



Merle Hay Neighborhood Association
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Des Moines, IA 50310

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Merle Hay Neighborhood Newsletter

MHNA's Quarterly Meeting on July 18th!

Learn how to recycle right and meet our new neighborhood police officer when the Merle Hay Neighborhood Association meets at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, July 18 at the Northwest Community Center, 5110 Franklin Ave.

We expect to be joined by a rep from the City of Des Moines, who will share do's and don'ts about recycling, and provide details about how you can go for the gold—gold lid, that is. The city offers gold recycling cart lids for “super recyclers” who pass a spot check on the contents of their bin. We all need to be more environmentally conscious and this is an opportunity to learn how we can all keep more recyclable goods out of the landfill. We'll also hear from Des Moines Police Officer Trudy Paulson, who was recently assigned to our neighborhood.

There will be neighborhood news, a preview of our events calendar for the rest of 2018, and perhaps most importantly, T-R-E-A-T-S. Please mark your calendar and spread the word among your neighbors. Attending MHNA's quarterly meetings is a great way to learn how you can get involved and make a difference right where you live!



New Water Feature Now Open at Tower Park!

Tower Park supporters gathered on June 13 to celebrate the grand opening of the park's new spray-grounds and restrooms. The spray-grounds are the park's signature attraction and feature a replica of the historic Hazen Water Tower, which is located just east of the park on Des Moines Water Works property.

The June 13 dedication marked the culmination of more than a decade of efforts among neighborhood volunteers, city leaders, and county officials to deliver a host of park improvements that were originally outlined in a 2006 master plan. In addition to the new spray-grounds and restrooms, Tower Park has recently added a new basketball court, interior trail, resurfaced tennis courts, a renovated shelter, and numerous new tree plantings.

The spray-grounds and restrooms are located southeast of the park's open-air shelter near the basketball and tennis courts. They are free and open daily from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. until September 30. There is no standing water, so lifeguards are not on duty. Parental supervision is required, according to the Parks and Recreation Department.

Please get out and enjoy the new spray-grounds! Thank you to all of the volunteers from the Merle Hay, Beaverdale, and Waveland Park neighborhood associations who have helped bring so many upgrades to Tower Park. MHNA also wishes to thank the Parks and Recreation Department, the Park and Recreation Board, City Council members, and Polk County for all of their work and contributions.

Connect with Us!

Facebook: @MerleHayNeighborhood
Website: www.merlehay.org

MHNA Calendar

How is half the year gone already? It's hard to believe, but we only have two more general membership meetings in 2019. Please catch us for quarterly meetings at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, July 18, and at 6 p.m. on Thursday, October 17. The October meeting duals as our annual supper. All quarterly meetings are held at the Northwest Community Center, 5110 Franklin Ave.

You're also welcome to join us at board meetings, which are open to MHNA's general membership and the public. Unless otherwise noted, meetings are held at 6 p.m. at the Franklin Avenue Library. Board meetings are scheduled for:

- Monday, August 12
- Monday, September 16
- Monday, October 7

We hope to see you at one of our events during the second half of 2019! Please encourage your neighbors to join us.

Join us August 6th for National Night Out

Please join the Merle Hay Neighborhood Association for our annual observance of National Night Out, America's night out against crime, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Tuesday, August 6th at the Northwest Community Center, 5110 Franklin Avenue. There will be food, games for kids, family-friendly entertainment, door prizes, and great tips and information from public safety personnel about how to safeguard your property against crime. Tableware, food, and drinks will be provided.

National Night Out is a great way to meet your neighbors and learn more about safety within your home and while you're out and about. Please help spread the word! We look forward to having a great turnout. Contact April Wyss at 707-6386 to volunteer, donate, or have a booth.



Get Involved with MHNA!

It's not too late to join or renew your MHNA dues for 2019!

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 masthead. Dues are \$15 for an individual, \$30 for a couple, \$30 for a business, and \$10 for a church or school.

Please get involved and support the only organization that is solely dedicated to improving the Merle Hay neighborhood as a whole!

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

July 2019

More Trees Planted on Urbandale Avenue

Have you seen all of the new trees along Urbandale Avenue? What a wonderful addition! The spring phase of the Urbandale Avenue tree-planting project focused on rights of way between Merle Hay Road and 49th Street. They were preceded by more than 40 flowering ornamental and shade trees that were planted in the boulevard in October. Beyond their beauty, the trees will help improve air quality, sweep carbon from the atmosphere, and help provide natural storm water management.

Thank you to the City of Des Moines and Trees Forever for coordinating the tree plantings along Urbandale Avenue! We are grateful for your time and efforts on this wonderful project for our neighborhood.

Mary Keables Earns Volunteer of the Year Honors at Des Moines Neighbors Banquet

MHNA's own Mary Keables was recognized as the volunteer of the year at April's Rodine-Mickle Recognition Dinner, hosted by Des Moines Neighbors. We cannot think of anyone more deserving! Thank you, Mary, for everything you do for our neighborhood. Here is the nomination submitted by MHNA:

The Merle Hay Neighborhood Association enthusiastically recognizes Mary Keables for many years of outstanding leadership, commitment, and service to our neighborhood.

Mary served as a Merle Hay neighborhood board member for a decade or more, and remains a valuable and essential member of our team. Mary has done a little bit of everything as a neighborhood volunteer. She's scrutinized City Council agendas, monitored legal notices, provided input on key zoning and development issues, worked on our newsletter, planted trees, and advocated for our neighborhood parks, among countless other contributions. If something needs to be done, Mary can always be depended on to do her part and then some.

Mary can always be relied upon to provide thoughtful and measured insights and advice on any number of civic issues. She leads by example, and her example is one of kindness, respect, and dedication. MHNA extends its sincerest thanks and gratitude to Mary for everything she does for our neighborhood and city. Des Moines is lucky to have her.

Mary accepts her award from Skip Moore, President of Des Moines Neighbors.



Keep Your Yard Looking Sharp!

Maintaining your lawn and landscape helps improve the value of your property and the Merle Hay Neighborhood as a whole. Overgrown grass, trees, and shrubs not only look bad, they can attract undesirable critters and mosquitos.

And in case you did not know, a countywide ordinance requires grass to be less than 12 inches tall. MHNA encourages neighbors to help each other. Lend a hand to a neighbor who may not be able to mow and maintain their landscaping as often as necessary. It takes all of us working together to keep our neighborhood looking sharp. When code enforcement is necessary, contact the Polk County Weed Commission at 286-3005, or by email at weedcommission@polkcountyiowa.gov.

Excess yard waste can be placed at the curb in an approved bag, or bundled with a "Compost It" sticker attached. Each month, the Metro Waste Authority's Compost Center at 1601 Harriett Street also accepts trucks and trailers of yard debris including brush, tree limbs less than 24" in diameter, loose leaves, and grass clippings. This service is free for all Des Moines residents.

For more information on yard waste disposal contact Des Moines Public Works at 283-4950.

Hy-Vee Eyes August Opening for Fast & Fresh Store

Hy-Vee officials recently informed MHNA that they are targeting an early August opening date for their new Fast & Fresh store at the northwest corner of Merle Hay and Hickman roads. The rainy spring and utility relocations have caused some delays, but the project is going well overall, Hy-Vee officials report.

Hy-Vee's new store will be roughly 8,000 square feet, offering grocery items, fresh prepared foods, a Starbucks coffee shop, fuel sales, and a Market Grille Express.

MHNA will continue to provide updates as new information becomes available.

Thank You to MHNA's Beautification Committee!

A quick salute to the volunteers who plant and maintain MHNA's flowerbeds at the following locations:

- Merle Hay Road and Cummins Parkway
- University Avenue and Cummins Parkway
- Merle Hay Road, Hickman Road, and Merklin Way
- Urbandale Avenue and 57th Street
- Urbandale Avenue and 49th Street
- Tower Park
- Tenny Standpipe at Merle Hay Road and Madison Avenue

If you would like to help us water and weed, please contact Beautification Committee Chair Kathy Battles at 255-5050 or 865-3040, or by email at kmbattles@msn.com.



Home Improvement Corner

sponsored by O'Donnell ACE Hardware
5715 Hickman Road



Add Color for Easy, Instant Curb Appeal

Add a pop of color to your home by painting your front door! Paint or stain the door with a color that stands out, yet complements, the trim and siding. Our Clark & Kensington Exterior Paint & Primer can be mixed in an array of colors to meet your preference. After picking your paint and color, first remove any door knobs or peep holes. Fill any dents or holes and sand any rough areas. Clean the door to remove dirt and dust. Apply your paint, and allow for dry time before a second coat, replacing your knobs and closing the door. A new door knob and lock will complement your project. Hang a pretty wreath to finish the look.

As always, visit our local ACE Hardware for helpful tips and all of your home improvement needs!



Intersection Improvements Coming to Merle Hay & Hickman

An improvement project at the intersection of Merle Hay and Hickman roads is expected to get underway in July. Left-hand turn lanes will be added on the western portion of Hickman Road for motorists turning north onto Merle Hay Road. The project also includes the reconstruction of the east and west medians on Hickman Road to increase sight distances at the intersection for turning traffic. Improvements to sidewalks and pedestrian ramps are also included. City staff and the contractor will work to minimize any disruptions to pedestrian traffic, including students who use the sidewalks to walk to school at Hillis Elementary School. The project is slated for completion by mid-November.

New traffic signals will also be installed. That work has an expected completion date of May 2020.

Longer-term, MHNA is also working with city officials on ways to improve the overall safety, functionality, and appearance of the intersection for motorists and pedestrians alike. We will keep you posted as things take shape.

Franklin Avenue Open House

The City of Des Moines hosted an open house on June 26th to solicit feedback on ways to improve Franklin Avenue from Merle Hay Road to Beaver Avenue.

City staff reports that storm sewer work along Franklin Avenue will require sections of the roadway to be reconstructed. The stormwater project gives us an opportunity to make other modifications to the street. During the open house, the City asked for resident input on potential street cross-sections that could reduce or eliminate on-street parking and add on-street bike lanes or a shared-use path. Approximately 50 residents from the Merle Hay, Beaverdale, and Waveland Park neighborhoods attended the meeting and offered input. Attendees also brought forward concerns regarding crosswalks, traffic speed, and intersection controls at 55th Street, 56th Street, and Merle Hay Road.

MHNA will stay engaged in the process and provide updates as new information becomes available.