



Merle Hay Neighborhood Association
PO Box 31036
Des Moines, IA 50310

NON PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 762
DES MOINES, IA

Postmaster: Please
deliver by Oct. 12th



Merle Hay Neighborhood Newsletter

It's Not Too Early to Renew Your MHNA Membership!

Beginning in October, any MHNA dues paid will be applied to 2020. Please don't wait to renew your dues or join for the first time!

MHNA membership is open to anyone who lives or owns a business within MHNA's boundaries. Annual dues are payable at the annual meeting in January, or can be mailed to the association post office box listed on the front cover. Members may take part in MHNA decision-making on planning, development, zoning, infrastructure, streets and parks, beautification, and other community service and education projects, and social events. Associate memberships are available to those outside MHNA's boundaries, though associate members may not vote on MHNA business.

Membership rates are as follows:

- \$10 for a church, school, or other non-profit
- \$15 for an individual
- \$30 for a couple
- \$30 for a business



You're Invited! Douglas Avenue Coalition Open House on October 29th.

The Douglas Avenue Coalition (DAC) will host an Open House on Tuesday, October 29, to share information about proposed improvements to the Douglas Avenue Corridor between Merle Hay Road and the Des Moines River. The improvements aim to improve multi-modal safety, beautify the corridor, and facilitate the revitalization of the commercial nodes along Douglas Avenue. The effort is the culmination of more than two years' collaboration between DAC, the City of Des Moines, Polk County, the State of Iowa, and consulting firms RDG and HDR, along with extensive input from the community.

The Open House will be held on October 29 from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. at Polk County River Place, 2309 Euclid Avenue. Stations will be set up around the room focusing on different aspects of the plan. The meeting will be informal - come for twenty minutes or stay for longer! The design team and officials will be on hand to collect your input and answer questions.



Left: After a long summer of construction, we thought you might appreciate this photo of the Hickman & Merle Hay intersection, looking west, circa 1956. A filling station was located on every corner.

Connect with Us!

Facebook: @MerleHayNeighborhood
Website: www.merlehay.org

MHNA's Annual Soup Supper and Quarterly Meeting on October 17th!

Bring your appetite and ideas for our neighborhood when the Merle Hay Neighborhood Association meets at 6 p.m. on Thursday, October 17 at the Northwest Community Center, 5110 Franklin Ave. Our evening will start tastily enough with the popular annual supper, featuring a variety of soups, sides, and desserts. If you'd like to contribute to the culinary cause, please contact April at 515.707.6386.

The meeting portion will feature a discussion about neighborhood priorities for 2019 and beyond. Before we meet, we encourage everyone to review the Merle Hay Neighborhood Plan. A copy can be found online at <https://bit.ly/2ncr4Br>. Some food for thought:

- *What does the neighborhood plan get right and wrong?*
- *What needs and priorities have emerged since the plan was adopted in 2008?*
- *What are the Merle Hay neighborhood's biggest successes and challenges?*
- *How can MHNA do better?*

We will also be joined by a staff member from the City of Des Moines' Engineering Department to discuss forthcoming improvements to Franklin Avenue. Storm sewer work along Franklin Avenue will require sections of the roadway to be reconstructed. A variety of other improvements are being considered as part of the project. An open house was held in June, where approximately 50 northwest-side citizens came to learn and ask questions about features such as on-street parking, on-street bicycle lanes, and a multi-use path.

As always, the meeting will also include neighborhood news, public safety updates, and more. Please mark your calendar and invite your neighbors! This is our last chance to gather in 2018 and we look forward to a great turnout.

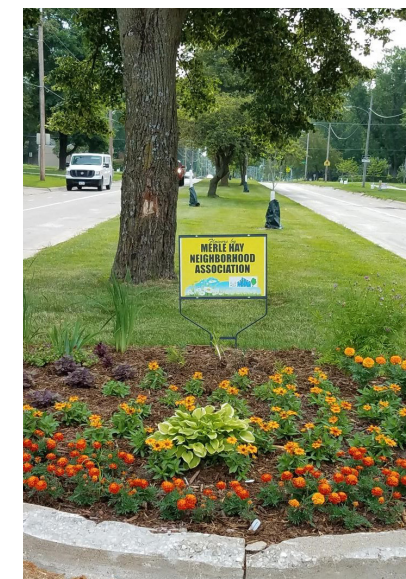
Help MHNA Keep the Kids Warm!

The Merle Hay Neighborhood Association will once again collect food and clothing donations for the less fortunate when we meet at 6 p.m. on Thursday, October 17, at the Northwest Community Center.

Through our "Keep the Kids Warm!" program, we will collect winter clothing for students at Moore Elementary School. Donations of new coats, boots, stocking hats, gloves, and mittens are greatly appreciated. For more information about the clothing drive, contact Kathy Battles by email at kmbattles@msn.com, or 515.865.3040.

The food we collect will be donated to the Des Moines Area Religious Council's Food Pantry Program. For more information about the most-needed food items, please visit: <https://www.dmarcunited.org/movethefood/>

We will also accept free-will monetary donations for each program and use the funds to further each cause. Please help us continue our success!



Merle Hay Neighborhood Association
"Working Together to Make a Difference"
PO Box 31036 Des Moines, IA 50310

October 2019

Don't Forget to VOTE!

Local Elections Tuesday, November 5th

This year is the first year that our community will vote for both city council and school board on the same ballot. With At-large Councilman Chris Coleman's retirement, the race for his seat will be a big one. Plus, the mayor's race has a number of candidates too. Historically the municipal and school board elections produce the lowest level of voter turnout, but are arguably the elections that have the biggest impact on our day-to-day lives. We recommend you plan ahead to minimize any issues this November.

The Polk Co. Auditor's website (www.polkcountyiowa.gov/auditor/election/) has a bunch of resources available for you. Check your voter registration! Find your polling place! Print an absentee ballot request form! Also, if you plan to vote on election day don't forget to bring a government-issued photo ID or another acceptable document.

For more information about how to exercise your right to vote this November email the Polk County Auditor's office at election@polkcountyiowa.gov or call them at 286-3247.

Officer and Board Elections

Elections for MHNA's 2020 Board of Directors will be held at our annual meeting at 6:30 pm on Thursday, January 16, 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 merlehayneighborhood@gmail.com.

Nominations will also be accepted from the floor when we meet on January 16. Membership dues must be current to run for a seat on the Board of Directors. Please consider running for a seat to help serve OUR neighborhood! It takes everyone doing their part.

2020 MHNA Meeting Dates

The New Year is right around the corner, so please think ahead and make MHNA a part of your regular schedule!

MHNA meets on the third Thursday in January, April, July, and October. Unless otherwise noted, the meetings start at 6:30 p.m. and are held at the Northwest Community Center, 5110 Franklin Ave.

The 2020 meetings will be held on January 16, April 16, July 16, and October 15. Please mark your calendars and help spread the word!

Annual Holiday Lights Contest

The Merle Hay Neighborhood Association will sponsor its 15th annual Holiday Lights contest this winter. Judging will take place in mid-December. If you would like ensure your house is included in judging, please contact April at 515-707-6386. Your home or your neighbor's home may be considered for a prize even if you don't contact us. Three homes will be awarded a \$25 gift certificate. Judges will be looking for creativity, originality, holiday spirit, neatness and theme coordination.

National Night Out Recap

Thank you to everyone who joined the Merle Hay Neighborhood Association for National Night Out on August 6! Special thanks to the Des Moines Police and Des Moines Fire Department for joining us, and for your service to the community. We also wish to thank and recognize our generous sponsors and wonderful volunteers.

Sponsors: Bankers Trust Company, Applebee's Grill + Bar, Jersey Mike's Subs, O'Donnell Ace Hardware, Shang Yuen Chinese Fast Food, Price Chopper Des Moines, McAlister's Deli Des Moines, Wasabi Chi, Buffalo Wild Wings, F&O's - Felix and Oscar's, KFC, Chic-fil-A, Blaze Pizza, Dairy Queen on Douglas, Marie's Mexican Food, and Mister Carwash.

We sincerely apologize if we missed any sponsors. Thanks again to everyone who made National Night Out a success!



Snow Ordinance Reminders

It's hard to believe, but winter is just around the corner. Chances are good you may need a quick refresher on the city's snow ordinance. Here are the basics:

- City ordinance requires vehicles to be removed from snow routes while Public Works crews plow streets. Violators will receive a \$35 fine and can also be towed.
- Once snow routes are cleared, city crews plow residential streets.
- Front-yard parking is illegal at all times.
- Complete details on Des Moines' snow ordinances can be found at www.dmsnow.org.

Also, below are some reminders about the city's requirements for snow removal on sidewalks. As always, MHNA 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.
- Pedestrian ramps on street corners should be shoveled.

O'Donnell **ACE** Hardware
Home Improvement Corner

Fall is the Time to Weatherproof Your Home!

The temperatures will be dropping soon. Now is the time to go around your house and seal up any gaps and cracks both inside and out. This simple task will save energy, prevent water damage, and prevent pest problems. Use caulk or spray foam around non-moving spaces in your home. Check outside for gaps or cracks in your foundation, around vent openings, plumbing pipes, and where windows meet your siding. Use caulking for gaps up to 1/4" and expanding foam for larger gaps. Weather stripping is best for areas that move or open, like doors and windows. Replace door sweeps to block drafts at the bottom of your exterior door.

Ace Hardware will be celebrating 95 years this month! Join us for our 95th Birthday Sale October 16th - 28th.

DID YOU KNOW???

In Des Moines, yard waste bags and carts are collected year-round. Just make sure that you get a sticker if it's not an official "Compost It!" bag. Set yard waste out on your regular collection day.



Got a Traffic Concern? Here's What to Do.

MHNA sometimes hears from residents who have concerns about any number of traffic safety and enforcement issues. Many times solutions can be achieved quickly, without getting the City Council involved. Depending on your concern, there are multiple ways to contact the City:

If you have a concern regarding traffic signals, traffic signage, pavement markings, street lighting, visual obstructions at intersections, or other design and safety concerns, you can contact the City's Traffic and Transportation Division at 515-283-4973.

If you have a concern that requires enforcement, such as speeding traffic or illegal parking, the Des Moines Police have set up a Traffic Complaint Hotline at 515-323-8375. The hotline is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. You must leave a voicemail message regarding your complaint. An investigator will be assigned to your complaint for follow-up. By leaving your name and phone number, the investigator will call you within 3-5 days to let you know the complaint was received. You will receive feedback from the investigator in approximately 14 days.

Of course, MHNA is always happy to help however we can. Please come to a meeting, drop us a note through Facebook, or send an email to merlehayneighborhood@gmail.com.

