

The LEAVENWORTH EXCHANGE

Celebrating together as friends and neighbors

Volume 34 Issue 3, March 2019



President's Letter.....

Snow, snow, and more snow...

It truly feels like its never-ending, but I know that in a few short weeks we will start to see signs of spring.

Last week, I was texting with my husband about the impending snow storm, and I was over it. I didn't want to see another flake, I'm sick of wearing boots, and I might cry if there is one. more. snow. day. In an effort to look at the bright side of things, I decided that I was going to make my personal list of things I'm looking forward to...

- Fish Fry (you can find a few of your neighbors attending Holy Name each week!)
- Gardening
- Sitting on the front porch

In reality, I know that the snow won't last forever, and that warm weather is right around the corner. Sure there will be potholes to fill and slushy messes that leave your socks and shoes soaked... but I'm choosing to look for the flowers. I hope you will too!

See you around the neighborhood.

Ashley Flater

Reminder! The LNA
Membership meeting
will be
March 21, 2019.
7:00 PM

We will be meeting at
Watts Coworking,
3502 Leavenworth

See you there!!

Report Complaints Online

By Ashley Flater

Want to report a pothole? Have an abandoned vehicle cluttering your street? Need to get rid of graffiti in your park?

Douglas County and City of Omaha residents can now report complaints or concerns online at <http://omahahotline.com>. You can also view other complaints so that nothing is duplicated. To submit your issue:

- 1) Click on a report type
- 2) Click on the green "Start a New Report" button at the bottom of the screen
- 3) Specify the location of the issue by clicking on the map, entering the address, or using the GPS button
- 4) Choose the report sub-type from the Type of Problem drop-down list
- 5) Type in a description of the issue in the Details section
- 6) Enter your name, phone, and/or email (if you want to be notified of updates)
- 7) Attach a photo (optional)
- 8) Click on the blue "Report It" button
- 9) Look for the green "Thank you! Your report has been submitted." message across the top.

You are done!

Questions/comments about reports?
Contact the Omaha **Mayor's Hotline: 402-444-5555**

Goals, Plans, Things To Do

At the beginning of each year the LNA sets out ideas for things that we would like to accomplish for the calendar year. We used to include things like remove junk cars, eliminate graffiti, etc. But these things are simply routine items that are supposed to be done by everyone, all year long.

So if you have thoughts about a significant project or concept that would improve and add to the quality of our neighborhood, we would be very happy to hear from you. Come to the meeting or drop us a line via email or postal mail. We appreciate your input.

LNA Budget 2019

By Janelle Domeyer

The following budget was approved at the membership meeting in February. Thank you to the members and advertisers who make these dollars appear.

2019 Budget Proposal

| Category | Budget | Spent | Remainder |
|-----------------|--------------------|-------------|--------------------|
| Chili Feed | \$ 30.00 | \$ - | \$ 30.00 |
| Spring Clean Up | \$ 300.00 | | \$ 300.00 |
| August Picnic | \$ 150.00 | | \$ 150.00 |
| Newsletter | \$ 800.00 | | \$ 800.00 |
| Christmas Cheer | \$ 200.00 | | \$ 200.00 |
| Holiday Party | \$ 250.00 | | \$ 250.00 |
| Marketing | \$ 800.00 | | \$ 800.00 |
| Dues | \$ 50.00 | | \$ 50.00 |
| Office Supplies | \$ 20.00 | | \$ 20.00 |
| | \$ 2,600.00 | \$ - | \$ 2,600.00 |

Grants for.....

The Leavenworth Neighborhood Association would like to apply for upcoming grant opportunities, but we need your help!

What changes or improvements would you like to see happen in the neighborhood? Send us a message for your idea to be considered.

At the membership meeting in February it was suggested that we re-visit the need for entrance signage to the LNA. Specifically, 36th & Leavenworth and 29th & St. Mary's. Also, there has been a long time desire to install "doggie doo" posts along the Turner Boulevard Trail.

Want to help with the grant writing process? We are always looking for additional volunteers to help with projects, committees, etc...

Thanks!

**IT IS TIME TO RENEW YOUR
MEMBERSHIP.
OR IF YOU HAVE NOT
JOINED, JOIN US NOW!!**

**Family membership:
\$15**

**Business Membership:
\$25**

Make checks payable to "LNA". Bring to the meeting, give to a Board member, or

Mail to:

Leavenworth N.A.

3031 Leavenworth St, Omaha, NE 68105

PLEASE NOTE: You can also pay directly through PayPal, sending your transaction to:
Treasurer@LNAOmaha.org

In Memoriam.....Dorothy Patach

By Jim Thompson

If you have ever been involved in neighborhood issues for any length of time, you more than likely crossed paths with Dorothy Patach from South Omaha. She passed away in February at the ripe old age of 95.

I met Dorothy on numerous occasions while attending meetings on recycling, City code enforcement issues, South Omaha Neighborhood Alliance, etc. She was the honored elder of all these meetings and never at a loss of input. Over the years her volunteerism and genuine concern for not only her territory in South Omaha, but for the City as a whole, contributed positively towards living in this community. I never knew her professional background but it didn't matter. Her conscientious attitude towards the greater good was the prevailing spirit.

In days gone by, the ravines of South Omaha and other hiding places for trash created a cause for this dear lady. She was persistent in getting action by Keep Omaha Beautiful, Weeds & Litter Department, and others to clean up the neighborhood. Next time you are traveling through South Omaha, drive by 20th & N Street, kitty corner from the GI Forum. This 7 acre plot of land has been designated the Dorothy Patach Natural Environmental Area. No future development on this land!



The dedication of Dorothy is to be commended for all who can enjoy this small but significant parcel. I remember Dorothy sheepishly accepting this honor many years ago, stating that she was simply doing what she enjoyed doing, helping the community.

May she rest in peace and may we all use her spirit as an example in our own neighborhood efforts.

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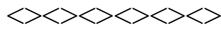
402.916.4015

Quick Snips.....

If you noticed in the Sunday Omaha World Herald that **Spielbound**, the board game cafe on 33rd & Harney, was sold it was merely a paper transfer. Spielbound will continue to operate the wonderful way they have been!



Postscript to last month's article on carbon monoxide monitors: Smoke detectors are very important for the safety of your family. The Omaha Fire Department will install for free a **combination smoke/carbon monoxide detector** for homeowners in the City of Omaha. To request a free smoke/CO detector, please call 402-444-3560.

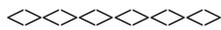


To the neighbors in Gifford Park: Thank you for adopting the groundhog that has disappeared from the space under my backyard shed. I do not miss the critter. May your "**Whistle Pig**" live happily in your neighborhood.

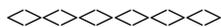


And one more item for the Gifford Park Neighborhood Association:

E



Maybe they passed right by my house, but I missed the Girl Scout's cookie sale. I know my doctor and dietician would object, but the boxes are small, right? Are there any Girl Scouts in the neighborhood? Next time ring the doorbell. I refuse to buy them at the make-shift stands inside of grocery stores.



Postscript to the snip about calling the Omaha World Herald to eliminate the delivery of those litter bags of ads: A neighbor attempted this and got shut out with the printed phone number. He then called the Mayor's Hotline and got the "not our problem" response. With a threat to call the Omaha Police to report the littering violation, he finally received positive results. Thank you sir for your perseverance.

Midtown Crossing Delights...

By Jim Thompson

In January the folks and restaurants at Midtown Crossing got me fatter by offering a Mac & Cheese Binge. Since the kids grew up and moved away, I no longer consider boxed macaroni and cheese real food. So I was delighted to sample too many variations of this comfort food during their event. With a list of about 9 participants, we figured that splitting one order would be the smart path to follow. It was.

Those portions were almost too big for both of us. We were unable, and full, to try all nine, but left with the need to not have to eat anything until the following Tuesday. Yum. And the Mac & Cheese voted most popular: Leadbelly!! Stop in and congratulate Chelsea.

So mark your calendars for Saturday, April 6th for the Taco Trot event. The hours are 11:00 AM until 3:00 PM. If it is anything like the Mac & Cheese Binge, do not eat breakfast and do not plan on cooking supper that night.



Windows can be a pain!

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Landlord Registration Proposals

By Jim Thompson

The following is the opinion of the author and does not reflect the position of the LNA

We live in a densely populated neighborhood with plenty of single family homes, apartments, condos, converted houses, etc. Change is coming, are you prepared?

With such a large number of landlords and tenants in our area, get ready to enter the Great Bureaucracy to a much higher degree than you ever thought. There are three City ordinances proposed to make your life.....better? More costly?? More comfortable?? It remains to be seen, but the intent of these proposals is to minimize those nasty, absentee landlords in our wonderful city. A most noble cause. I am not going to reiterate these ordinances so you must go to the City's website and find them. After the public hearing on March 12 it is clear that all three will be reviewed, consolidated, refined, and presented as one, designed for the betterment of the City.

One of the founding goals of the Leavenworth Neighborhood Association is to work to provide a higher quality of life to those who live, work, and play in the area. There have always been a few bad apples in our barrel that frustrate this goal. Particularly, some of the living conditions that exist continue to motivate us to do better. Multiply that by the boundaries of Omaha. And now we have before us a big hammer to knock some control into quality.

For discussion purposes, I'll lump the ordinances into "the City", without trying to single out which one is better. First, I believe the City needs to create a workable inventory of rental properties. The rationale that Council Bluffs and La Vista can register their landlords so we can too falls short. We are Omaha. We are complex and much bigger. Too many capitalistic and socio-economic dynamics exist to come up with one magic solution. But we do need some sort of framework to fit existing laws and ordinances into in order to march towards the quality we all pursue. I do not feel that requiring landlords to pay an additional tax is appropriate. This registration fee and a per rental unit fee will only be passed on to the tenants. Just as the increased property taxes we have all seen, such businesses must recover their costs. How much additional rent

the occupants will pay would remain to be seen. But this will negatively affect affordable housing.

I feel this present response from the officials is an impulsive reaction to a problem on 34th & Lake. I seriously question what laws and ordinances that are currently on the books are so deficient that corrective action cannot occur without the addition of more laws. Whether this landlord was registered would not make a bit of difference on the living conditions. It seems the only issue is that these deficiencies were not communicated to City inspectors. They hold the clipboard. If additional ordinances are layered upon the people, the City needs to set up a better mechanism for compliance. We do not need additional laws that will be difficult to enforce. The Nebraska Landlord Tenant Act is full of time tested clauses, the ground rules for this special relationship. On top of these, the City already has a multitude ordinances geared towards building compliance. Education is the key. Use it. For landlords and for tenants. Add one more pamphlet for the tenant at time of lease signing at a minimum.

The public hearing reflected a significant amount of social agencies. Perhaps a "Mayor's Committee on Landlord/Tenants Rights", for example, with representation from all of these social agencies could suit the need for education. Also, there was mention of an Ombudsman position for tenants. Go for it, relatively cheap with positive consequences. Don't forget to use the network of neighborhood associations. Assist us, dear City, with some empowerment to be the eyes, ears, and reporting tools for those whom we are physically close to. We are all looking for a good cause to take on.

Getting back to the inventory of landlords, currently it is not easy to find the owners. Most use an LLC (Limited Liability Corporation) to set up these rentals. You can find these on the Douglas County Assessor's website, and get some additional details from the Secretary of State website. But this process is cumbersome and rarely gets to the right person. We simply want to know the people who own the property. So, call it a registry, but don't charge them. And even those who use a cover business to manage their property, the layers need to strip away so we can communicate properly. Although the initial start-up would be time consuming, I would think the City would not need additional staff to support this inventory.

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Continued from P. 5

Does the City need additional inspectors? Yes, but in my opinion not to force just landlords into compliance. It was very evident at the public hearing that the vast majority of landlords are good business people. Under these proposals the City would inspect such places as the magnificent Midtown Crossing. Really? Please don't attempt to justify this, and other compliant business, with "only every X years will we inspect". What a nightmare. Urban Village only gets inspected every X years? Their rehab projects have produced top-notch properties and we all know they work hard to keep them that way. Their goal is to stay on the right side of a business operation. Just go after the chronic violators, please.

The energy being focused on landlords is necessary, but requiring this level of change is going too far. A quick view of the properties on my block for example reveals that we have a problem with owner occupied houses too. But if the City creates this huge registration effort, how does one get the "slum owner" into compliance? Fix that please. And due to the complaint driven system we have, reluctance to complain, whether it comes from a tenant or a neighbor, is too real. Let us find a better way to communicate without adding a law. After all, are we not seeking "nice" for the entire neighborhood?

I used to own a rental house and I maintained it the best I could. I knew my tenants and would have access to the house at any time. However, I respected their privacy and never entered their bedrooms unless there was work to be done in that space. I cannot imagine a City Inspector trouncing around a tenant's living quarters uninvited. I don't know how the mechanism of these ordinances is spelled out, but privacy must be respected. I understand that inspections require joint attendance with the landlord. With the amount of rental units in the City, this puts an unnecessary burden on the majority of landlords. Of course those in non-compliance mode need to be faced with this burden.

The hearing lasted four hours. There is a lot of interest in establishing the change we need. Our neighborhood group and others have been too silent on this topic. A good, round-table discussion is necessary before things get put into place that do not really solve the problem, but create burdensome bureaucratic processes that distract from the true goal.

Omaha Rapid Bus Transit

By Erica Sladky

In case you haven't heard, Omaha is getting a Bus Rapid Transit, otherwise known as ORBT (Omaha Rapid Bus Transit).

The City and Metro have been hosting a series of public meetings getting feedback on Transit Oriented Development. The meeting that affects the Leavenworth Neighborhood the most was held on February 7th at Yates. This meeting focused on the proposed ORBT stop at 33/35th/Park Avenue along Dodge/Douglas.

The final public meeting for this stop is on **April 11** at 6:30 PM at Yates. For more information on Transit Oriented Development and past meetings, see <https://urbanplanning.cityofomaha.org/transportation-planning/transit-oriented-development> or join the meeting on Facebook by searching events hosted by Omaha by Design or Metro Transit Omaha.



**In case you were not aware,
the LNA is on Facebook.
Simply enter Leavenworth
Neighborhood Association.
Become a "friend" TODAY!**

Snow and Trash

By Jim Thompson

This year's snowfall was one of the exceptions. As all of us have experienced, it has become a challenge to not only bring your recycle and trash containers to the curb, but then where to place them once you get close!!

For those with driveways it's not so difficult - except when you have to drive somewhere. But think about this: in the very near future we will be getting three 96-gallon carts for our trash, yard waste and recyclables. Because of the size, collection will be staggered each week. Thankfully, we will not be putting out the yard waste container in the winter.

Can you imagine stashing these things in your snow banks?? You will hopefully find a way.



Want to Advertise in The EXCHANGE?

The expenses of The EXCHANGE have diminished significantly since we converted mostly to an email version. We do, however, print copies for bulk distribution to local businesses and mailing to those who prefer a hard copy. Advertisements not only help us defray these costs, but definitely reflect your support of this organization.

The current format is one price for an ad to cover the full year vs. creating/invoicing for each month or quarter. The rates would not change: \$99/year for a business card size. Additional sizes (quarter page, half page, etc) are also available. And if you have a one-time event, we can accommodate those situations.

Let Jim T. know: Editor@LNAOmaha.org

Trying to Live Well

By Erica Sladky

There is a resident engagement survey Live Well Omaha wants people to do by March 17th. The survey will ask what areas of health are most important to you and your community so Live Well can focus their resources on these issues. Live Well Link: <https://livewellomaha.org/>
Survey link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/JFZVITYX>



Information for Contributors
To contribute to *the EXCHANGE*, please contact Jim Thompson, editor@LNAOmaha.org.
Mutual items of interest, announcements, recipes, opinions on the state of the neighborhood, observations in the 'hood, unresolved issues, etc. etc. Please consider a submission.

Deadline for the April issue is April 4, 2019.

Content submitted may be edited as needed.



March
2019



LEAVENWORTH NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION
3031 Leavenworth St.
Omaha, NE 68105

*"Celebrating together as
friends and neighbors"*

THE LEAVENWORTH NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Who We Are

A neighborhood association advocating growth and pride for families and business in the heart of the city -- working to provide a safe, attractive, and welcoming environment in which to live, work, and play. The LNA is a 501(c) 3 nonprofit organization.

Our Board Members

- President: Ashley Flater
Email: President@LNAOmaha.org
- Vice-President: Jack Henry 402-650-3761
Email: Vice-President@LNAOmaha.org
- Secretary: Laura Green
Email: Secretary@LNAOmaha.org
- Treasurer: Email: Janelle Domeyer
Email: Treasurer@LNAOmaha.org
- At Large: Ben White, 402-346-5700
Email: atlarge@LNAOmaha.org

Join us for our monthly meetings -- the 3rd Thursday of the month, 7 p.m., Dewey Park Building on Turner Blvd.

Website: www.LNAOmaha.org

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Family membership: \$15 annually
Business membership: \$25 annually

Name of Business: _____

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Make checks payable to LNA. Dues are for Jan.-Dec.
Mail to LNA, 3031 Leavenworth St, Omaha, NE 68105
Or send via PayPal to: Treasurer@LNAOmaha.org
Each adult 18 or older, 2 max. per family or business that pay dues and lives, owns property, or owns/operates a business in the LNA boundaries shall be eligible to vote on Association matters.
LNA boundaries: East - 29th St., North - Dodge St.,
South - Pacific St., West - 36th St.