appreciated Father's Day gift of a cart to make the half-block trip easier. These small gardens are very representative of a neighborhood association. The traffic circles are reminders that something lives here. Circle keepers (neighborhood residents) not only plant, weed, and water the garden; they also take responsibility to report graffiti, damaged or missing signs. Unfortunately the circle at Kenwood and Newhall recently fell victim to vandals. The center tree that was maturing nicely was broken in half. The trunk and branches were left scattered along with the beer cans. The crime was reported, the circle cleaned-up, and replanted. This action shows the desire and determination of its residents, as did a similar act that occurred in Cambridge Woods when people were caught in the act of cutting trees to build bike jumps. We will continue to look for the 'gifts' that offer us assistance, but it is the residents of our neighborhood that provide the most enriching gift.

As for some organizational items, the May General Meeting was an open discussion with Alderman Michael D'Amato. We like to schedule this meeting once a year to hear news of interest in the neighborhood. I hope those who attended appreciated the discussion. Some items that were announced included Bella Fat Cats arrival to Oakland Avenue and Open Pantry's plans to open a coffee shop next to their existing store to complete their remodeling project. I have recently participated in meetings with state representatives, alderman, other neighborhood association representatives and residents regarding UW-Milwaukee's potential acquisition of Columbia-St. Mary's. A reported feasibility study indicated the University's need to use part of the site for 600-1300 dorm beds. This potential development has many concerns associated with that type of use. One such concern is that any increase in dorms will trickle into the surrounding neighborhoods in search of social and housing desires. The neighborhood groups will continue to actively meet to address the concerns raised by residents and as always welcome your input.

The July General Meeting will be on Tuesday, July 19 and will include a presentation by the Urban Ecology Center staff on activities of interest to neighborhood residents such as canoeing; kayaking; rock climbing; kids and citizen science programs; and leadership training for high school students. Watch for emails with more details of the program and plan on attending!

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