



## Meredith Neighborhood Association

### ANNUAL MEETING & POTLUCK

Minutes of MAY 11, 2004

Hoover High School Cafeteria

4800 Aurora Avenue / Des Moines, IA 50310

Neighbors present are listed on the Sign-In Sheet

Meredith neighbors, friends and guests enjoyed a delicious potluck dinner beginning at 6:30 p.m. Kevin Burger of Famous Dave's BQ brought warm BBQ pork sandwiches, hot wings, and corn bread muffins. The MNA furnished hot coffee, lemonade and water. Thanks to Nancy Rathert and Delores Wells for coordinating the potluck and Chris Craig and Mike Seifer for handling the decorations.

President Bob Wells welcomed everyone and led the Annual Meeting starting at 7:00 pm. He introduced guests City Councilman Tom Vlassis and wife Sophie and Des Moines Police Officer Larry Rogers. The minutes of the February 10, 2004 Quarterly Meeting were seconded and approved. The evening's agenda was approved.

**Speaker Municipal Arborist Skip Moore** answered questions on city plantings and tree removal. In his 29 years with the department it still amazes him what folks do not know about trees. They are trying to educate residents that it is not necessary to top a tree but to maintain its circumference with proper pruning. The power company no longer tops trees. Free trees are available by contacting his department or residents can purchase a tree and they will plant it. The Public Works department is open 24-7 to clean up snow, ice removal, flooding and plugging chuck holes.

**Speaker District Chief/Fire Marshall Matt Porter** has been in charge of fire investigation for 25 years. He discussed home fire protection and safety regarding BBQ grills and smoke detectors. He recommended changing batteries in the spring and fall and have smoke detector on all home levels and the kitchen, by the furnace and water heater also. Residents cannot have recreational chimneys within the city limits.

**Speaker Major Frank Cownie** updated neighbors with an overview of the tough city budget decisions and his visions for future growth. There are a possible \$4-6 million cuts next year. How are we going to meet those cuts? The city is working on improving the quality of life and needs our input. A question was asked if there are any plans to pay part of the city workers health insurance? He mentioned that the Des Moines Register had called him to tell him they hear the City Council does not get along. The Major said that was not true, but that they work very hard and well together. He asked how many people voted today? He said people just don't get out and vote and we have a secret weapon in neighborhood associations. Please keep participating in your MNA.

The Nominating Committee placed the following Slate of Officers in nomination to each serve a two year term (2004-2006). **Justin Gross** for **President** and **Chris Craig** for **Secretary**. Nominations from the floor were also asked for. Voting for the election of new officers was held. The nominations were voted into office unanimously by the members present.

The MNA Board recognized the four years of dedicated volunteer efforts of outgoing President Bob Wells and wife Dolores and Harold and Nancy Rathert, retiring Social Chairs. Board Member Emily Chafa presented each couple with a framed Certificate of Appreciation and miniature blooming rose bush.

**Treasurer's Report:** Mikki Kinning reported on the financial status of the association. The MNA reports a beginning revenue balance of \$3,989.42; expenses of \$1,651.40 with an ending May 11 balance of \$4,413.02. A motion was made and seconded to approve the financial report. For ease of reading, Mikki has reported the revenue by category and the expenses by MNA projects and events. Questions can be directed to her at 254-0583 or [kinning@aol.com](mailto:kinning@aol.com).

**Westchester Park Committee:** Park Committee Member Emily Chafa reported that the City is on schedule to have the Phase II renovation completed soon. This summer's work includes the new 5-12 year-old play equipment, which features three slides, a pod bridge, several climbers, overhead rings, and a chinning bar. Also planned are new concrete parking lot curbs, a small retaining wall to save an existing tree, 4 additional benches, 3 new bike racks, and additional swings for the older kids and kids at heart. The contractor, Johnson Concrete, is in the process of ordering the play equipment, benches, and bike racks which typically take about 4-6 weeks to arrive.

on site. Although the rain earlier this summer has put him behind schedule, he expects to get started on the park right after the August 3 National Night Out Family Picnic. The park construction includes the installation of a Donation Box at the east end of the park in the seating area. The money (cash or checks) that is donated will be used to help with the operation, maintenance and improvements to our park. The portable restroom enclosure will be a part of next year's Phase III development along with an open-air shelter. Emily thanked the Parks and Recreation Department for their progress. Questions can be directed to Park Chair Bob Shaw at 278-2524 or [bob7bob@aol.com](mailto:bob7bob@aol.com).

**Membership Committee:** Chris Craig reported that our data base is being updated by Jennifer Hushagen but we still need a volunteer to run the Welcome Committee, to make calls to our newest neighbors and deliver a small package of gifts from area businesses. The Calling Committee makes phone calls a few times a year to remind members of their membership renewal dates. Current membership has gone from a beginning of 50 to 188 members. Contact Justin at 252-7307 or [Justin.gross@dmps.k12.ia.us](mailto:Justin.gross@dmps.k12.ia.us) if you can help out or with questions.

**Social Committee:** Harold Rathert talked about the projects and events that the MNA has scheduled. There are plenty of opportunities for volunteers to get involved and the Social Committee is in need of additional members. A one-page MNA Calendar of Events for 2004 was distributed to the attendees. The next big event is the Night Out Family Picnic at Westchester Park on August 3 and the July 4<sup>th</sup> Kids Parade to be held on Saturday. Direct any questions to him at 276-5746 or [nancyrathert5746@msn.com](mailto:nancyrathert5746@msn.com).

**Business Committee:** Ken Craig was not present for this report but it was said that the committee needs someone to volunteer to help sell ads. The committee current has members Ken Craig, Don Shaw, Don Lancaster and Bob Wells selling ads (and Bob will be retiring as a rep). Contact Ken at 270-3878 or [chriscraig@mchsi.com](mailto:chriscraig@mchsi.com).

**Communication Committee:** Ken Craig reported that the Spring newsletters was mailed out as a flat 8.5 x 11 piece with the membership envelope tucked inside and 3 sides tabbed shut. We get great support from our advertisers; new advertisers call us. The Des Moines Menace asked to put an ad in this current issue to thank the community. Our recent Member Appreciation night at Famous Dave's in April had a great turnout and support from manger Kevin Burger and his staff. Thank you to Don Lancaster also for distributing extra printed newsletters to the area businesses for people to pick up.

**Community Development:** Project Coordinator Nancy Beltramo reported that we have two main entry points off Palm and Bel-Aire Roads as a welcoming entrance into part of our neighborhood. We need to keep the islands updated, watered and weeded and keep the city coming in to help. Plus put in more perennials and annuals. Nancy passed out flyers to volunteer to help plant the islands on Sunday, May 16 from 1:00 to 3:00 pm. Contact Nancy at 276-0999.

Don Shaw reported that the Toyota car dealership was redoing their area. Wayne Thomas said the MNA would be having their 4<sup>th</sup> annual Scrub Day at Hoover parking lot on Saturday, July 27 from 7 am to 12:00 noon. No fees and we are co-project coordinators with the Merle Hay Neighborhood Association. The Committee is working on the logistics of getting the big equipment laid out. We will be promoting this general trash and clean up day and items that neighbors can get rid of are listed in the Spring newsletter. We need to eliminate commercial and straight haul trucks entering the premises. Contact Don Shaw at 278-2150 or [bjndonshaw@mchsi.com](mailto:bjndonshaw@mchsi.com).

Door prizes winners were Claudia Koon, Jerry Beltramo, Ann Jennings, John Grim, Betty Saunders, Gary Aswegan, Delores Aswegan, Pam Needham and Randy Taylor. Thank you to Boesen's The Florist for their generous discount toward the colorful potted flowers used as table decorations and drawing prizes.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm

**Minutes Submitted by  
Chris Craig, Secretary 2004-2006**



Questions on the Minutes?  
270-3878 or [chriscraig@mchsi.com](mailto:chriscraig@mchsi.com)