

March, 2015

Muncie Action Plan 2



MAP Reading

MAP Moves Forward as Muncie Looks Back

Volunteer Spotlight Isabelle Sowers

Since 2010, active neighborhood associations in Muncie have grown from approximately 4 to 26. Much credit for this goes to Isabelle Sowers, who has served as MAP's **volunteer** Volunteer Coordinator since 2010. Isabelle said she wanted to do this because she had been in Muncie since 2001 and wanted to do something to help the community in which she is raising her family. She wanted to support the community as well. She believes that by helping these neighborhoods the city can flourish, like a garden which thrives due to hard work. She believes this volunteer work helps her as well. A native of Carmel, she attended IUPUI and Kaplan College in Indianapolis and became a medical assistant.

Fast forward and Isabelle has two children and her husband is a family physician in Muncie. In addition to her family duties, she is an integral component of MAP's Task Force 2. Her neighborhood goals for the upcoming year are to help Blaine Southeast with its new park and playground and get the Granville, Sky Park, and Cowling Park neighborhoods organized. An overarching goal is examining the South Side neighborhood to determine boundaries. An important benefit to Isabelle is the friendships she has developed with volunteers in the neighborhoods. She will be looking for more volunteers as the weather warms and neighborhood outreach activities begin in earnest. You can volunteer by contacting the MAP website (click on Volunteer).

SHAFFER CHAPEL CELEBRATES BLACK HISTORY

A newly-created museum space in the Muncie community and Whitely neighborhood was publicly launched on January 19, 2015 in connection with the celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day. The museum celebrates the historical significance of Shaffer Chapel, as well as the history of the African American community in Muncie. Co-created by members of the Shaffer congregation, the Whitely Community Council, and Ball State University students and faculty, the museum is a testament to the power of community mobilization in realizing positive social change.

The history of the chapel goes back many years but its legacy was established in 1930 when three young African-American men were arrested for shooting a local businessman in Marion. Two of the young men were lynched in the courthouse square after the businessman died and another survived after being hanged. As there

were no black morticians in Marion, the pastor of Shaffer Chapel, Reverend J.E., Johnson, drove his hearse to Marion to retrieve the bodies. When threatened by a white mob forming in downtown Muncie, the Whitely community responded by holding an all night vigil to protect the bodies.

Through their efforts, they were able to successfully ward off the threat of the Ku Klux Klan upheaval and return the bodies to Marion and the young men's families for burial. The museum is located at 1501 E. Highland Avenue in Muncie. To learn more about the project, or to request a visit, contact:

To schedule an appointment to visit the museum, contact Delores Pryor at 765.288.9730 or Eva Zygmont at emzygmunt-



Neighborhood Presidents Council

MAP's February presentation at the Neighborhood Presidents Council was a prelude to spring. Bryan Preston, Mark Kreps, and Lindsey Helms shared their experiences with local community gardening, focusing on gardens in Muncie, how to start a community garden, and the logistics of managing a multi-user garden such as the Maring-Hunt Community Gardens at Maring-Hunt Li-

brary. There are currently 16 community gardens in Muncie with varying organizational structures. At Maring-Hunt, 8' x 25' plots are leased for a fee to individuals or families. The fee pays for on-site water. The plots were designed so that people could work on both sides of the garden without having to walk all the way around. Other gardens, such as the North Street Urban Garden, are maintained collectively by a handful of volun-

teers who use the garden for their families. The East 16th Street Church of God, which has had a community garden for two seasons, gives their produce away to anyone who needs it. The City of Muncie is initiating a program that will facilitate community gardens on vacant parcels of property in distressed neighborhoods. So, think spring and get out your hoe!

Get information about MAP at <http://muncieactionplan.org>

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Anthony-Northside - Wednesday, March 18 at 6:30 p.m. at Kennedy Library.

Blaine/Southeast - Tuesday, March 10 at 6:00 p.m. at the Serenity Club, 1218 S. Brotherton.

East Central - Sunday, March 1 at 6 p.m. at the Emily Kimbrough House, 715 E. Washington.

Forest Park - Thursday, March 19 at 6:30 p.m. at the Delaware County Senior Citizens Center, 2517 W. 8th.

Grove Park—Thursday, March 12 at 7 p.m. at Munsee Lanes at 601 E. 25th.

Halteman Village - Tuesday, March 10 at 6:00 p.m. at the Lutheran Church of the Cross, 4401 N. Wheeling.

Indian Village - Thursday, March 5 at 6 p.m. at Pilgrim Holiness Academy, 2720 Apache Pass.

Industry - Thursday, March 26 at 6:00 p.m., Price Hall, 704 S. Madison.

Ludingwood - Tuesday, March 24 at 7 p.m. at Luddingwood/Woodlands Nursing Home, 3820 W. Jackson.

Minnetrista Central Neighborhood Association - Tuesday, March 3 at 7 p.m. at Minnetrista.

Northview—Monday, March 16 at 7 p.m. at Northview Elementary School, 807 W. Yale.

Old West End - Tuesday, March 24 at 6:30 p.m. at the Dining Room, Friends Memorial Church, 418 W. Adams.

Riverside/Normal City - Wednesday, March 25 at 7:00 p.m. at Hazelwood Christian Church Fellowship House (Mansion), 1400 W. University.

Thomas Park/Avondale - Wednesday, March 4 at 6:30 p.m. at Ross Center, 1110 W. 10th.

Westridge - Thursday, March 12 at 5:30 p.m. at Bracken Library, Ball State University.

Western Woods, Wednesday, March 4 at 6 p.m. at West View Elementary, 3401 W. Gilbert.

Whitely - Monday, March 9 at 5:30 p.m., Muncie Area Career Center, 2500 N. Elgin.

The Blaine Southeast Neighborhood was recognized in the Saturday, February 21 Star Press for the grant award it received for a new playground and park area at the old Blaine School athletic field on the southeast side of Muncie. The grant is from Dr. Pepper Snapple and national non-profit KaBOOM. The neighborhood will be seeking additional funds to complete the playground and, eventually, develop other park improvements.

MUNCIE SESQUICENTENNIAL

Sesquicentennial Moments—1865 - 1880

The Civil War ended in the spring of 1865, and many local residents had served in the war, including local African American Civil War veterans such as Enoch Fletcher. After the Civil War, Delaware County's population dramatically increased, and the newly incorporated city of Muncie was growing. The first Muncie high school began operation out of the basement of the Universalist Church in 1868 and had a graduating class of 6 students. One of the notable graduates was Ida Husted Harper, who went on to become an author, journalist, teacher and prominent figure in the U.S. women's suffrage movement. Also in 1868, twelve black residents met at the home of Mary H. Artis to organize the first African-American church in Muncie, the Bethel A.M.E. Church. In 1870, entrepreneur James Boyce arrived in Muncie. His company manufactured flax bagging and machinery handles, and his factory was one of the largest employers in the city with 100 workers. Muncie's first City Hall was constructed in the 1870s and housed the fire department, police, and public library. In 1876, natural gas was accidentally discovered in nearby Eaton while workers were looking for coal. It would be another decade before residents would realize what they had found and what it would mean for Muncie.

History and Photos were provided by Sara McKinley, Local History and Genealogy Specialist, Muncie Public Library.



Enoch Fletcher (above left) and Ida Harper (above right). James Boyce (below).

