



Merle Hay Neighborhood Association

"Working Together to Make a Difference"

P.O. Box 31036 Des Moines, IA 50310

Web: www.merlehay.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/MerleHayNeighborhood

Twitter: @MerleHay

January 2016 Newsletter

MHNA Annual Meeting on Thursday, January 21

The Merle Hay Neighborhood Association will host its annual meeting at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, January 21, at the Northwest Community Center, 5110 Franklin Ave. Refreshments will be provided.

We are still working on guest speakers for the annual meeting, and will provide updates as soon as possible.

As always, there will be public safety updates and the latest neighborhood news. We also welcome discussion about neighborhood goals for 2016. Lastly, the 2015 annual report will be given, and officer and board elections will be held.

We look forward to seeing lots of neighbors on January 21. Please spread the word!

2016 Membership Dues

MHNA membership dues for 2016 are payable in January. Costs for membership are as follows:

- Individual: \$15
- Couple: \$30
- Business: \$30
- Church or School: \$10

MHNA membership is open to anyone who lives, rents, or owns property, and to businesses within the neighborhood boundaries. Non-residents may join, though they may not vote. MHNA is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization. Dues and donations are tax-deductible, and can be paid in person at association meetings, or mailed to our post office box, which is listed on the newsletter mast-head.

Officer and Board Elections

Elections for MHNA's Board of Directors in 2016 will be held at our annual meeting at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, January 21, at the Northwest Community Center. Elections will be held for president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and three board members.

If you are interested in running for an officer or board position, please send an email to Marilyn Nizzi at: mmnizzi@outlook.com.

Nominations will also be accepted from the floor when we meet on Thursday, January 21. Membership dues must be current to run for a seat on the Board of Directors.

Resolve in 2016 to Get Involved In Your Neighborhood!

Making 2016 an even better year in the Merle Hay neighborhood depends on all of us working together. MHNA has great opportunities for volunteers to make a difference in our community. Consider getting involved in any of the following MHNA committees:

- **Advertising**
- **Special Projects/Civic**
- **Newsletter & Communications**
- **Flower Planting, Trees, & Beautification**
- **Social — National Night Out, Merle HayDay, Special Events**
- **SCRUB Day**
- **Holiday Lights**
- **Parks: Tower Park & Riley Park**

Interested? Contact MHNA President Jason Pulliam at 515-681-9689 or jason.pulliam@gmail.com. To get involved in the Beautification Committee, contact Kathy Battles at 515-865-3040 or kmbattles@msn.com. To get involved in the Social Committee, contact April Beck at 515-707-6386 or hawkifan87@yahoo.com.

Snow Ordinance Reminders

City ordinance requires vehicles to be removed from snow routes while Public Works crews plow streets. Violators can be ticketed or towed. Once snow routes are cleared, city crews plow residential streets. Complete details on Des Moines' snow ordinances can be found at www.dmsnow.org. Please do your part to help city plow crews keep our streets as clear of snow and ice as possible.

Also, below are some helpful reminders about the city's requirements and expectations for snow removal on sidewalks. As always, the Merle Hay Neighborhood Association encourages neighbors to help each other with snow removal. Please lend a hand to elderly or disabled neighbors who may not be able to clear their own sidewalks. Thanks to everyone for your help!

-City ordinance requires sidewalks to be shoveled 48 hours after a measurable snowfall. Sidewalks should be shoveled full length and width, according to the City of Des Moines.

-Those who don't clear their walks could be penalized. Historically, fines for noncompliance have been \$50 for the first offense, \$75 for a second violation, and \$100 for a third.

-City ordinance prohibits snow from being blown or thrown into the street.

-A wheelchair needs a minimum clearance of 36 inches.

-Pedestrian ramps on street corners should be shoveled.

-Spread sand and/or ice-melt as needed.

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PO Box 31036

Des Moines, IA 50310

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MHNA's 2016 Meeting Dates

MHNA holds its quarterly membership meetings on the third Thursday of January, April, July, and October. Meetings are generally held at 6:30 p.m. at the Northwest Community Center, 5110 Franklin Ave., unless otherwise noted. Please save the following dates:

- Thursday, January 21
- Thursday, April 21
- Thursday, July 21
- Thursday, October 20

Tree Planting Projects

MHNA worked with other groups on the northwest side this fall to do some wonderful tree-planting projects. On Saturday, October 18, MHNA volunteers teamed up with Trees Forever, the City of Des Moines' Forestry Division, and the Beaverdale and Waveland Park neighborhood associations to plant **more than 50 trees** in the rights-of-way along Franklin Avenue between Merle Hay Road and Beaver Avenue.

On Dec. 22, weather and soil conditions were still conducive to another tree-planting project at Windsor Elementary School, 5912 University Ave. MHNA collaborated with Windsor to plant three more trees on school grounds. Windsor volunteers planted two Autumn Blaze Maples, and one Royal Red Norway Maple. Last year, MHNA donated four trees to Windsor. Thanks to everyone who helped!

Holiday Lights Contest Winners

Thank you to everyone who decorated their homes for the holiday season! You really made the Merle Hay neighborhood sparkle and shine! The following residents received a \$25 gift certificate to Merle Hay Mall:

- 1501 Cummings Pkwy
- 5915 College Ave.
- 6026 Urbandale Ave.

Honorable mention went to residents at 6105 Crown Lane, 6408 Holcomb Ave., 2901 54th St., and 6119 Hickman Road. Our judges always have some tough decisions to make because so many homes are so nicely decorated. We look forward to next year's contest! (Recent winners are not eligible for prizes.) Thanks again to all who participated!

Food and Clothing Drive

MHNA led another successful food and clothing drive for the less fortunate on November 19 at the Northwest Community Center. Volunteers donated more than 80 food items and \$95 to the Des Moines Area Religious Council's Food Pantry program. During multiple drives in 2014, MHNA collected and donated more than 250 food items to DMARC's food pantry program.

A few dozen winter clothing items—stocking hats, gloves, scarfs, coats, and snow boots—were also collected and donated to Moore Elementary School.

MHNA plans to keep this tradition going. Contact Kathy Battles at 515-865-3040 or kmbattles@msn.com to get involved! Thanks to everyone who has contributed!

Prairie/Pollinator Garden Project Planned

Volunteers are sought to support a prairie project near the Franklin Avenue community gardens that coordinators hope to start in 2016. MHNA was joined at its October quarterly meeting by Natasha Bures with People for Pollinators and Lydia Roush from the City of Des Moines' Park and Recreation Department. The goal is to plant more prairie areas and pollinator gardens in various places throughout the city. Such efforts provide myriad environmental benefits, including vital habitat for Monarch butterflies and other pollinators.

At least 30 volunteers are sought to support a prairie/pollinator project near the Franklin Community Gardens. There were not quite enough volunteers to start in fall 2015, so recruitment will continue to foster the effort in 2016.

If you are interested in volunteering to support a prairie/pollinator project near the Franklin Community Gardens, please contact Lydia Roush at 515-248-6383 or email at ParksVolunteer@dmgov.org.