2020 Annual Holiday Celebration

Wednesday, December 16, 2020
7:00 to 8:00pm

Where: Virtual > Contact our office at 459-8950 or heritage@heritagehillweb.org for the link to the virtual meeting

We will have RAFFLES and will recognize neighbors who have provided distinguished service to our neighborhood in 2020. Raffle winners must be present at this online event to win.

Also, our neighborly friends at The Commons will offer a 20% discount off their dine-in or carry-out menu for Heritage Hill neighbors that evening. Remember, they offer carry out adult beverages, too (though, not available for discount). Contact them to order and remember to tip the staff! The Commons – 547 Cherry St. SE – 616-458-2704 – www.commons-gr.online

AGENDA

7:00 PM  WELCOME AND DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARDS
7:20 PM  2021 HHA BOARD ELECTIONS
7:45 PM  RAFFLE DRAWING
8:00 PM  ADJOURN
Walking Tours
Our Hospitality Committee has been busy keeping things interesting for Heritage Hillers during these isolating times. Four walking tours sold out within a day (!) highlighting various homes in our neighborhood as well as nearby Fulton Street Cemetery. They were such a hit that we will be looking at ways to keep the momentum going this winter and into the spring with new tours and other activities. If you have ideas for the Heritage Hill Association to consider as part of bringing our neighbors together safely, let us know!

MeetUp
Look for your Heritage Hill activities on our new Meetup.com page, too! https://www.meetup.com/Heritage-Hill-Neighbors-Friends-Meetup-Group We will post activities that will bring our neighbors together (virtually or in-person when safe).

Pleasant Park Update
You probably noticed the bulldozers and equipment working in Pleasant Park as part of the millage improvements project. The City provided a scheduling update on these upgrades. The contractor will work on the rain garden before the cold weather really settles in and the support poles for the new swing and shade sail will be installed before winter hits, too. However, the surface for placement underneath the swings cannot be poured until the temps warm up. Hence, that and the shade sail will go up in the Spring.

Tom the Turkey
Thanksgiving time is here and it made us think of Heritage Hill’s well-known bird neighbor. Has anyone has seen Tom the Turkey lately? Please send us your photos if he’s still hanging around the neighborhood. We would love to feature him in a follow-up article!

Herald Advertising
We know how hard businesses are working to keep clientele coming during the health pandemic. Don’t forget that advertising in the Herald is a great way to reach your audience. The Herald is mailed to more than 4,000 households every other month and is posted in-full online for 3 years! Check out the rates https://www.heritagehillweb.org/newsletter/ or ask us at heritage@heritagehillweb.org 616-459-8950.

HPC Commissioner Opening
The City needs you! There is an opening on the Historic Preservation Commission whose purpose is to ensure that our city’s historic neighborhoods remain beautiful by:

- Reviewing applications for exterior renovation of structures within any of the city’s six historic districts
- Meeting with owners and inspecting properties to resolve design issues
- Giving advice and guidance to owners and renovators
- Contributing feedback on City projects affecting the historic landmarks and districts

There are no particular requirements for expertise. Each member’s term is 3 years. It is a volunteer board; therefore Historic Preservation Commission members are not compensated. For more info or to fill out an application, visit the City’s website at: https://www.grandrapidsmi.gov/Government/Boards-and-Commissions

Barbara Draughon
Executive Director
Annual Meeting 2020 To Celebrate Community

Calling all Heritage Hill neighbors to join us for our online festivities on December 16 from 7:00-8:00PM! The agenda includes raffles, distinguished service awards, and the election of our 2021 board.

There are five, 3-year terms up for election and five candidates have provided written notice of their candidacy.

Meet the HHA Board Candidates. Each has provided their statement: Why do you want to serve on the Heritage Hill Association Board of Directors?

Richard App
344 Madison SE

My wife, children and myself moved into Heritage Hill four years ago and wouldn't want to be anywhere else. We are passionate about our community and I am committed to making our city a better and more desirable place. I am the Retail Retention & Attraction Specialist for the City of Grand Rapids and I believe my position with the city can help our neighborhood in several ways. If selected I look forward to serving.

Wendy VerHage Falb
350 Cherry SE

When my husband and I purchased our home in 2000, I became actively involved in addressing crime issues, management of rental property issues, and care for the park in front of our house. I have been a volunteer on the tour and have helped to organize neighborhood events. As president of the PTO of then Ottawa Montessori, I successfully relocated the program to Heritage Hill when former Superintendent Burt Bleke made the decision to close Fountain School, renaming it GR Montessori. I worked to actively recruit HH families to the school. I then ran for the Board of Education and have served as trustee from 2009-2019, as secretary, legislative chair, and Board President (twice). I was instrumental in the hiring the former superintendent (Teresa Weatherall Neal), and the development of the Museum School. I serve on the DDA, and as part of that service, was able to include Central Campus in the GR Forward Plan. I also serve on the Smart and was able to include Central Campus as part of the GR Smart Zone. I am deeply committed to Heritage Hill and value the opportunity to serve a second term on the board.

Jeffrey Fawcett
505 Cherry SE

After serving on the Board of Directors for the Hillmount Condominiums Owners’ Association this past year, I am interested in expanding my boundaries of service to my neighbors in the greater Heritage Hill neighborhood. My personal interests lie in historic preservation, architecture, construction, and zoning. I believe my over thirty years working in the construction industry should be invaluable to the HHA. Thus, the committee I am most interested in serving on (and possibly chairing) is the zoning committee.

Sarah Green
403 College SE

I have been an advocate for ‘Active Transportation’ options i.e. walking, busing, and biking. I specifically looked for a neighborhood where I could live car free. I have volunteered on the tour of homes, night out at Pleasant Park, I also volunteer to walk a neighborhood dog on a team of neighbors assisting a woman who is unable to do so. I am involved and passionate about our neighborhood. I have served on non-profit boards including Sheldon House, Kent County ARC, and ATI Association for Travel Instruction. I have worked at the Rapid for 22 years promoting transit as the ADA Coordinator and Travel Trainer assisting the agency in outreach to seniors and individuals with disabilities. I would be pleased to serve a second term on the HHA board.

Laura Joyce
201 Morris SE

Heritage Hill is historically rich, but also home to a diverse group of people, from college students to families, and pretty much everything in between (which is where I fall)! It is part of what makes living there so fun and vibrant. I want to be on the Board because I am very passionate about where I live, and I would love to be part of making it a better place. Our community (really, all communities) have faced significant challenges this year, making it clearer to me how important it is to be deeply committed to our neighborhoods as we solve problems together. I want to collaborate with my neighbors to beautify and unite our community, and I think that a place on the association board is the ideal way to do that. Thank you for your consideration!
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The Heritage Hill Association publishes available apartments.
Please remember us when your apartment needs renters. Your dollars not only find you tenants but also support the programs of the Heritage Hill Association! You can list your apartment right at the website or stop by the HHA office. We welcome you!

HERITAGEHILLWEB.ORG
Heritage Hill Apartment Rental and Home Sales Listings All sizes and prices — Spread the word!!!
These are unusual times.
So, why do you need the Heritage Hill Association?

Stability:
There is no clearer need in these times than building a sense of community. Now more than ever, HHA wants 2021 to be a year that we come together around common goals, where neighbors support neighbors, and neighborhood is community.

Organization:
The Association has its ear to the issues that impact quality of life in Heritage Hill. From land use planning to traffic and parking ordinances, we look forward to engaging neighbors and fostering informed positions. We provide amplification to our collective voices.

Safety:
Our e-alerts and social media posts deliver pressing issues to your inbox and provide information to keep you knowledgeable and active in neighborhood developments. From fire safety to home security, we help create a safe environment.

Your Heritage Hill Association will not continue to be here without your help.

For the continuation of the Heritage Hill Association, I pledge:

___ $25  ___ $50  ___ $75  ___ $100  ___ $250  ___ $500  ___ Other $ ______

Name ____________________________

Address ____________________________

Phone ____________________________ Email ____________________________

Please return this coupon and check to: HHA, 126 College SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49503 or pledge online:  www.heritagehillweb.org
When my husband Scott and I moved here from Chicago nine years ago, I was thrilled to inherit a large yard with lots of potential. The trouble was, I was absolutely clueless about gardening. Truth be told, that first year I carefully watered a tall plant by the porch all summer only to have a visitor point out it was ragweed. And the day I intended to yank out what I assumed was a large weed, I was shocked to see it was full of purple hibiscus flowers. I knew I was out of my league, and needed some help.

I lamented to my neighbor, Martha Edwards, about my lack of gardening knowledge, and she shared there used to be a neighborhood garden club that had disbanded some years ago. I pictured being surrounded by a group of experienced gardeners that I could learn from, and suggested we start it up again as a co-team. We envisioned checking out beautiful gardens in the neighborhood for inspiration, swapping plants, bringing in local experts, and expanding our gardening knowledge. We launched in the spring of 2015, and 25 people showed up for the kick-off meeting. We knew we were on to something!

We typically meet monthly from May to October on Thursday nights at 6:30 pm, and have enjoyed a variety of meetings and outings over the past six seasons. We visited Walters Gardens in Zeeland for a private tour of their Proven Winners test garden,
we got a guided “behind the scenes” look at the Winchester Garden on Wealthy Street, and went to Kootsier’s Greenhouse to learn about container gardening and went home with our own masterpieces. We’ve invited speakers including Katey Romence of Romence Gardens, who gave us tips and tricks for planting bulbs. We’ve created our own ceramic flowers for our gardens, and enjoyed a special ‘Art in the Park’ night where we gathered on a beautiful summer evening at Mooney Park to create torn art under the leadership of neighbors Kate Diedrich and Jeff Martin. One of our favorite meeting nights we look forward to is when we do neighborhood “Walkabouts.” The host for the evening finds several other gardens nearby for us to visit. After enjoying hors d’oeuvres and wine, off we go!

We are fortunate to live in a neighborhood full of amazing and creative gardens of all shapes, sizes and styles, and the Garden Club is a great way to see them and get inspiration for your own yard. It’s also a wonderful way to meet neighbors and develop friendships. We welcome all newcomers [no experience necessary!] and are always looking for neighbors to share their lovely gardens. If you are interested in being added to the contact list, want to get involved on the planning team, have a gardening topic you could speak on, or would like to invite us to see your garden, please email me at karen_coy@yahoo.com.

I am happy to report that nine years later, thanks to the Garden Club, my brown thumb has turned quite green. I can easily identify many types of flowers, confidently move plants around the yard, have built rock gardens and pathways and learned tidbits like which of my hydrangeas grow on old wood and new wood. I now officially call myself a “gardener” and next year even plan to be on the Heritage Hill Garden Tour. This former city girl has come a long way!
Keeping Children Safe Online

As we are aware, the COVID-19 pandemic created the need for us to connect much of our lives to an online platform and this is a new format for many of us. With schools relying on virtual learning, children and teens are spending more time in front of a screen than ever before.

While taking an online course about internet safety recently, I learned the story of Breck Bednar. Breck was a 14 year old boy who was tragically murdered after being groomed over the course of a year by an 18 year old man in an online game room. Breck’s abuser told him that he was a wealthy business owner, that he had served in the military (none of it was true) and he slowly used manipulative tactics to turn Breck against his own parents. Breck’s mother spoke in the online training about the need for parents to be aware that simply taking technology away isn’t always the answer. She stressed the importance of teaching children from a young age how to spot abusive language and tactics. She encourages parents and caregivers to invite conversation with children around setting boundaries with strangers online. From the time they log on, children should know that not everyone online is dangerous, but all of them are strangers.

Grooming techniques can be used for a variety of reasons, such as gang or extremist group recruitment and human trafficking but the motives are not always sexual. The stereotypes imply that it is younger girls and older men but boys can be groomed too, and a perpetrator can be any age or gender.

Tips to prevent online grooming (from SOS Safety Magazine):

- Discuss with your child who they should and should not be contacting online. Teach them not to share their photos, personal information or their location with anyone they don’t know and trust in person.

- Let your child know that people are often dishonest online. Make sure they know it is very easy for people to lie about their age, gender or location. And unless they know the person in real life, they could be talking to anyone.

- Be aware of what services your child is using. Become a friend, follower or subscriber on each of the services whenever you can. Ask your child to tell you when they join a new service.

- Don’t be overly strict. If you ban everything, your child will most likely try and hide their usage from you. Instead, encourage open and honest conversations about what they are doing online.

- Set up clear rules that allow your child some freedom, while still allowing you to monitor their activity. For younger children, it is fair to know all their online passwords so you can check their activity.

Signs to watch out for:

- abnormal behavior or changes in your child’s behavior.

- gifts that your children may have received.

- sudden withdrawal from family and friends and emotional or behavioral changes such as a lack of interest in extracurriculars.

Further resources include: [https://www.breckfoundation.org/](https://www.breckfoundation.org/) and [https://www.parents4peace.org/](https://www.parents4peace.org/)

Seasonal Parking Reminder

Beginning Sunday, November 1, 2020, odd-even and same-side parking restrictions start to allow city street sweepers and snowplows easier access to neighborhood streets while clearing roads of leaves, tree debris, and snow throughout the fall and winter. These parking restrictions also help to keep one lane of traffic open and available for residents as well as emergency and public service vehicles.

Odd-even and same-side parking restrictions take effect at 12:01 a.m. on Nov. 1 of each year, regardless of whether there is snow. The restrictions are in effect until 11:59 p.m. on April 1 of the following year. Streets with restrictions have odd-
Odd-even parking restrictions mean that on each even numbered day starting at 1 a.m. and until 6 p.m., parking is prohibited on the odd numbered side of the street. On each odd numbered day starting at 1 a.m. and until 6 p.m., parking is prohibited on the even numbered side of the street. From 6 p.m. to 1 a.m. each day, parking is permitted on both sides of the street unless signs indicate otherwise.

For more details including a map: https://www.grandrapidsmi.gov/Government/Departments/Public-Works-Department/OddEven-and-One-Side-Parking-Map

**Light Up the Night and Preventing Crime**

One of the treasures of this neighborhood is the beauty of the sparkling lights during the holiday season. It adds warmth and comfort to our evening strolls brightens up those short days where we see little sunlight. Keeping the streets and porches well-lit can also help prevent thefts from vehicles and porches.

Consider these ideas to help deter thefts:

- Add motion-censored lighting in the driveway near your vehicle
- Install a security system
- Keep porch lights on at night
- Always remove personal belongings of value from your vehicle
- Bring packages in as soon as they are delivered
- Know your neighbors and help each other watch over your homes while away
- Keep shrubbery/trees trimmed – this eliminates hiding spots

**Holiday Tree Disposal**

The city of Grand Rapids offers free drop-off sites for Christmas trees start after the holidays. The sites, open December 30 to January 31, are located at:

- Riverside Park (north entrance), 2001 Monroe Ave. NE
- McKay-Jaycees Park, 2531 Kalamazoo Ave. SE
- Lincoln Park, 231 Marion Ave. NW
- Huff Park, 2286 Ball Ave. NE

All trees collected are chipped and returned naturally to the ground.

The alternative method for disposing of your tree is to attach a $2.50 City bulk yard waste tag (purple tag) to the Christmas tree and place it in your pickup area by 7 a.m. on your scheduled refuse collection day. Bulk yard waste tags may be purchased at City Hall, 300 Monroe Ave. NW, in the customer service lobby. City Hall is open Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Some local retailers also may have the tags in stock.

**Smoke Alarm Installation Program During COVID-19**

A Message from the Grand Rapids Fire Department

Because most homeowners are not aware that smoke alarms must be replaced every ten years or that every home should have at least six-eight alarms (i.e., one in each bedroom, hallway, main floor and basement), the Fire Department initiated the Residential Safety Program

(Continued on page 10)
(Continued from page 9)

(RSP). Since 2013, firefighters have been installing smoke alarms in homeowners’ residences and as of 2017, began including carbon monoxide (CO) detectors too – all for free. The program not only enables firefighters to install free CO and smoke alarms, but also conduct a free home assessment to resolve any potential fire hazards within the residence. Considered one of the premiere programs in the country, the RSP has conducted approximately 65,000 assessments to date.

However, with the recent emergence of COVID-19 impacting how we interact with residents, the program has been modified recently to protect both citizens and firefighters alike. RSP still provides free carbon monoxide and smoke alarms, but firefighters are not entering homes to install nor conduct home assessments. For homeowners who would like to DIY, you can call to arrange the RSP staff drop off the devices which include manuals, install instructions and screws. To ensure that the devices have been installed appropriately, they ask for photos to be emailed along with some minor information.

Generally, the installation should take no more than 30-45 minutes for a single person. The alternative option is to call and get your name on the install list. When the program becomes fully active again, the RSP office will call you to establish a date and time to have firefighters come out to manage all services. The entire installation and assessment take about 20 minutes on average plus allowing kids and neighbors alike to gawk at the fire truck (yes, they arrive in an engine in case they get called to an emergency).

Call 311 (the city services number) or 616.456.3966 to reach the RSP office directly to arrange either option.

Lastly, keep in mind that as we head into the end of the year, the occurrence of home fires tends to increase due to improper use of candles, outdated Xmas lighting, flammable items too close to heated appliances and most importantly – not staying in the kitchen while food is cooking. Stay safe, get your life-saving smoke alarms, and enjoy the winter holidays!
Foster Park  By Wendy V. Falb

Have you ever walked west down Cherry near the Madison intersection when the sun was setting? The little park anchored by a huge old horse chestnut tree creates a beautiful foreground to the city and river beyond. Apparently I am not the first person to value this view. I am in possession of one of those old “painted” postcards from around 1910 of the sun setting on this same intersection and park. State Street which was originally connected with upper Monroe is an old Anishinaabe trail that led down to the river and passed by this little plot of land now named Foster Park. This park, a .225 acre triangle that once had stone watering troughs for horses, was “given” to the city in 1849 by one of our city’s early non-native residents, Canton Smith. (He later denied the gift when the deed burned in a courthouse fire and built a large fence and barn that the city had to move to stake its claim).

The park is named for congressman and Grand Rapids mayor, Wilder D. Foster (1854, 1865-66). Standing in the center of the park is not congressman Foster, however; it is “The Hiker”—a depiction of a soldier from the Spanish-American War. My sons’ bedroom overlooks this park and statue, and since they had spent their entire life gazing at it from their beds, imagine their surprise when on a family trip this very familiar sight showed up on a street in New Orleans! “The Hiker” was replicated over 50 times, and this copy was first placed in Grand Rapids in 1928 at Belknap Park and only moved to its current location in 1957 at the behest of aging veterans of the war it commemorates.

After two decades of caring for this modest green space alongside other volunteers and neighbors, my family is thrilled to see the city’s new investment in this park. Reminiscent of Victorian city squares, the new fencing around the park encloses the green space, inviting you to stay awhile rather than just walk across. Within only few days of its rejuvenation, this new addition already changed how people use it.

I invite you to take your dog, pack a picnic—or better yet, pick up some Chinese food from the lovely couple who run the restaurant right there!—and sit under the grand old horse chestnut and enjoy one of Grand Rapids’s oldest parks.

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NCBC lost a dear member of it’s family with the recent passing of Tom Koetsier. Tom & Clare have owned and lived in the home at 60 College for many years. Great neighbors and very active over the years at many NCBC events.

A perennial volunteer at the NCBC Food booth, he loved working the Grill with his teammate Char Kruizich

For several years Tom & Clare hosted the NCBC Texas Hold'em Tournament where much fun was had.

HHA NCBC Crime Prevention Award

Annual Meetings
Christmas Parties
Brunches & more...

Tom was a fixture at many NCBC Gatherings.

He will be genuinely missed by us all.
**Board Notes**

*Discussion at the September 2020 Heritage Hill Association Board Meeting included:*  

President Wendy Falb, on behalf of the board, congratulated Barbara Draughon on recently being appointed executive director of the Heritage Hill Association.

**Treasurers Report** - New projections in revenue and expenses have been mapped out through the end of July 2021. The numbers used have been conservative and realistic in keeping with the present economy due to the nationwide pandemic. Information coming soon regarding forgiveness of federal PPP grant, but things look positive. A MEDC (Michigan Economic Development Corp.) grant application for Covid-19 relief was approved.

**Staff Report** - Long-term planning was brought up in relationship to neighborhood/city master plan. Barbara suggested dedicating time during upcoming board meetings to discuss neighborhood needs and/or other topics related to quality of life in Heritage Hill. Wendy suggested the board look over the last neighborhood Master Plan and come prepared to the October meeting for a "discussion of our past, where we are now, and where we want to be."

**Committee/Liaison Reports:**

Land Use Issues: HHA Office received an inquiry about the process for garnering public input during the development process of a Heritage Hill property which is now underway. A few board members familiar with the site noted that the City followed normal protocols and held numerous neighbor meetings and sent mailers to secure input throughout the process. They noted that there is a radius within which the City works of a development site and neighbors outside this radius are not typically proactively engaged in the development process.
**Administration:** HHA seeks prospective board members to fill out 3 mid- and late-term vacancies. Discussion took place as to what is needed in a board member. Conversation continued around recruiting new board members to help hone the association’s future purpose statement versus honing the purpose statement and then recruiting board members to implement the stated purpose.

**Fundraising:** The Home Tour committee brainstormed a preliminary list of “possibilities” to pursue in 2021 including a physical Home Tour or a virtual Home Tour. Also, on-line auction, architectural tour, garden tour, plant sale, yard art sale, art/craft sale are being discussed as potential replacements for the traditional home tour. Discussion ensued about “friend-raising” efforts to further community building efforts of the HHA including activities like movies in the park, pumpkin carving contest, holiday decorating contests and more family-oriented events.

**Community Engagement:** GR Running Tours will be conducting a socially-distanced, mask-required walking tour of a select few blocks of Heritage Hill on the evening of October 6, this year’s celebration of the National Night Out. They will conduct a Fulton Street Cemetery tour on October 28.

No definite plans yet for the conducting of an “Annual Meeting.” Exploring virtual presentation with participation capabilities (to ask questions, respond to presentation, etc.).

*If you would like an item placed on the Board agenda, please call the HHA office at 459-8950 before 4:00 p.m. of the second WEDNESDAY of the month. If you would like to address the Board regarding an agenda item, public comment is taken at the beginning of each meeting. For non-agenda items,*

*public comment is taken at the end of each meeting. Typically, Board meetings run from 7:00 p.m. until 8:30 p.m.*
No matter who you are or where you are on life’s journey, you are welcome here!

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The teachers are exceptional educators and kind mentors, the administration is engaged and open to change, and the attending community is incredibly rich and dynamic.”
Christy Vos GRPS PARENT

CONGRESS ELEMENTARY neighborhood school GRADES PK-5
GRAND RAPIDS MONTESSORI theme school GRADES PK-12
INNOVATION CENTRAL theme school GRADES 9-12

GRPS.ORG/ENROLLTODAY
Neighborhood Improvement & Public Safety organizing efforts of the Heritage Hill Association are in part funded by the City of Grand Rapids’ Community Development Block Grant Programs.

**DATES TO REMEMBER**

**All Heritage Hill Association Meetings are open to neighbors.**

**Wednesday, November 18, 2020**

HHA Board Meeting – 7:00 pm  
Currently Meeting Virtually on Zoom

To join the meeting, please contact us at heritage@heritagehillweb.org or 616-459-8950 to receive log on info

**Wednesday, December 9**

1:00-2:00pm  
Brown Bag Lunch with Community Officer Craig Glowney (GRPD)  
Bring your lunch, join our casual conversation and share what makes you feel safe and what are some concerns for safety in Heritage Hill.

To join the meeting, please contact us at heritage@heritagehillweb.org or 616-459-8950 to receive log on info

**Wednesday, December 16, 7:00 pm**

Virtual Annual Meeting / Holiday Cheer  
To join the meeting, please contact us at heritage@heritagehillweb.org or 616-459-8950 to receive log on info

**Wednesday, December 23 – Monday, January 4, 2021**

Office Closings / Holiday Schedule  
Staff will check email periodically

**Monday, January 11, 2021**

Herald advertising deadline  
January / February issue

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