



Hello Fellow GGNA Members,

The new Board of Directors of the GGNA would like to wish each and every one of you a very happy holiday season! Also, we to take this opportunity to introduce your new Board of Directors as well as to inform you of a few of the initiatives the new Board has undertaken on your behalf, the members of GGNA. The initiatives we have set to accomplish are both short- and long-term.

We will need YOUR participation to assist us in accomplishing these initiatives and others. Frankly, we welcome and encourage YOUR participation. The more input and effort the general community makes the more we will be able to accomplish together.

**IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**NEW GGNA BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

The new Board of Directors includes nine members of the community that will be volunteering their time to address issues that are important to OUR neighborhood. The following are the names (in alphabetical order) of your GGNA’s Board of Directors:

- Pedro Borrero – *Founding Member of GGNA*
- John Burns
- Juan “Johnny” Elias – *Founding Member of GGNA*
- Mary Escobar – *Founding Member of GGNA*
- Sally Hamann – *Founding Member of GGNA*
- Bryan Hill – *Founding Member of GGNA*
- Ramon Tembledor
- Neil Trifunovski
- Doug vanderHoof

**GGNA BOARD OF DIRECTOR MEETINGS**

The GGNA Board of Directors (BOD”) meets every second Tuesday of the month at Goethe School. These meetings are typically open to all GGNA members and non-members alike. However, the December and January BOD meetings will be closed sessions to GGNA BOD members only. The reason for this is to allow the new BOD to address Board business for the coming year. This includes setting an agenda and priorities for 2008 which includes the election of officers. The February BOD meeting (to be held on Tuesday, February 11<sup>th</sup>) will be open to the public and we encourage all GGNA members to attend and ask questions of their new BOD. The results of the election of officers as well as minutes of the meeting will be posted on the GGNA listserv and website. We appreciate your cooperation as your new BOD organizes itself in order to serve the entire GGNA in a more effective manner.

**ISSUES DISCUSSED IN THIS NEWSLETTER**

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## *GGNA MONTHLY NEWSLETTERS AND WEBSITE*

### GGNA MONTHLY NEWSLETTERS

The GGNA will be publishing a monthly newsletter updating its members and non-members alike. The newsletters will provide information on the various GGNA committees as well as the BOD meetings. These letters will be published in both English and Spanish.

### GGNA WEBSITE

The GGNA will be undergoing an update during the first few months of 2008. The updated website will include both English and Spanish versions. Your suggestions for the website are welcome and appreciated.

The following pages contain brief descriptions of the various GGNA Committees the new Board will be forming (or has already been formed):

## *GGNA BACKGROUND AND INITIATIVES*

We would like to reiterate the general background of the GGNA and the primary reasons it was formed in 2004. The GGNA was formed by a group of concerned citizens for the purpose of reducing crime in the neighborhood, improving communication with all of our neighbors and generally improving our little neighborhood in Southeastern Logan Square. The following are the areas of interest as stated in the GGNA's charter:

1. to sponsor youth development programs;
2. to review prospective development plans affecting the community;
3. to raise the level of awareness and encourage resolution of issues facing the community through GGNA's website, newsletter, listserve and phone tree;
4. to promote neighborhood beautification through periodic clean-ups, planting gardens and by advocating expansion of park space in southeast Logan Square;
5. to sponsor senior programs; and
6. to sponsor healthcare programs.

## *GGNA COMMITTEES*

GGNA's new Board desires to match-up the appropriate GGNA BOD with the various committees the GGNA has had in the past and will have in the future. Each BOD member will either head-up a committee or be an active participant in a committee. The Committee Chairpersons will in turn be responsible for organizing, planning and recruiting for their respective committees. Additionally, the Committee Chairpersons will be responsible for reporting to the BOD on a regular basis. The various committees will meet on a monthly or "as-needed" basis. Your new BOD asks you to consider volunteering for one of the many committees GGNA has in-place or is forming. YOUR participation is extremely important to the success of these various committees. Thank you in advance for your consideration.



The following pages contain brief descriptions of the various GGNA Committees the new Board will be forming (or has already been formed):

### YOUTH COMMITTEE

In the past, GGNA has had a Youth Committee that organized a number a fun and enriching events for our neighborhood's youth. The new Board's goal is to re-establish this committee. The Youth Committee will focus on providing select programs for the area's youth. These activities will involve the following:

- **Summer Basketball Tournament:** A summer basketball tournament (which was a tremendous success a few years ago) will be held at Goethe School's playground or at the Chicago Police Department's 14th Precinct's parking lot. The tournament will have a 3-on-3 format similar to the event held a few years ago. Team shirts and various GGNA logo items will be distributed to all of the participants. The GGNA will solicit local vendors and restaurateurs for donations of sodas, snacks and lunch for all of the participants and their parents. This is just one of many activities that will be planned for our neighborhood's youth.
- **Spring Soccer Tournament:** A spring soccer tournament for grade school children attending both Goethe and Chase Schools. Team shirts and various GGNA logo items will be distributed to all of the participants. The GGNA will solicit local vendors and restaurateurs for donations of sodas, snacks and lunch for all of the participants and their parents. Again, this is just one of activities that will be planned for our neighborhood's youth.
- **Campbell Terrace Apartments Computer Initiative:** This initiative is outlined on pages 5 and 6 of this newsletter. The Youth Committee will be involved in coordinating the schedules for the high school volunteers which will be assisting the residents with learning and utilizing the computer equipment.

### SENIOR CITIZENS COMMITTEE

The GGNA should and will have an active Seniors Committee. The committee will focus on providing select programs for seniors living in the area. Our seniors have a wealth of knowledge they can share with their neighbors and our area's youth; all parties which could benefit from regular contact with each other. Various senior programs could be established. These programs could range from something as simple as approaching the neighborhood's restaurants and stores with regard to organizing a weekly senior's day for shopping and dining discounts. A sampling of these programs is as follows:

- **Campbell Terrace Apartments Computer Initiative:** This initiative is outlined on pages 5 and 6 of this newsletter. The Senior Citizens Committee will be involved in coordinating the overall program and working with the appropriate member(s) of the Youth Committee to insure the volunteer staffing is available for all seniors.
- **Senior Citizens' Days:** The Senior Citizens Committee will also be working with the Membership and Fund Raising Committee to coordinate "senior citizen specials" at neighborhood shops and restaurants. Our goal is to have a "Senior Citizens' Discount Day" at local shops and restaurants. This will benefit both our senior citizens and local business owners.
- **Tutoring Programs for the Local Schools:** The new Board will work with the local schools and their LSC liaison to investigate the possibility of implementing a tutoring program for students. Our senior citizens have a lot to offer their community. We want to establish a program where seniors can volunteer their time and provide tutoring to students at Goethe and Chase Schools. This interaction between seniors and young children could be invaluable for all parties



concerned. Local school children will receive tutoring in subjects in which they might be having trouble. Parents will have the help their students require without the cost of a professional tutor. Senior citizens get to contribute to the neighborhood and to the development of our youth. Again, we hope many special relationships are formed during the tenure of this program.

### NEIGHBORHOOD BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE

In the past, GGNA has had a Neighborhood Beautification Committee that organized a number of events annually. The new Board's goal is to re-establish this committee. The committee will focus on providing select programs for neighbors and the neighborhood in general. The ideas are boundless as they are for all committees. How about various GGNA sponsored contests for the decoration of houses and businesses at Christmas time? Halloween? Cinco de Mayo? Fourth of July? Other things on the agenda could include gardening classes in the spring and fall where someone from the Chicago Botanical Society addresses the group. We will organize groups to beautify the cul-de-sacs in our area. Materials and planting and maintenance instructions could be donated by neighborhood garden shops.

### MEMBERSHIP AND FUND RAISING COMMITTEE

The newly established Membership and Fund Raising Committee will concentrate on attracting new members and donations to the GGNA. The committee will reach out to both residents and businesses with regard to membership. Various types of membership will potentially allow for more inclusive community involvement in the GGNA. The committee will be responsible for speaking and communicating with residents of the neighborhood to survey their thoughts and ideas for the area in general or any specific item or subject they would like to see addressed. The Committee members will also focus on fund raising for the GGNA and the projects which it supports. This fund raising effort will go beyond the GGNA's boundaries; it will encompass grants from public and private sources as well as corporate donations. There are numerous initiatives your new Board has identified and a tremendous amount of other activities which we hope to identify with YOUR input and involvement.

Some people think of corporate fund raising is bad for a community group. Your new Board does not think this is the case. For example, there are various pockets within the area where we still have gang activity. There are many empty lots on Bingham Street which attract unsavory elements and provide a path of escape from the Chicago Police. We will be approaching Habitat for Humanity (and other similar organizations) and some of its corporate sponsors for assistance in acquiring these vacant lots and constructing affordable housing (either single-family homes or two-flats). The housing could then be sold to families that would like to live within the GGNA's boundaries but might not be able to afford market rate housing. This is an ambitious plan but not unrealistic if we have an active and effective Membership and Fund Raising Committee.

### ZONING AND PLANNING COMMITTEE ("ZAPC")

GGNA's ZAPC is the most active of the current committees and has recently come under the Alderman's scrutiny. The new Board's goal will be for the ZAPC to provide more open communication with the GGNA membership and all third parties. To accomplish this open line of communication with the neighborhood's residents, concise and comprehensive minutes of all of the meetings (whether regular monthly or special meetings) will be published and distributed via the listserve. Additionally, the ZAPC will have better lines of communication with the various groups approaching it. Alderman Flores recently addressed members of the ZAPC and the new BOD and asked them to work together to come up with new guidelines for the ZAPC and its members. This process has actually started and it is the new Board's hope it will be completed in a timely manner.



Additionally, the ZAPC will invite guest speakers ever few months to address the group. These speakers could be officials from the City's Planning and Development Group which could explain the basics of the City's zoning code. Other speakers could be involved in the development of "Green Buildings" or affordable housing. These are just a few examples of the types of professionals that can be instrumental in supplementing and broadening the knowledge base of the ZAPC's members and their constituents.

### CAPS

The CAPS committee has been a very active and responsive committee since GGNA's inception. We are all blessed to have such dedicated people including (but not limited to) Sally Hammon, Joe Kopera, Jim Rhodes and Jon Wettersten. These folks are truly involved and regularly attend the neighborhood CAPS' meetings and report back to the community at large through the GGNA website and listserve. Additionally, some of these citizens serve as court advocates which assist their neighbors in their fight against gang activity and crime in general. The new Board looks forward to working with Sally, Joe, Jim and Joe, and all others that are or would like to be involved, to find new ways in which the GGNA Board, its members and community in general can get more involved.

### SCHOOL LIAISON

The GGNA needs to take an active interest in the issues that affect both Goethe School and Chase School. The Friends of Goethe provides a good model the GGNA can build upon. The Friends of Goethe has been very active in Goethe School's issues. One of the group's goals is raising the awareness of the high standard of the school and recruiting more students. These institutions are a vital part of our neighborhood; these schools are educating tomorrow's adults. In our opinion, GGNA's endorsement of and involvement in Goethe School and Chase School must be stepped-up.

## *GGNA SHORT-TERM INITIATIVES*

The new GGNA BOD has a number of short-term agenda items it would like to introduce and discuss. These agenda items are things the Board desires to complete within the next couple of months. These are small steps but are very important for setting the tone and trend of future GGNA activities. The Board's short-term initiatives are as follows:

### CAMPBELL TERRACE APARTMENTS COMPUTER INITIATIVE

The Campbell Terrace Computer Initiative is the first of the important short-term initiatives the Board will complete. We say short-term because we desire to have the first steps of this initiative completed by late-January. However, this "short-term" initiative is actually a program that will have long-term effects for both the residents of Campbell Terrace and the young people of our community. The proposed general outline of the Computer Initiative is as follows:

- The GGNA will purchase and donate computer equipment to the Campbell Terrace Apartment Complex. The equipment will consist of a desktop personal computer, printer and the necessary software and supplies.
- The computer equipment will be installed and set-up by a computer technician.
- Local high school students will then donate their time to work with the residents of Campbell Terrace to teach them how to utilize the computer. Among other things, these students will be assisting residents establish e-mail accounts so they can better communicate with their families, the community (via the listserve), and the tech savvy world in general.



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- The students will have week day (late-afternoon and early evening) and weekend “shifts” which will allow the residents ample time to spend on the computer and truly learn the necessary steps involved in properly using the equipment. The specific time frames for the shifts have yet to be established.
- Additionally, the Board will sponsor periodic general computer educational seminars which could encompass a host of subjects including instruction in Google Earth, Google Mapping, Google Street View, and other tools available on the internet at no cost to the user.

This is a very important initiative because it covers two specific areas of the GGNA’s charter. One, working with seniors in the neighborhood and two, getting our area’s youth involved in the general community. This program also brings together two segments of our community which would normally not have contact with each other. It provides an opportunity for both groups to interact and establish the all important bond between our community’s past, present and future. We are hoping many special relationships are formed during the tenure of this program; a program that will be ongoing as students can utilize this time for fulfilling their high school’s community service requirements.

The Board is very excited about this initiative. Mary Escobar will be taking the lead role in meeting with representatives of the area’s high schools to establish the student volunteer program. Johnny Elias will be coordinating the efforts at Campbell Terrace Apartment Complex. Bryan Hill will be coordinating the purchase of the necessary equipment.

*We encourage others to get involved with this program. For more information, please contact Mary Escobar at either 312-671-7707 or by e-mail at familiaescobar04@aol.com.*

#### HUMBOLDT PARK SOCIAL SERVICES CENTER INITIATIVE

The Humboldt Park Social Services (“HPSS”) Center is located at 2120 North Mozart and its Center for Changing Lives is located at 3051 West Armitage Avenue. HPSS’s facilities are located just west of the GGNA’s official boundaries; however, HPSS is an important institution in our greater neighborhood. HPSS’s facilities provide vital services for our area’s homeless and disadvantaged families and individuals. The mission of HPSS is to empower, serve and advocate for the homeless and disadvantaged in our neighborhood by providing housing and supportive services. The Center offers opportunities for the homeless and disadvantaged as well as opportunities for volunteers and advocacy. HPSS has been serving the neediest people in OUR community since its inception in 1989. Incorporated as a non-profit community service agency by its sponsoring organization, Humboldt Park United Methodist Church of Chicago, HPSS serves approximately 1,800 people each year with a range of programs.

The GGNA’s new Board has identified HPSS as an organization that can utilize the assistance of the GGNA and its members. We will be working with representatives of HPSS in the coming year to identify areas in which the GGNA and its member base can assist the organization with its goal of providing vital services for the area’s homeless and disadvantaged. HPSS faces the future challenge of eliminating homelessness in our community with the confidence built on this solid track record of service. The history of this community service organization has been written on the pages of the hundreds of lives that have been turned around for the better, leaving behind years of homelessness and hopelessness, and moving forward into healthy, productive and independent living. A large share of the credit for this success is due to the staff of HPSS. These dedicated and talented persons have learned to accomplish so much with so few resources. This front line of staff and volunteers is backed up by a working board of directors, hundreds of donating churches and individuals, committed principal funders, and cooperative networking agencies. Now, the GGNA is proud to be an active supporter of this fine organization.



The first of GGNA's initiatives with HPSS will be assisting its staff and volunteers with holiday meals. Johnny Elias has been leading the charge with HPSS for the GGNA. Last month, we had a tremendous amount of food left over from GGNA's 2007 Annual Meeting. This food was donated by Lazo's Tacos and El Cid Restaurant. After the meeting was adjourned, Johnny Elias delivered the balance of the donated food to the HPCC men's facility located at 2120 North Mozart. The food was greatly appreciated by both the staff members and volunteers and especially the people utilizing the center. This past Thanksgiving the GGNA donated ten pies, salads and all of the fixings for HPSS's Annual Men's Thanksgiving Dinner. The food was delivered to the shelter by BOD members Johnny Elias, John Burns, Bryan Hill and Ramon Tembledor.

Additionally, the GGNA will be assisting HPSS with its Annual Christmas Dinner. Details are not yet available as to the types or quantities of food needed. Johnny Elias will be coordinating GGNA's efforts with Martin Feliciano. Details will be provided as they become available. We ask each and every GGNA member to assist us in some way in helping make this Christmas dinner a memorable one for the families and individuals served by HPSS and its volunteers.

*Please contact Johnnie Elias if you have an interest in assisting with the GGNA's endeavors with the shelter. Johnny's phone number is 773-592-0411 and his e-mail address is [je4rlst8@sbcglobal.net](mailto:je4rlst8@sbcglobal.net).*

*Also, please feel free to call Martin Feliciano (HPSS's Re-Entry & Volunteer Coordinator) directly at 773-342-6210 or 773-342-0441 should you have an interest in donating food, clothing or your time to the shelter.*

*For additional information regarding the Humboldt Park Social Services and its Center for Changing Lives, please check out its website at [www.hpsschanginglives.org](http://www.hpsschanginglives.org) or contact Martin Feliciano via e-mail at [mfeliciano@hpsschanginglives.org](mailto:mfeliciano@hpsschanginglives.org).*

### CONCLUSION

***Neighbors and friends, thank you for your patience in reading the GGNA Board of Directors first formal communication with its members. We appreciate your input and look forward to working with each and every one of you as your new Board strives to reorganize and revitalize the GGNA. However, we cannot accomplish all we have set out to undertake without YOUR help and support. Your new Board has ambitious plans for each of the GGNA's committees but will only be as successful with the active participation of you, the GGNA's members.***

***Also, the GGNA's new Board of Directors wants to hear from you. We desire to receive your feedback, thoughts and ideas as to how we can collectively make the GGNA a more productive organization for all that live and work within our neighborhood and the surrounding area. We encourage and would appreciate each and every one of you to provide positive feedback or constructive criticism in a neighborly fashion.***

***Last item, we encourage any one that has an interest in volunteering for a committee to contact Johnny Elias or John Burns. Johnny Elias can be reached at 773-592-0411 or via e-mail at [je4rlst8@sbcglobal.net](mailto:je4rlst8@sbcglobal.net). John Burns can be reached at 773-772-7722 or via e-mail at [jburns@cooperconlin.com](mailto:jburns@cooperconlin.com). We look forward to hearing from you!***