



NEWS & VIEWS

New Year's Greetings!

By Cindy Zweber-Free, Outgoing President & Membership Chair

I hope our newsletter finds all our neighbors with positive thoughts and goals for a great 2004.

2003 brought lots of involvement by your neighborhood association. What a year it was! Our crime watch initiative is in full swing; Land Use had many of you bringing your projects before them prior to MSPC, many social events, and of course The River of Flowers has proved to be a "blooming" success. And how about the River of Luminaries and Christmas greenery on the lampposts? Our beautification committee has been hard at work all year, and we thank them and all of you for your volunteer

and financial support in making our neighborhood even more beautiful.

On a more somber note, Meridian Street Foundation will miss Governor O'Bannon and First Lady Judy. Our many meetings and discussions on the residence and its new addition and renovations echoed their commitment to historic preservation. We were thrilled the state's "Living Room" will remain.

Welcome Governor Kernan and First Lady Maggie. We look forward to having you in our neighborhood.

continued on page 2



Cindy Zweber-Free, MSF President with the Parks Department Alice Carter Park Plan.

PLEASE — BE OUR VALENTINE!



Watch the mail for Your Invitation! MSF Social Committee 283-1835

The President's View

Virginia W. Handley

Wow! '04 is going to be a great year for the Meridian Street Foundation (MSF). We will be working on new projects like The Alice Carter Park at the corner of Westfield and Meridian Street, traffic "calming" to make it safer for people walking, walking your dog, even bike riding. Why not a grassy strip down the middle of the street and open parking after 6:00 PM? It's a city street now, so who knows what's possible. We can always dream.

Take a moment and send in your membership dues for '04 (envelope enclosed) and join one of the many committees (you don't have to be a board member to serve on a committee). It's a great way to meet your neighbors. I know that as we work in harmony we

can accomplish many things. You will see, as you read this issue of MSF News & Views, the work that has taken place last year and what will be happening this year.

As my year of being the new President begins for MSF, I want you to know that you can call on me if you should have the need, or just want to talk about "our" Street. The names and phone #'s for the current Board are listed in this issue. Please keep this insert for reference during the year.

My sincere "Thank you" to all of you for your continued support of our Meridian Street Foundation and my best wishes for your good health and prosperity in the New Year.



Editor's Note:

Meridian Street Foundation News & Views is the communication arm of the Meridian Street Foundation, published three times a year. 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 (257-3741)
email jmsabens@indy.net

Kathy Shorter
Vaughn Hickman

New Year's Greetings! (continued from page 1.)

We have a new initiative for 2004, the Alice Carter Place Park Project. Indy Parks with input from many neighbors has come up with a fabulous plan for the park. As I bid adieu to being president, I am looking forward to heading up this project. Future communication will be coming regarding the project and the major fundraising that will be needed to begin our effort. If you would like to be on this committee please contact me at 921-9571.

Finally, it's membership drive month. For new and existing members, we have enclosed a membership envelope. Your membership dues are the main source of funds for MSF. Dues pay for our newsletter, many social events and beautification efforts among other things. Thank you in advance for your continued support.

It has been a wonderful experience serving as president. So many of our

neighbors and board members have deep commitment to this fabulous neighborhood we call home. The countless hours that so many devote to various efforts is remarkable. I continue to be amazed and impressed by this commitment so many of you share. Thanks!!

Have a healthful and positive 2004!



Addition to Governor's Residence Gains Support

The neighborhood fund raising activity to support the addition to the Governor's Residence, headed by Nelda Coxe and Cindy Zweber-Free, raised over \$9,000. The fund raising effort was designed to show neighborhood support for keeping the Residence in the neighborhood and to help defray the cost of the addition and decorating.

Meridian Street Foundation, Butler Tarkington Neighborhood Association and Meridian Kessler Neighborhood Association all made generous contributions. Twenty-one families also made contributions. They are: Tony and Marla Smith, William and Melissa Oesterle, Connie Vickery, Bruce and Denise Cordingley, Nelda Coxe, Langdon Family Foundation, Inc., C.A. and Patsy Solinger, Carol DeCoursey, Cynthia Zweber-Free, Casey Cronin, Linda Sue Gilman, Frederick and Kathryn Roudebush Shorter, Daniel J. Stout and Marianne C. Stout, David and Alice Berger, Raul Burciaga, John and Elaine Klein, Phillip A. and Jane B. Cox, Richard A. and Cecile G. Johnson, Jim and Peggy Sabens,



Casey Cronin, Cindy Zweber-Free, Nelda Coxe and Caroline Farrar present contributions from our neighborhood to Greg Fehribach, Chair of the Governor's Residence Commission on 12/19/03.

Marilyn Strawbridge and Shirley E. Berry. The checks were presented at the Residence on December 19, 2003, by Nelda Coxe and Cindy Zweber-Free to Greg Fehribach, Chairman of the Governor's Residence Commission.

A special reception for the contributors will be held at the Governor's Residence in February.

Many thanks from Nelda and Cindy for all those most generous contributions.

If you would like to make a contribution, send checks to:

Nelda Coxe
5104 N. Meridian Street
Indianapolis, IN 46208

Please make the check out to the Governor's Residence Commission.

American Art Pottery – Tile in Your Historic Home

by Alice Berger

Did You Know?

Your original ceramic tile is an important part of the integrity of your historic home. It is critical that we as homeowners understand the value, and that we avoid disturbing it and work around it carefully when we are remodeling.

American Art Pottery companies flourished in the late 1800's until the time of world War II. The "potteries" were in their golden era during the time that most of our neighborhood's homes were constructed. Pottery companies from the Midwest, particularly in clay-rich Ohio, became world renowned as the patentees and manufacturers of artistic embossed, glazed, inlaid, enameled, and hand decorated tiles. These tiles decorated the most luxurious hotels and homes throughout the world.

The following are but a few of the more famous producers of art pottery and tiles:

American-Franklin-Olean Tiles,
Lansdale, PA
American Terra Cotta &
Ceramic Company, Terra Cotta, IL
Beaver Falls Art Tile Company,
Beaver Falls, PA
Cambridge Art Tile, Covington, KY
Wheatley Pottery, Cincinnati, OH
Cowan Pottery, Rocky River, OH
Fulper Pottery, Flemington, NJ
Rookwood Pottery, Cincinnati, OH
Mueller Mosaic, Trenton, NJ

Kensington Art Tile, Newport, KY
Moravian Pottery, Doylestown, PA

A word about Rookwood: Rookwood, of Cincinnati was a pioneer in the development of design and glaze. As early as 1889, Rookwood won international design awards in Paris and was established as a prestigious world leader in this fine art. Many of our homes have beautiful Rookwood tile. Some pieces (even one tile) of Rookwood sell today for up to thousands of dollars.

MSF is encouraging you to become more aware of this important component of your home. We are inviting you to take color photographs (showing as much detail as possible) so that we may research the origin and, if possible, the artist of your home's tile. We would also like to incorporate these photos into our Meridian Street Foundation Scrapbook. Please send these photos to Alice Berger, 4833 N. Meridian St., 46208.

Old tile is an architectural treasure. If you have remodeling plans and need help in finding plumbers and tile craftsmen who will repair and work around your old tile and fixtures, (some of our sinks and toilets are made of china) please call on the MSF land use committee. Remember, we need to be excellent custodians of these works of art.



Alice in Meridian Land

by Alice Berger

As you go about your life in this wonderful Historic District please remember our North District Police Department. Many people are not aware they can make donations to the Police Department. Not only can you make such donations but your Meridian Street Foundation would encourage you to do just that. Here are some of the ways the North District will put your donations to work:

North District Community Day, Bicycle Rodeo, Walking with IPD, Fallen Officer's Memorial wall, and the Officer of the Month program. For those animal lovers you can donate to the care of the horses in the Horse Patrol.

Please send donations to:

Benjamin Hunter, Community Relations, IPD North District



MSF BIOGRAPHIES

Rosie Sweeney

Treasurer

I was born and raised in Australia. I moved to Indianapolis via La Crosse, Wisconsin. My husband and I have been living on Meridian Street for 2 years. I love the detail and the craftsmanship of the older homes. I am currently studying Accounting at IUPUI and have previously worked in the Finance Industry.

Vaughn Hickman

Vaughn Hickman is the CEO and Executive Creative Director of Hickman + Associates, a full-service advertising and public relations firm he founded in 1968. Throughout his career, he has served clients across the country in a variety of industries including automotive, technology, financial services and healthcare, among others.

He has been a distinguished community volunteer having served on the boards of Indianapolis Opera, Arts Indiana, Contemporary Art Society of the Indianapolis Museum of Art and Friends of Herron Gallery, among others. Currently, he serves on the board of directors for the Indianapolis Arts Council and the capital campaign cabinet for the Herron School of Art Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis.

Vaughn Hickman and his wife, Melissa, have been residents in the neighborhood for 16 years. Residing in Kurt Vonnegut Junior's childhood home on Illinois Street, Vaughn and Melissa enjoy the many pleasures of owning an older home including gardening, home improvements and mechanical engineering!

Beautification Committee Pulls Through

The beautification committee has pulled through another busy season of beautifying our neighborhood.

In October, 200 volunteers, including residents, IUPUI groups (via United Way), Butler students, Indy Ambassadors,

died down. This will help the bulbs gain extra strength for the following year.

Our goal is to have a continuous "River of Flowers" between 38th and Westfield creating a spectacular visual effect for years to come. Look for information in

Vignati (all helpers, husbands/wives, and friends) for making, placing and removing the luminaries.

This year, we added live greens and large red bows to the antique lampposts during the holidays to display our community spirit. Meridian Street



Butler students were among many of the volunteers that assisted in planting bulbs along Meridian Street.

family and friends, pulled on latex gloves and dirtied their knees to plant our continuing "River of Flowers". With a lot of early mornings and dedicated bulb planters, we now have 500,000 Glory of the Snow bulbs planted between the street and sidewalk from 38th to Westfield Blvd. We now have bulbs covering about 75% of the land. Remember, as we enter our second season of blooming, these tiny bulbs will multiply and spread as they mature creating a thicker carpet of flowers each year.

Special thanks goes to Bret Gerking of Especially Gardens for donating his crew to mow and aerate all the properties in preparation for planting this year. We truly appreciate this generous contribution!

For those who have bulbs planted on their property, please do not apply broadleaf weed killer or mow the planted area until all the bulb foliage has

the spring for details on having your property planted with Glory of the Snow bulbs in Fall 2004.

Enjoy the millions of blooms to appear March 2004!!

Straight from planting the "River of Flowers" many of our residents once again helped create the "River of Light".

1500 luminaries were placed along the historic district the Friday after Thanksgiving illuminating the way downtown for the tree lighting celebration. Everyone traveling the street enjoyed the spectacular sight. Many thanks to Rome Nkoski, Bryan Wagner, Marilyn Strawbridge, Elaine and John Klein, Virginia and Neil Handley, Greg Dedinsky, Kathy Shorter, Alice and David Berger, Erick Ponder, Marge Kroeger, Cindy Zweber-Free, Nancy Whitaker, Rosie Sweeney, Brent Harvey, Nancy Behrmann, and Ruth

Foundation sponsored this project and accepted donations to help offset the costs from over 100 residents and local businesses including Dr. Mark E. Catton, Meridian Heights Cleaners, Frame Designs, The Sommerville Team, Sigma Delta Chi Foundation of the Society of Professional Journalists, Spohn Associates Inc., United Way of Central Indiana Inc., NUVO, and Realty Trust of In LLC.

Response to the holiday decorations was overwhelming positive. We hope to continue this seasonal project for years to come.

Again, we appreciate the services of Bret Gerking with Especially Gardens who installed and maintained the decorations throughout the holiday season.

Thanks to all the volunteers and contributors that have made these community projects possible. Also, special recognition to the beautification committee members Kathy Shorter, Virginia Handley and Phil Cox who have given countless hours to beautifying our neighborhood.



Luminaries were placed along the sidewalks of Meridian Street the Friday after Thanksgiving illuminating the way downtown for the lighting of the tree.

"Calming" Meridian Street Traffic

By Kathy Shorter

There is a national urban trend to "calm" traffic on city streets, and our neighborhood is looking to be a trendsetter in this regard. The Meridian Street Foundation Traffic issues Committee has begun work with neighboring organizations and with city and state officials. The following explains what we would like to achieve. We need your help! If you have interest in giving some time to this important cause, please contact me at 283-5322 or fjshorter@aol.com. Your suggestions and concerns are solicited as well.

MSF desires to work with the City of Indianapolis and the State of Indiana to significantly "calm" traffic on North Meridian Street and in its surrounding neighborhoods. Drivers habitually travel on Meridian at highway speed, disregarding the 35-MPH speed limit, pedestrians, school children, residents entering and leaving driveways and turning cars. The speed and volume of traffic is now a crisis for people who live in the neighborhood as well as for people who

travel on the street. The situation is extremely hazardous, and it will worsen if north side highway widening funnels more and more traffic into the neighborhood.

We are asking for City and State cooperation in achieving the following:

- Recognize the crisis and resolve to rectify it without compromising/destroying some of the City's finest assets: North Meridian Street, the Meridian-Kessler neighborhood and the Butler-Tarkington neighborhood.
- Adopt a plan that encourages commuters to use more desirable routes to get downtown, while making Meridian Street (and other neighborhood streets) inconvenient for commuters. Streamline the 465 to 65 route, 465 to 70 route, Binford Blvd, Keystone and Michigan Road corridors. Ensure that any north side highway projects route travelers onto 465, NOT onto Meridian. Even better: Stop the widening and develop light rail and mass transit options.

- Do away with synchronization of stoplights or synchronize them at 30 mph.
- Add stoplights at 54th and Meridian, 43rd and Meridian, and 40th and Meridian.
- Establish school zones at 55th and Meridian (Meridian Street United Methodist Preschool) and 46th and Meridian (1 block east of St. Thomas Aquinas School).
- Reduce the speed limit to 30 mph from Westfield to 38th Street. Ticket speeders. Use electronic board that informs drivers of their speed.
- Develop and adopt a plan to reduce lanes on Meridian, adding a parking lane and turning lanes with center islands.
- In addition, we are asking neighborhood residents to please slow down!

If you would like more information about efforts across our nation that are working, check out www.trafficcalming.org. Other cities are making this happen—we can too!



The Annual Summer Picnic— Fun for Families, Art Lovers and History Buffs

By Marilyn Strawbridge

The skies cleared just in time for the June 8, 2003, Annual Summer Picnic of the Meridian Street Foundation. Members, as well as all residents were invited to the home of Robert and Marilyn Strawbridge, located in the woods at 4245 North Meridian. Dodd's town House catered the chicken dinner served by Elaine Klein and gracious volunteers. Swimming, face painting, making meg bubbles and other fun activities kept children entertained. Others enjoyed the art of Blanche Stillson, the former owner of the historic house, as well as the art of two local artists, Andrea Eberbach and Cindy Wingo. The wooded grounds around the pool became the gallery for Eberbach's colorful florals. Wingo's especially large pieces were on display inside the home.

Also inside the home was a display of artifacts that told of the life and presented the artwork of Blanche Stillson, the woman who had lived in the home for seventy-five years. She was an accomplished artist herself, taught at the Herron School of Art, and was an important figure in the Indianapolis Museum of Art. A copy of her painting that is displayed at the museum was supplied by the museum. A woodcut, which is the technique that brought her much acclaim, was also among the artifacts. A bust, sculpted by Alice Usher, along with newspaper articles supplied more information. As a scientist and naturalist Blanche established a bird sanctuary in the woods surrounding the house. This activity provided much information for her book, "Wings", which was also on display. The research on this remarkable

woman was done by Jayne Paine, whose home was built much later on this unusual piece of property in the middle of the city.

A surprise guest, Natalie Brunner, who had also lived in the house after Blanche, brought a 1974 copy of Good Housekeeping that presented an article and numerous pictures detailing a large renovation that she and her husband, Wally Brunner, had just completed. The house had been the site of a popular television show, Wally's Workshop, during the early seventies.

It was a perfect day for friends and neighbors to celebrate the neighborhood, its' residents, art, history, family and fun.



Real Estate Roundup

By G. B. Landrigan, Realtor

This issue's Roundup will reveal an MSF version of "A Tale of Two Cities" for the year 2003.

First, the very good news. No home in the MSF area had sold in excess of \$1 million until last year. This year there have been three — two on North Meridian and one on North Pennsylvania. One more is currently pending. The average sales price for a home in Metropolitan Indianapolis thus far this year has been \$142,640. As you will see below, the

MSF area average continues to exceed this by a considerable margin.

The "other" news reveals a slightly larger-than-normal inventory of homes available caused by homes taking a bit longer to sell than is usual for our area. This is particularly true for homes in the \$200-800,000 range. Reasons for this are varied. In some cases, owners priced their homes too high for the market. This tends to dampen the excitement a new listing usually generates and discourages early offers.

The property tax issue also cannot be overlooked. A summer and fall devoted to television news clips about the doubling and tripling of taxes in the area undoubtedly caused some (albeit undocumented) hesitation for buyers. The uncertainty of the situation (i.e. delayed bills, "revised" assessments, etc.) further exacerbated the situation. Fortunately, while property tax reform is, in my opinion, still needed, the market is showing signs of recovery.

STATISTICS FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1, 2003 TO DECEMBER 21, 2003:

LOCATION	North Meridian Street	North Pennsylvania Street	North Illinois Street	Side Streets
ON MARKET	7	11	11	6
AVERAGE LIST PRICE	\$859,100	\$454,908	\$489,000	\$273,516
PENDING	1	1	1	0
CLOSED SALES	7	11	11	2
AVERAGE SALE PRICE	\$859,150	\$603,627	\$194,618	\$341,750
PRICE RANGE	\$460,000 - 1,249,900	\$242,000 - 1,399,900	\$133,000-339,000	\$259,500-424,000

Statistics provided by the Metropolitan Indianapolis Board of Realtors.



BOB PINKLEY RECEIVES AWARD

MSF Prez Cindy Zweber-Free presents Bob Pinkley, longtime volunteer with an award.

Meridian Street Land Use/ Preservation Committee

Alice Berger: 283-2453
Ruth Vignati: 254-1686

This has been a very good year for land use and preservation. Thanks to the Meridian Street Preservation Commission for informing people we are here to help with their applications. We have guided many of our neighbors through the process. Although people are not required to appear before us, when they do, they find the whole process is so much easier and that they are not blindsided in front of the Commission with a problem they did not know existed.

With the exception of the process mentioned above, your Land Use/Preservation Committee attended many meetings at the Governor's Residence to assure the new addition fit in historically.

We also worked hard to solve the problem of what to do with the empty lot at 46th and Illinois. The good news is that, with our encouragement, the Governor's Residence has attained ownership of this lot and it will be turned into a landscaped parking lot for their use and the use of the school and churches nearby. What a great solution!

More good news to preserve our historic district and prevent commercial encroachment came from the Meridian Street Preservation Commission last month. Tammara Tracy is asking for a Notice of Jurisdiction for every property in the MSPC area. This notice will show up on the title search and inform the property owner that the property is

under the jurisdiction of the Meridian Street Commission Statute Indiana Code 36-7-11.2 and is subject to Title 925 of the Indiana Administrative Code. If this is approved, we have solved the problem, making sure everyone who buys a home in our district is aware of the state statute governing and protecting our historic homes.

Members from your Land Use/Preservation Committee also attend HUNI meetings at Historical Landmarks, BTNA meetings whenever possible, MKNA meetings, tax relief meetings and any other meetings that affect the use and preservation of the Meridian Street Foundation area.



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Maintaining Meridian Street's Mistresses

By Jim Sabens, Chair Beautification Committee

Some don't know how it started; some blame it on a glance; some waged a long campaign. But whatever the reason very few of us would willingly give up our "mistresses". And for good reason. Whatever they are called; "dowagers", "matrons", "faded roses", storybook castles", "bygone glories", "Mansions", our Meridian Mistresses knew all the tricks to hold us in their spell.

They have survived past loves, both happy and sad; they have survived residents who have been insensitive and uncaring; they have survived years of being relegated to the real estate "back burner", but they all continue to reach out with new energy and become a very important part of each new owner's life.

All of us remember what it was like to spend that first night in our new (to us) homes; the unusual but soon familiar noises we heard; the silence with no neighbors' TV or stereo; the overwhelming doubts about what we had taken on here. What would our neighbors be like? Could we keep our cat out of Meridian Street traffic? How could we ever fill the place up with

furniture? How much would the gas bill really be?

But soon, most of our doubts were allayed; the sun shining through our large windows; the feeling of being a part of this ever growing city and so convenient to everything; not having to draw maps for friends and relatives to find us; knowing we wouldn't be snowed in for weeks; the flowers which appeared out of nowhere the first spring; the feeling of helping to continue a link with the past.

So we will admit the Meridian Street area is already beautiful; so why do we have a Beautification Committee of the Meridian Street Foundation? Good question—and this is why we are asking you, the Meridian Street area residents, to share with us your ideas and areas of interest and concern.

Here are some suggestions already received:

- Work with Historic Landmarks of Indiana to expedite posting appropriate signage identifying Meridian Street

from 40th Street to Westfield Boulevard as the North Meridian Street Historic District.

- Develop procedures for vacant lot of empty house weed and grass control.
- Develop advertising methods for home improvement, repair and maintenance contractors and real estate agencies that are in keeping with the appearance of the area.
- Present a "Neighbor of the Season" award to a deserving resident of the area.
- Provide information about our area and organization to new residents.
- Develop a central listing of companies and individuals who have provided satisfactory service in remodeling, repairing, maintaining area properties. A "help hotline" so to speak.
- Determine if tree planting in the boulevards (space between sidewalks and street) should be a neighborhood project or by individual requests through the Parks Department.

Your thoughts and ideas are important to us.



A fresh IDEA in giving, from Marsh Supermarkets!



Marsh Supermarkets is proud to support the people and communities we serve! And now, through Community Shopper, you can show your support every time you shop at Marsh! Getting started is as easy as 1-2-3...

- 1 Pick up a Community Shopper sign-up form at your local Marsh Supermarket
 - 2 Fill in the organization name and Express Code below:
Meridian Street Foundation
351831615
 - 3 Earn money for your organization every time you buy Marsh-brand products!
- To sign up online, visit www.marsh.net and click the "Community Shopper" icon.

**PUBLIC SAFETY
COMMITTEE**

— ◆ —

The mission of the
Public Safety Committee of MSF
is to enhance protection
of people and property
through acts of prevention,
information/communication
and service.

— ◆ —

Clouds of Witness

We lost a good friend and neighbor with the passing of Governor Frank O'Bannon. To quote, with his kind permission, some words of Bishop Woodie W. White, "What a good, kind and gentle man was our Governor. We are the better and the richer because he touched our lives in so many different ways. So through our tears, sense of loss and grief, we thank God for the life and witness of Frank O'Bannon". Our condolences to his wife, Judy, and the O'Bannon family.



Meridian Street Foundation placed a wreath in front of Governor O'Bannon's residence.

We also lost another neighbor this fall: long time resident Miss Sally Reahard. Even though she was a quiet person she was very interested in the activities on "our Street". She was recognized as a beloved benefactor to many worthy causes over the years.



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