



**July 2005 Meeting**

**WNA Neighborhood  
Newsletter**

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**Vol. 10, Issue 6**

**🌿 President's Message 🌿**

*By Lynn Johnson*

**Membership in WNA**

*I would never belong to a group that would accept someone like me as a member.*

----Groucho Marx

Well, Groucho, if you wanted to join WNA, we would accept you, cigar and all. Now, voting in our organization may be another matter. There have been questions raised by our members for some time over who should control our destiny. Should it be those who live in our geographic boundaries? Or should it be those who are interested enough to become members? We will bring this up as an agenda item at our next meeting in September (no meeting in August, remember). It will require a clarification to our by-laws, so try to attend this meeting and give this some consideration.

We have a number of opportunities presented in this Newsletter for you to help improve your community—as so many others have done before you. Please join these spirits who recognized that their universe was affected

by much more than the four corners of what they purchased.

*The good we secure for ourselves is precarious and uncertain until it is secured for all of us and incorporated into our common life.*

----Jane Addams



**🌿 Music in the Playground Event 🌿**

Mark your calendars for Friday evening, Aug. 8, when WNA will be holding its *Music in the Playground* event. We will be having a band playing in the Westminister Playground (900 block of Westminister St., NW). The band is called the *In-Street Band* and they'll be playing from 7:30- 9 pm. They play popular music, gospel, and swing. Yes, it's okay to bring your children to this event—this band is rated "G," general and approved for all audiences. And if you feel like dancing, we'll even turn the water feature off for the evening.

We will need a few WNA volunteers to help set up, serve lemonade, and remove trash,

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after the event. Let Pres. Lynn Johnson know if you're available to help.



### 🌿 City Property Development 🌿

This month's meeting presentation was by AdvantEdge, one of the pre-selected developers for the city's Home Again Initiative properties, one of whose principals lives in the WNA area. Eric Jenkins, also a principal of AdvantEdge, explained how the program works. They are submitting a proposal in early August for one of the bundles Home Again has put out for bid. This bundle consists of all 8 empty lots in our area as well as the vacant building at 902 T Street, NW. Contrary to prior developers used by the City for the last decade or more, the developers now used are for-profit entities, which will likely result in a more timely turn-around of these properties.

Eric Jenkins indicated that his company's proposal will limit their projects to two units per property, with 26% of them being offered to lower-income buyers (4 of these units will be slated for 'live-in' artists). They will be using "green" construction methods and practices which will include greenery on the rooftops and re-use of the rainwater runoff. Listening to our suggestions from last month, they will also pay for us to install custom iron treebox guards around every—as in EVERY single—treebox in the WNA area (ed. note: retail price for this is about a \$1,000 a pop, or \$90,000 for all these tree-boxes).

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We discovered during that presentation that the Home Again Initiative has included the vacant lots at 910/912 S Street in this proposal for residential building development. This took many of us by surprise as we had not been given any formal notice or opportunity to be heard on converting this former playground into residential use. Many WNA neighbors objected to this use. However, there was general confusion as to whom we could complain and whether it may be too late to turn around this decision. The WNA members then voted to have the WNA President send a letter to four City council members citing our objection to this projected conversion of green space in our community and asking them to try and have these two properties withdrawn from the Home Again bundle.

The WNA members were asked by AdvantEdge to consider supporting their proposal to Home Again. After considerable discussion, it was voted that WNA would send a letter to Home Again in support of their proposal, but such letter would not state that we are "endorsing or recommending" any particular proposal.



### 🌿 Tree Beautification 🌿

Many of you have noticed the great trimming job our trees received last month and have been asking how WNA found the person-power to do all of our trees. Well, we must not take undue credit. It was your City that

trimmed those trees. It's been a long time since we've seen that done and our commendation goes to the Trees and Landscapes Division of Public Works for finding the funds in their budget for this.

As you know, we have a committee canvassing our WNA area to determine where we have dead or missing trees. The location of trees that they have reported as requiring removal are as follows:

- 917-919 Westminster
- 928 Westminster
- 927-929 Westminster
- 1803 10th Street
- 914 T Street
- 940-942 T Street
- Triangle park on Southeast corner of 10th and T Streets

If you know of other dead trees that need removing, please let us know.

Liz at DC Greenworks has now requested the City to remove the dead trees and has apparently received confirmation that the City will do so sometime this Fall. She has also indicated that DC Greenworks will provide new trees. Thank you, DCG, you've always been so good to us.

Which brings us to our obligation to water our existing trees. You know how hot it's been. You know you would wilt standing out there all day in that sun. Don't forget your tree and treebox—remember them at least once per week. If you want a 'gator bag' to help you with that young tree, let us know.

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### Public Safety

Ronnie McGhee, head of our Public Safety Committee, reports that our area has calmed down a lot in the last few years. [We'd like to take some credit for that.] Drug sales, car break-ins, auto thefts, and house burglary are all down significantly this year.

This is not to say such activity has been eradicated. In fact, there has been a number of car break-ins on Westminster Street during the last month. Some members also reported that the walk-by drug sales are still persistent along 9<sup>th</sup> Street. If you have specific information on any of this, you might contact Ronnie at [RMCJKA53@aol.com](mailto:RMCJKA53@aol.com) so he can coordinate some further actions.

**Mother's Helper Available**  
Neighbors: Are you looking for a mother's helper for any of these long summer days? Sarah Ousley can help you any of these days: Aug 1-5, Aug 8-12. Please call her secretary (mom) at 361-9133 if you are interested.

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**Community Service Opportunities**

OK, so you've paid your \$15 annual dues to WNA and you gave an hour or two of time at the beginning of the year. It's all appreciated, but please remember that we need to give an hour per month all year long if we're going to keep our neighborhood well-maintained and continue to improve it. Here are some current opportunities:

**WNA Secretary Position**

Our current secretary, Derek Cole, is leaving us this month. We need a secretary for the rest of this year. This position entails taking monthly meeting notes and starting the draft of the WNA Newsletters. (Yes, that's why you didn't get a Newsletter last month.)

**Sidewalk Repairs**

We continue to make progress on getting our brick sidewalks repaired. We need a volunteer to keep the pressure on two City agencies so that we can get our painstakingly-preserved brick sidewalks back.

**Weed Abatement**

Weeds growing in our alleys and between the bricks of our sidewalks are not only unsightly, they cause cracked and broken bricks and uneven sidewalks, which are in turn more unsightly, as well as being a safety issue-- and a bear to shovel snow from. We need volunteers to spray the bricks every six weeks to prevent weeds from taking root. We need 1 more volunteer for this project.

**Closing Playground Gates**

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As you know, we lock the Playground at 9pm and open it again about 7am in the mornings. Now, we have the mornings covered but we need someone to lock it at night—preferably some neighbor who lives close to the Playground. On those occasional days when you can't do it, we'll give you a backup telephone number to call for someone to fill in.

**...Still more opportunities---**

- \* Monitor the City agencies regarding outstanding illegal construction and historic preservation citations;
- \* Water the Playground as needed;
- \* Blow the Playground chips off the cement as needed; and
- \* Find volunteers to take over the trees & tree-boxes that do not yet have stewards for this year.

If you can take on any of these tasks, contact our WNA President, Lynn Johnson.



**A Bit of Local History**

*[The following article was written by our WNA school student Andre Ousley]*

Carter G. Woodson in our Community

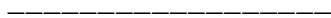
I just recently went to a lecture at the newly renovated Phyllis Wheatly YWCA. The lecture was about Carter G. Woodson. Carter G. Woodson was a philanthropist and an advocate for black rights. He also was the founder of the

Association For The Study of Negro Life and History. He was the man who put black history on the map. He would do his research and let the world know what that particular African American did. Without him, we might not have a clue about the struggles and successes of the black race. He helped to record accounts of countless African American stories.

You can walk by 1538 Ninth Street, NW and see the historic house. His house is improperly marked. All houses that have any historic value have to have a sign or some sort of symbol that shows why it's important. On Carter G. Woodson's home just says his name. Why would the Park Service stand and watch a building that Carter G. Woodson lived in and that served as a headquarters for what he did fall apart.

I learned that the Park Service couldn't work on the house until they owned all the property. George Bush already agreed to fund the \$2-million plus projects to build a gift shop, exhibit space, and of course to restore the original building exactly the way it was when Carter G. Woodson lived there. The Park Service also plans to buy the 2 adjacent houses on the block, including the carryout on the corner.

I also learned that Henry Willard hired 3 designers to build in the U Street area. Architect Thomas Franklin Schneider designed 902-946 T St NW and 1820-1836 9th St NW (built 1890); the Hough Brothers designed the entire row of houses along Westminster, from 938 to 952 (built 1892); and Thomas Haislip designed all of those from 902 to 936 Westminister Street, NW (built 1891-1902). Our family's house, 935 Westminister Street was built in-between 1891-1902 by Thomas Haislip.



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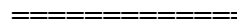


**Trash Cans Belong In Your Yard**

Yes, we heard the screaming. A few of you received one of those \$75 tickets this month for not taking in your trash can or recycling bin within 24 hours after you put it out. But for heaven's sakes, folks, how much more warning could we have given you? Let's go through the basics one more time so that you don't inadvertently transgress the City's regulations:

- \* They are put out after 7 pm the day before the trash trucks come (*i.e.*, Sun. nite and Wed. nite);
- \* They must be taken in by 7 pm on the day they are emptied.
- \* If trash day falls on a holiday, push the above schedule back one day, *i.e.*, put them out on the holiday night and take them in the next night.

And please remember, that the second citation is an 'instant double winner,' *i.e.*, \$150. Please do your part. It is only when we all follow these rules that we have clean-looking pleasing alleys for all of us.



**Triangle Park Project**

As earlier reported, a committee has been formed to come-up with ideas on what to do

with the triangle park located on the corner of T, 10th and Vermont Streets. Currently, the triangle park is unused and covered in concrete.

You are invited to attend a meeting at 7:00 pm this Tuesday, August 2, at the Triangle Park to help brainstorm ideas for the parks. Nilmini Gunaratne and the Committee will share ideas of what we want to create/grow in the triangle parks and suggest ideas for how to make our vision a reality. Any and all ideas are welcome!

**🌀 2005 WNA Membership Dues 🌀**

January was the month to pay your 2005 WNA dues, so if you haven't paid them, you're late. Make out your check now, payable to "WNA" in the amount of \$15 per household (\$5 per senior citizen household). Dues are tax deductible as a charitable contribution so it's a win-win for all of us. You may also mail or drop your check in Chuck's mailbox: 914 Westminster Street.

**🌀 July Financial Report 🌀**

Income/Expenses

Balance as of June 1, 2005	\$6,347.41
Receipts:	
Dues	170.00
Donations	0.00
Disbursements:	0.00

Total	<b>\$6,517.41</b>
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Total	\$6,517.41
Less Playground Fund	<u>-2,699.44</u>
Total in General Fund	\$3,817.97



**🌀 Next WNA Meeting 🌀**

WNA does not meet in August, so we will hold our next monthly meeting on Sept. 27<sup>th</sup> (remember, the 4th Tuesday of every month) at 7:00 p.m. in the Playground, weather permitting, or at 922 Westminster St., NW (basement). This is the time we should nominate new officers for the year, so give this some consideration Mark your calendar now.

Please call or email any member of the WNA Board to announce a community event in the upcoming WNA Newsletter or to contribute an article.



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