



# The Park Bench

AEPNA Association Newsletter

Visit us online at [aepna.org](http://aepna.org)

## President's Letter

### Everything Old is New Again

Happy New Year! The older I get, the clearer it is to me that change often involves going back to the old ways. Perhaps just a nod to tradition, but always a return home of sorts. I'm delighted to hear of people who grew up in the neighborhood choosing to move back here, choosing to make it home again. Last month's call for stories of the old days in Aksarben have awakened old memories of longtime residents and we hope to share some of their stories and photographs with you in future issues.

The January meeting will be our annual Soupfest. Officers provide the soups; you bring the sides, desserts and your neighbors. We'll have potato, ham & bean, south-western chicken and whatever surprise soup I can put together that Thursday.

Our guest speakers will be Kathy Byrnes from Canvas & Cabernet in Aksarben Village and Amber Miller from the Omaha Parks Foundation. Both of them will show us what happens with a little imagination, talent and work. I've seen the Omaha Parks and Recreation Department's final drawings of the Schroeder/Vogel Park playground renovation, and it looks good. Now to get started!

Leah Meyer joined AEPNA's officers at HyVee to discuss support for a community garden. You'll be hearing more from Leah about that project in the near future. If you are interested in being in on the ground floor of an exciting opportunity for the neighborhood and community development, talk with me or Eileen Slane and we'll get you connected with Leah.

I'd like to welcome new members and encourage all members to renew for 2014. Anne Konen, one of our newest business members, sent us a letter sharing her vision for a bar that pays respect to the 50-year old neighborhood landmark it replaces. Ann aims to keep the best and improve the rest. Check out her stories on pages 3 and 4.

2014 is going to be an exciting year for the neighborhood. I hope you'll join us in the work and play that goes into making the improvements and preserving the traditions.

See you around the neighborhood!

Avery Schwer

### Next Meeting...

January 16th

6:30 – 8:30 PM

Guest speakers from:

Omaha Parks & Recreation

Omaha Parks Foundation

Canvas & Cabernet

### SOUPFEST!

Soups provided by

AEPNA officers

Sides – Potluck:

A-L- desserts

M-Z- salad/veggies

Saint Matthew Evangelical

Lutheran Church

1725 S. 60th Street

3rd Thursday

Every Other Month

Bring a friend or two

and join us!



AEPNA board members planning for 2014



your neighborhood bank  more

You may know us as the friendly, neighborhood bank. But there's more to the story than that. Here, you'll find mortgage experts to help with all of your purchasing, refinancing, and home equity loan needs. You'll find experienced financial advisors who can provide you with the custom planning and consultation you need to meet any dream. Plus, you'll find insurance experts who know how to save you money on anything from home, auto, and life to business and health insurance. Best of all, you can find it right here. In your neighborhood. What more could you ask for?



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# Small Wonders

## Making Tracks

*Excerpts from Anne Konen's letter to the Aksarben Elmwood Park Neighborhood Association Members:*

A little over a year ago, I purchased the building at 1506 S. 60th. The building was in great need of care, both inside and out. I purchased it because of my fondness of the neighborhood and the potential of the location to be a positive part of it. As you drive past you will notice some big improvements.

I am sure you are wondering what is happening to the building and the former Trackside Bar. As you know, Stan Voecks, owner of the Trackside, died in May. The doors were locked and I was left to search for another tenant for the bar. I feel my standards are high and my intentions for the building and bar are that they will contribute to the neighborhood.

Eventually I decided that in order to ensure this, I would own the bar. We are working hard to clean it up inside. The bar was opened in 1965 – that is almost 50 years! It is such an honor to have the opportunity to keep it going. I want to pay homage to its history in the neighborhood and its connection to Ak-sarben horse racing.

You may have noticed the new sign, "Tracks." I hope you also noticed that the sign reads, "world's best chicken!" What a challenge, but we are up for it. The bar will evolve as it meets the needs of the neighborhood.

I look forward to meeting my new neighbors and participating in the association.

Sincerely,  
Anne Konen



*Editor's note: Anne is hoping for a mid-January opening of Tracks. Stop by and have a bite!*

## Time to Renew!

Please renew your membership so you can continue to receive the newsletter. Use the form on page 3. Consider a gift membership for a new or favorite neighbor!

### AEPNA Membership Form

New  Renewal

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Circle one:                      Household      Business  
   \$10.00              \$20.00

Please make check payable to:

Aksarben Elmwood Park Neighborhood Association  
Mail to: 1302 South 56th Street Omaha, NE 68106



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Elmwood Tower  
Godfather's Pizza Aksarben Village  
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## **The Surly Chap**

“I was fortunate to find a neighborhood barber. Lewis Moore grew up getting his haircuts at Ben's Barber and he wants to carry on with the tradition. I encourage you to stop in and see the great things he is doing.” Anne Konen (owner of the building at 1506 S 60th)