

# The Park Bench

## AEPNA Newsletter

Visit us online at [aepna.org](http://aepna.org) or find us on Facebook at Aksarben Elmwood Park Neighborhood Association

## President's Letter

### It's Been Fun

Wow! I can't believe how the years have flown by! As I look back on the past four years that I've served as AEPNA President, I see a lot of accomplishments that the association spearheaded, organized, funded or supported.

We raised \$50,000 for a park renovation. We applied for grants, got grants, and matched grant money for special projects. We served beer. We served pancakes. We planted trees. We watered trees. We planted more trees. We hosted potlucks, soup-fests, chili-fests and celebrations big and small. We organized fundraisers. We organized regular park clean ups, dumpster days and garage sales. We got a walkway to bridge the neighborhood and the University village. We hosted garden tours, arena tours, tours of green homes and assisted living homes. We did all this and a whole lot more.

Any one of the items or events may seem simple from the outside, but I know the effort that went into them behind the scenes was sometimes heroic and often thankless. Something as simple as putting a break in the fence between the University and Woolworth Avenue took two years...

It has been a real privilege to serve the neighborhood through the association. The officers and volunteers are some of the finest people I've ever met, and I'm glad to know that they're my neighbors. I don't have the space to thank everyone here, but I have to give special recognition to some who have served selflessly for a long time.

Secretary Tim Potter keeps all our notes and minutes. Treasurer Eileen Slane, keeps all our books and was instrumental in keeping the park renovation and celebration on track. Membership Director Scott Swanson keeps the roster and handles email communication with members. Communications Director Therese McGrath keeps the peace on Facebook. Social Director Lois Ourada keeps us well fed at the business meetings. Newsletter Editor Colleen Ciciulla keeps me on message. And last, but not least, my wife Marilyn keeps me sane and humble.

Thanks for letting me serve you. I'll see you around the neighborhood!

Avery Schwer

Next Meeting

Thurs. Jan. 21

6:30 PM

St. Matthews Church

1725 S. 60<sup>th</sup>

Soup Fest!

Soups provided;  
bring a side dish or  
dessert to share

Officer Elections

UNO students to share  
research on historic area  
homes in 2016 home tour

## AEPNA - What's In It For Me?

When told that the newsletter might not be printed and mailed any longer, a member asked,

### “So please explain to me what my membership has paid for exactly?”

Thank you for asking! Let's start with your \$10 annual household membership dues:

If you pay by cash or check, AEPNA gets \$10 or **\$0.83 per month**. If you pay \$25 via PayPal for a 3-year membership, you get a discount, PayPal gets a fee, and AEPNA gets **\$0.67 per month**.

**So, your paid membership gives AEPNA between \$0.67 and \$0.83 a month to cover operating expenses and provide the following kinds of services:**

- Annual fee for hosting website (maintained by AEPNA volunteers)
- Annual membership dues to umbrella associations
- Annual Garage Sale advertising (all other garage sale related activities are donated by AEPNA members)
- Donation to St. Matthews for their generously allowing us to use their facilities (meeting space & kitchen) for our bi-monthly meetings
- Facebook page (AEPNA volunteers provide administration of the page at no charge to AEPNA)
- Host neighborhood garden walks and other fundraisers to support AEPNA
- Matching funds for grants to make neighborhood improvements, using volunteer hours for in-kind funds where possible (members donate their time to research, write, manage and following up on grants)
- Paper products, coffee, tea, etc. for the 6 membership meetings (most food is donated by members)
- Park Pavilion rental and main dish for the annual picnic (side dishes are donated by members)
- Printing costs for notices distributed throughout the neighborhood to announce various AEPNA activities and/or solicit members
- Printing and mailing costs for the newsletter (members donate time to write, research and produce)
- Provide volunteers to facilitate annual events like 'Clean-up/Dumpster Day' for the neighborhood
- Schroeder/Vogel Park maintenance (dog waste bags and miscellaneous items most of which are donated by members)

As you can see, AEPNA functions mostly on the efforts of dedicated volunteers who selflessly provide their time to make our neighborhood a wonderful place to live! Please join us and see how investing \$0.83 per month can make you rich!

### Newsletter Update

The cost of printing and mailing the newsletter has been subsidized over the years in various ways. We believe that the newsletter provides a valuable service to the community and we plan to continue producing it, but we need some help.

Thanks to Tom Hansen and Denie Nesvan who came to the Dec. 17th meeting to address how to best continue this service. The cost of printing and mailing would be about **\$0.075 per piece**, which consumes the bulk of the monthly dues (see above). Advertisers or sponsors would defray the cost, but volunteers would have to find those advertisers and handle the bulk mailing.

The officers agreed to a short-term solution. For January and February, we will email the newsletter and

*Midtown Monitor* to all members who provided an email. Those without emails will get a hard copy, hand-delivered by one of the officers, who will ask for the member's email. We'll reassess in February and decide how to proceed for the long term.

This is a great time to shake up the newsletter content and make it more valuable to members and more appealing to potential advertisers or sponsors. With a neighborhood as vibrant and rich in history as ours, each issue should have content covering different aspects of the area, including business, culture, history, architecture, gardens, and human interest. Any one of those sections could be your “beat” if you're willing to volunteer your time and your talent for your neighborhood. Contact Colleen Ciciulla to contribute.

**Aksarben-Elmwood Park  
Neighborhood Association  
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**President** – Avery Schwer  
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**Secretary** – Tim Potter  
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**Membership Director**  
Scott Swanson  
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**Social Director**  
Lois Ourada

**Media Director**  
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We welcome newsletter ideas and photos. Send articles, information and photos to colleenciciulla@gmail.com.

The Aksarben Elmwood Park Neighborhood Association newsletter is published monthly.

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## 60<sup>th</sup> & Woolworth – Two Burning Questions

Trina Westman (neighbor and architect in the Urban Design and Historic Preservation Section of the City Planning Department) has gotten some calls about the available space at 60<sup>th</sup> & Woolworth. Her research showed that the building was built in 1924, and has always been a commercial site. It's had multiple lives as a drug store (Crestwood Drug), grocery store (Shaver's Food Mart), a convenience store and gas station, and most recently a golf specialty shop.

Trina's research turned up photos of the inside of the grocery store and a 1977 Omaha World Herald article about a fire that burned the building to the ground.

**Q: Do you know Donnie Kirby?**  
Neighbors Don Kirby and Kitty Tarkett were interviewed in the 1977 *Omaha World Herald* article.

If you have contact information for Don, Donnie or Kitty, please notify Colleen Ciciulla. We'd like to invite them to the January meeting and hear some stories!



From the *Omaha World Herald*, March 9, 1977. Find the full article on AEPNA Facebook page with the newsletter pdf.

**Q: What's next at that site?**

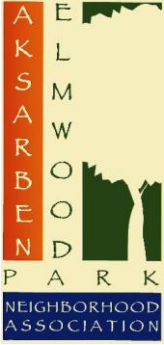
Businesses at that location have always added something to the neighborhood. It's a great location – close to the University, close to Elmwood Park, easy access to the interstate, right in the middle of a neighborhood where people get out and walk.

Let's steer the business we *want* here. Do you have any business friends who have been looking for a place? Is there a shop that you would love to see nearby? What would fit?

When a new business takes a risk on our neighborhood, we should support it and expect it to support the neighborhood. It's give and take.

A massage business recently opened on Leavenworth. It advertised online where people go to look for sexual services and offered "very young girls". Neighbors and nearby businesses rallied against the place, checking with local, state and even national authorities. At last report, it will be closing soon. If it moves to a place where neighbors don't actively work to promote a good community, it may thrive there, unfortunately.





## Time to renew your AEPNA membership!

Membership runs calendar year  
Use this form or sign up & pay online by  
using the PayPal link on our Facebook page

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

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

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

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

Please include me in the neighborhood roster  Yes  No

Household - \$10/1 year; \$20/2 years; \$25/3 years

Business - \$20/1 year; \$40/2 years; \$50/3 years

New  Renewal  Gift (a great for your thoughtful neighbor!)

Please make check payable to Aksarben-Elmwood Park NA

Mail to: 1302 S. 56 St. Omaha, NE 68106

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### AEPNA Business Members

#### What businesses in the neighborhood are missing from this list?

Encourage nearby businesses that you patronize and love or that contribute to the character and livability of our neighborhood to become business members.

Use the membership form above or send them to AEPNA's Facebook page.

A Couple Things

Anderson Industrial Engines Co.

Bluestone Development

Canvas and Cabernet, Aksarben Village

Cars R'Us Auto Body

Clooty Tree Massage

Courtyard by Marriott/Aksarben Village

Elmwood Pharmacy

Elmwood Tower

Gold Coast Real Estate

Gotta Be Me

Hertz Equipment Rental

Hy-Vee

Kids DIY Studio

Learning Headquarters

Life Gate Church

LIV Lounge

Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church

Noddle Companies

Olsson Associates

Pinhook Flats

Pruitt Outdoor Power

Residence Inn by Marriott/Aksarben Village

Sandra Turner Real Estate

Security National Bank /Aksarben Village

Shurson Publishing

St. Matthew Lutheran Church

Tasty Pastry

The Gourmet Granola

Tracks

UNO College of Business, Pacific Campus

UNO Board of Regents

Please patronize our business members  
and encourage other businesses not listed  
here to join.