From the Editor: We are now distributing this newsletter electronically. Every copy we can send by email saves nearly one dollar in costs, as well as just being more environmentally friendly. If you received this newsletter by email, and don’t want to, please let me know directly. If you received this by U.S. Mail and are able and willing to receive it by email, please let me know that too. Contact me at fghd.th@gmail.com or 478-0686.

Marie Pontius, editor

It’s Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas

By Kaylynn Sanders

Once again, the first Sunday in December is set for our annual Holiday Home Tour. This year that is on December 7. The tour is our principal fund raiser and the best way to encourage awareness of the historical district. We hope to raise enough funds again to share with our local charity, the Western Indiana Community Action Agency at 705 South Fifth Street.

This year’s homes demonstrate the wide range of architectural styles in the neighborhood. Our generous neighbors who have graciously agreed to open their homes this year are: Geoff and Jessica Weyton (714 Park St.), Joel and Ina McMullen (825 7th St.), Diane Trackwell (Farrington Bed and Breakfast 7th St.), Harriet McNeal (901 8th St.) and Honey Creek Title Service (405 S. 6th St.). With the Vigo County Historical Museum’s wonderfully preserved Italianate, we will have six stops on the tour. The board of Farrington’s Grove Historical District, extends our sincere thanks to our participants.

We invite everyone to attend the tour and help us greet our visitors. As in past years and weather permitting, we can expect as many as three or four hundred tourists. Some ways to contribute to the project would be to help pick up around the neighborhood, to volunteer to be a greater in one of the homes, or to help our home owners to decorate. Please be aware that there will be more people wanting to park near the houses being toured on that day. Anything that we can all do to alleviate parking problems would be appreciated. A few of us are planning a decorating party at the home of Harriet McNeal. All who want to help with anything should contact Kaylynn Sanders sander-sarch@hotmail.com or 235-3116.

Letter from the president . . .

Dear Neighbors,

Since the last newsletter, there has been much going on in the neighborhood. We celebrated our second annual Block Party on August 31st. In addition to neighbors from throughout the Grove, Mayor Bennett and Director of Public Affairs, Darrel Zeck joined us for ice cream cones and conversation. Special thanks go to police Sergeant Dave Smith who brought a squad car to the party and to the three firemen who displayed a shiny fire truck. The children and adults enjoyed checking out the police car and fire truck, and having their pictures taken with them.

The task forces have continued to hold meetings and we are seeing progress made. Todd Nation’s Infrastructure Task Force inventoried street curbs that need yellow “No Parking” paint, and submitted that inventory to the city. Some of the curbs have been painted and we hope that the city will complete that project during the spring of 2009. We continue to explore placing new street signs in the Grove that include our logo. As you may recall we each had a chance to vote on which logo was preferred. A narrow winner was the one that Dan Sanders, and Miller-White, developed for the walking tour brochure, featuring a stylized tree. I have been working with Brad Miller, the head of the street department who obtained bid prices for the new signs, which will be “historic” brown with white letters with the Farrington’s Grove Historic District logo on one end. Hopefully we can pay for the signs in part by having residents and businesses in the neighborhood adopt an intersection. It looks like a sign for an intersection will cost between $50 and $65. Contact me if you are interested. The street department has agreed to put them up on (see Letter page 2 )

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Upcoming Events

FGHD, Inc. board meetings
First Tuesday of every month except December at 7:00 p.m.
Former Crawford School Park in south lot, come in back door and up to second floor.
Everyone is welcome!

NOTE: November’s FGHD meeting will be held on Monday, November 3, because of Election Day.

Holiday Home Tour
Sunday, December 7
2:00 pm—6:00 pm

Next Newsletter due out February 1
Deadline for articles January 23
HISTORICAL SOCIETY HAPPENINGS

By Barbara Carney

The holidays are fast approaching and the Vigo County Historical Museum is preparing to celebrate in grand style. The special December exhibit will be called “Home For The Holidays, circa 1920s and 1930s”. Since the holidays would not be complete without the family gathered around the table for a festive meal, this year’s display will have as its focus a dining room table resplendently set with the finest china and linens. The table centerpiece and additional decorations will be those used for a Christmas dinner in the 1920s and ’30s. Chairs surrounding the table are floral needlepoint, done by Maudie Brown, whose daughter, Lynette Fields, recently donated the furniture to the Historical Society. A buffet of the time period will complement the arrangement. Surrounding the dining table, visitors will enjoy a Christmas tree adorned with ornaments, toys that would have been found under the tree, and festive clothing that the entire family could have worn for this special holiday feast.

As always, the Historical Museum is decorated from top to bottom during the Christmas season. A handmade ceramic crèche, beautifully decorated trees, garlands, and wreaths are waiting around every turn to bring the spirit of the holidays to the visitor. We urge all readers to mark their calendars for a stroll through the Museum during the month of December.

The Historical Museum’s annual Open House will take place on the first Sunday in December. Refreshments will be served and Museum hours will be extended from 1 to 6 p.m. Books about Vigo County and its history may be found in the Museum’s Gift Shop and make excellent gifts.

Letter . . . continued from page 1

existing poles.

Tom Burkett’s Trash Task Force just completed a very successful fall clean-up in conjunction with the city and Keep Terre Haute Beautiful. Thanks to the hard work of Colleen Chestnut and Tom Burkett, plus all of you who worked throughout the weekend, we filled three dumpsters. The dumpsters were generously contributed by Republic Services. The neighborhood looks better and better.

Charlie Lee’s Code Enforcement Task Force is investigating the auto dealership that backs onto South 4th Street. Hopefully in the near future we can get answers to the concerns raised by neighbors in the area with maintenance of that lot and lack of promised landscaping. Speaking of South 4th Street, the contractor is obligated to replace all the dead trees that were planted. Look for them to go in this fall or next spring. Notice also, all the home renovations that are now going on there.

Another problem that needs attention is individuals using their front yards as a parking lot. This problem has existed in some areas for years but I see this happening more and more.

Hopefully, Charlie Lee and his task force can determine if this is a code violation or not and how best to address the issue.

At the October meeting of the FGHD, the assistant police chief, Shawn Keen, attended our meeting to listen to and provide advice on how best to deal with the large number of incidents that have occurred in the Grove recently. Dr. Mark Frederick has agreed to chair the task force on security and crime and we all look forward to suggestions from this group in the near future.

Darrell Hamilton continues to work on a new web site for the neighborhood. When it is complete it will replace the one we currently have.

I want to thank Marie for her hard work on linking the neighborhood via email. Several people have indicated that we now have a way to communicate rapidly with our neighbors. It’s like having an old fashioned telephone party line, but much more timely and efficient.

Finally, we will need your help with the holiday home tour that will be held on the first Sunday of December. The date is December 7th. Remember, this event is crucial to our yearly fund raising efforts. Kaylynn Sanders is again leading the charge. She needs volunteers to help take tickets and generally “host” the featured houses. See her article for contact information. In addition, last year, Colleen Chestnut was able to get a spread in the newspaper around Thanksgiving. Watch for that in the Valley Life section of the paper.

Have a great holiday . . .

Steve Pontius
Members Needed!

Farrington’s Grove Historical District, Inc. is doing a lot of things in the neighborhood. I think we all can see progress being made. But we need the support of members. This newsletter goes out to almost 300 households and costs about $200 for each edition. That’s only one example. We are trying to keep neighbors informed, but not everyone who receives the newsletter pays the annual dues. Dues run from January through December and are only $20 per year, per family, although we welcome donations of any size. Donations are fully tax-deductible. Please make sure you send in your dues and donations. See the information on the back page of this newsletter for how to contribute.

Contact any of your neighborhood association officers listed below if you have any questions.

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News and Notes—Across the Backyard Fence

By Anne Burkett

The following are the new people I have met in the neighborhood:

Bobby and Sandy Pike live on South 7th St. Their family consists of a 21 year old, a 19 year old, and a 17 year old. This makes for a busy household, thus, they love their big Farrington Grove home. Bobby is a truck driver and Sandy works for the phone company. You may see her out walking her dog.

Rev. Jerry Heineke and his wife, Erika, are living in the Lutheran Vicarage on Swan with their two sons, Malachy and Zacharia. They come to Terre Haute from Fort Wayne, and are interested to learn more about Farrington's Grove. He is on an internship for this year before he returns to classes.

Kathy Dickerson has moved back to her hometown and the FGHD with her dog, Keisha. Kathy has moved into an apt on South 5th St. and Deming. She is a former Sarah Scottie and South Brave. She is a nurse at the local hospital. She has worked on the front of the apartment, planting flowers in the yard, and filling flower pots on the porch. Glad to have you back and helping to make the neighborhood look so nice.

Tom and Eileen Balduff from Bowling Green, Ohio, have moved into the former Yazge house on Center Street. Tom is with Historic Landmarks that is housed in the Chances for Youth Building at 444 South 6th St. It’s great to have you with us in our Historic District.

Art and Susan Johnson came into Farrington Grove from the South Side of town after the June flood. They have bought a home on South 4th Street and have spent the summer getting it all spruced up. They are retired and are travelers, so they are interested in the Grove neighborhood doings when they are in town.

Lester and Cozett Miller live on Center St. They rent the house and are fixing it up while enjoying the big house. She works in Real Estate, so hopes to get the house in shape to sell. He works for Jeanne's Appliances and installs DISH TV connections from Jeannie's Appliances. However, Cozett is not new to our Farrington's Grove. She had lived in an apartment in the 400 block on S. 5th Street for nine years. This says she must like the Area very well.

Welcome to all our newcomers.

p.s. Let me know if you know of newcomers or events I should report on.
Report from the Security & Crime Task Force

by Mark Frederick

Criminal activity in the Farrington’s Grove Historical District has and continues to result in two distinct outcomes for victims, including physical/material and emotional. Injury, property damage, and inconvenience represent negative physical outcomes while fear, suspiciousness, and the loss of a sense of safety represent negative emotional outcomes. Though the two results of criminal activity can be regarded as qualitatively different from one another, a single set of responses can be employed to effectively deal with both.

A carefully crafted and enacted response plan can both minimize the incidence of crime while at the same time lower levels of apprehension and fear. The FGHD Security and Crime Task Force has been formed to develop a proactive action plan in response to the ongoing criminal and mischievous behavior that occurs in the neighborhood. Lacking an effective, coordinated, and activated response plan which is safe, legal, and complementary to law enforcement invites increased criminal activity.

The Security and Crime Task Force has experienced some organizational challenges over the past year that have recently been overcome and it is now moving toward reinvigorating its efforts. In its improved structure, the Task Force will be composed of two elements. The first element is a large Advisory Panel that will meet on a quarterly basis, or more often as needed, that will continue to develop and improve the existing strategic plan and serve as an advisory group.

More on neighborhood efforts to reduce crime

by Marie Pontius

We have all been frustrated lately by the high number of reports of break-ins, vandalism, and sometimes violent crime in the neighborhood. It’s been frightening to me. And it isn’t particularly reassuring to hear that friends in Deming Woods, Dobbs Glen and Wyndham are suffering similar problems. Some people have said this has always been a problem, we’re just hearing more about it now. Others have told me, no, these crimes are on the increase. I don’t know. But we are doing something about it, now, and I am optimistic we will succeed.

Chief of Detectives, Shawn Keen, met with the Farrington’s Grove neighborhood association at the October 7th meeting. He was very receptive to our concerns and handed out contact information if any of us have complaints or concerns about police responses. (See box) One thing that has been a problem is the 911 dispatch system. Several years ago, in an effort to be more efficient, the county sheriff’s dispatch and the city police dispatch were combined. The sheriff’s office has the primary responsibility now and there seems to be a glitch somewhere in getting information to the police department in a timely manner. Several people have also experienced less than cooperative attitudes on the part of dispatch operators. We have been told the Mayor’s office is working on this problem.

Task Force Chair, Mark Frederick, is working with Dr. DeVere Woods, a professor in ISU’s Criminal Justice Department, and with Tom Manson, a consultant to police departments nationwide. All three of these men are Farrington’s Grove residents, and we are so lucky to have this resource in our neighborhood. Watch this space for more developments.

I keep looking for more that we can do right now. We obviously can’t go out hunting for the criminals ourselves, but here are some things we can do ---- and it will help:

- Report all criminal activity to the police. Request that they file a report if they seem hesitant. Keep a record of date, time and other details. We are developing an interactive reporting form on www.farringtonsgrove.org but I don’t think it’s up and running yet. This step is important because one thing we need to do is track crime statistics so we can go to the police, mayor or city council with actual facts and figures rather than generalities. Other cities have mapped these crime statistics and have concentrated on “hot spots” to good results. We hope to get to that point.
• Send me the information by email at pontius1200@verizon.net and I will distribute it to my list of about 120 addresses of FGHD residents. We need to watch out for each other and this is one way we can do it. If I don’t have your email address, send that to me.

• Remove or paint over graffiti within 24 hours of it happening. This seems minor, but it has worked to reduce crime in other cities. It’s called the broken window theory. (We need to fix those as soon as they occur, too) It says to the vandals that we’re watching; someone cares about this neighborhood and we won’t tolerate this kind of thing. The opposite is also true. If the graffiti and broken windows are allowed to remain, the vandals and criminals think no one cares and they move on to the next step: breaking in and stealing.

• Add motion sensitive spotlights to your house and garage so that they flip on when someone walks up. These are not expensive and don’t use that much electricity because they only come on when triggered. We may not be able to put up more street lights yet, but we can do this.

• Landlords must not tolerate bad or criminal tenants. This is easy for me to say, since I’m not trying to keep a rental property rented. But it will benefit everyone in the long run.

• Likewise, all of us need to maintain our properties. Like the broken windows and graffiti, messy yards, houses that need repair and so forth, tell criminals that these folks don’t care.

• Finally, be careful out there. Don’t accost trespassers yourself. Call the police.

—Marie

Sgt. Dave Smith

TAX BENEFITS FOR HISTORIC BUILDING OWNERS

By Tommy Kleckner, Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana, Inc.

While we’d all like to find free money to help with restoring or rehabilitating a historic property, the truth is there’s no state or federal grants available for private property owners undertaking a historic preservation project. There are, however, other benefits definitely worth considering.

For a historic property that is income-producing, such as a commercial building, a rental housing property, or a farm, there exist both a federal and a state historic rehabilitation tax credit. Each program provides an income tax credit worth 20% of the qualified rehab costs, which means potentially recouping up to 40% of qualified rehab costs for a project. Quite the savings when undertaking a substantial project! A property must be listed in the National Register of Historic Places & Structures to qualify for the federal rehab credit.

Not to leave historic homeowners out, there is a state residential rehab tax credit available for the qualified rehab of owner-occupied historic residential structures. Like the state credit program for income-producing properties, this program provides a state income tax credit worth 20% of the qualified rehab costs and the residence must at least be listed in the Indiana Register of Historic Sites & Structures.

Another incentive program available to historic property owners is the property tax deduction program. When you invest in the rehab of a building, it’s likely the assessed value of the property will increase. The property tax deduction program allows you to deduct 50% of the increased portion of property taxes for a period of 5 years. For example, if the property taxes for a particular historic property are $5,000/year and that increases to $8,000 following rehabilitation, 50% of the $3,000 increase ($1,500) can be deducted each year for 5 years. That’s a savings of $7,500!

The information above gives you the basics; however, there are additional provisions for each of the programs. For one-page fact sheets or additional information for any or all of these incentive programs, contact the Western Regional Office of Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana at 812-232-4534 or west@historiclandmarks.org.
Farrington’s Grove Historical District, Inc.  2009 Membership Application
Make checks payable to FGHD, Inc. and mail to FGHD, Inc. P.O. Box 322, Terre Haute, IN 47808

I have included a tax deductible donation of $ ______________

Name(s): ________________________________________________________________

Address: __________________________________________________________________

City: _____________________________ State: _____________________ Zip: _______________

Telephone: ______________________ email: ________________________________

Total amount enclosed: ________________

$200  Benefactor membership
$100  Corporate membership
$35   Patron membership
$20   Regular membership