

PLATT PARK

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF
PLATT PARK PEOPLE'S ASSOCIATION

FEB. / MAR. 2014

WWW.3PA.ORG

Post

Who Are the Parents in Your Neighborhood? Introducing Platt Park Parents

by Shelley Jewell

As you hit the sidewalks of Platt Park, it is not uncommon to see a stroller passing you by on the way to a park, a bike resting on a front lawn before its next big ride down the block, an expecting couple on a stroll after dinner, or a scooter racing by to catch up with an older sibling. Platt Park is a neighborhood saturated with families. It is a community where parents are excited to live, learn, play and, most importantly, raise their children. It is no wonder that a group—Platt Park Parents—has grown out of the need to help facilitate all of this and a little more.

Platt Park Parents first started in 2008 when eager moms and dads were looking to meet others in the community. Today the group consists of more than 150 parents and neighbors. Platt Park Parents continues to look for ways to bring the community together and support the neighborhood. As part of the vision, Platt Park Parents believes that our neighborhood matters as much as our kids.

Each month Platt Park Parents hosts events to help parents meet each other. Mom's Night Out (MNO) happens on the third Thursday of each month. Starting at 7:30pm, moms get together at local restaurants and bars.

Unique to Denver parent groups, there is also a Dad's Night Out (DNO) on the last Thursday of the month. Both events offer parents a chance to meet up with other parents in the neighborhood.

There is also a neighborhood playgroup that meets up one Saturday at Platt Park from 10 to noon. Known as Play! Play! Play, this is a time when



you can guarantee to find a few extra families and sand toys to play with at the park. Play! Play! Play! has also sponsored special events, including pumpkin decorating in October called Pumpkin Palooza. There was also a winter gathering in February at Decker

Library with a craft, story time and face painting.

The easiest way to learn about Platt Park Parents is to sign up for the monthly electronic newsletter. At the beginning of each month, the newsletter highlights local events that families can attend or special happenings with local merchants. There is even a feature on parents who work and volunteer in the neighborhood.

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The Platt Park People's Association, a city of Denver Registered Neighborhood Organization, serves more than 3,000 homes and businesses in the neighborhood bounded by Broadway on the West, Downing on the East, I-25 on the North and Evans on the South. 3PA membership is open to all neighbors and business owners who live and own property within these boundaries. Have a voice in your neighborhood and with the city: Join 3PA.

Check out our website. Stay informed, learn about upcoming events, and more!

Upcoming 3PA General Meetings

February 11 - Happy Hour at the Black Pearl from 5-7pm

March 11 - The meeting will cover exciting park projects in our community, including \$22 million of park and trail improvements to the South Platte River between Dartmouth and Alameda and The Levitt Pavilion at Ruby Hill. The meeting will also have a discussion of parks rules and enforcement. Held at the Fleming Mansion located at 1510 S. Grant Street at 6:30pm

May 13 - Annual Business Meeting and General Election, 6:30pm at the Fleming Mansion.

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Your Neighborhood Board...

President, Kaelen Gueymard, plattparkpres@3pa.org.

Vice President, Renee Hook, reneehook@3pa.org. **Treasurer,** Joe Beierl, jbeierl@yahoo.com. **Secretary,** Suzanne Knight, sk@nestrealestate.net. **Directors:** Ashley Arroyo, ashleyarroyo@yahoo.com; Cindy Parmenter, cindyparmenter@comcast.net; Sarah Moore, sarahhmoore@yahoo.com; Jolon Clark, email@jolonclark.com; Antoinette Taranto, An_tara@yahoo.com

From the Desk of

THE PLATT PARK PEOPLE'S ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT South Pearl Street Merchants Association & Platt Park People's Association

By Kaelen Gueymard

I occasionally mistakenly receive emails with compliments or complaints about events organized, sponsored or coordinated by the Merchants Association, such as the Farmer's Market, Music Festivals, Art Walks, Sidewalk Sales and Winterfest, and refer the sender to the appropriate contact: Mark Gill, President, mark@southpearlstreet.com, 303-282-7777. The purpose of the Merchants Association is to develop the business community on South Pearl from Buchtel Drive to Evans Avenue.

Platt Park People's Association (3PA) is a registered neighborhood organization composed primarily of residents or property owners who pay \$20 in annual dues. Membership also includes clubs, churches and businesses within our boundaries of Buchtel to Evans, South Downing to Broadway. Our purpose is to educate Platt Park residents about neighborhood issues, assist in planning and development with city of Denver and work with organizations in the neighborhood to address neighborhood concerns. This is a pretty broad scope necessarily limited by available resources of volunteer board/committee members.

The Merchants Association has generously provided 3PA with a booth at the Farmer's market in the past. But 3PA does not coordinate or sponsor this or other South Pearl Street events. Nevertheless, the concerns of both associations overlap. A shared concern is availability of parking spaces.

Parking Issues in Platt Park

3PA sponsored in July 2013 a general meeting held at the Fleming Mansion on the topic of parking shortages. The meeting was attended by residents as well as Sean Mackin and Nola Owens of Denver Public Works Parking Operations. Robertin Ferrin, Parking and Planning Program Administrator, subsequently responded to requests for parking studies, range of technical assistance available from city and safety issues raised due to lack of visibility from alleys. Ferrin states:

- A parking study will be conducted in the first quarter of 2014 to assess parking demand via the distribution of parked vehicles at various times of day and week. Study area will be South Pearl bounded by Arkansas, Washington, Mexico and Pennsylvania with an additional scope of two blocks in each direction. This will update a study conducted in the summer of 2011 on a smaller area. Go to 3PA.org and click on CFRD to see the results of the 2011 study.
- Solutions include car-share, bike-share, transit, carpooling, bike parking corrals, valets, and parking permit programs

that prioritize user groups. The city can provide marketing bike maps, RTD contacts and marketing info for distribution.

- Shared parking may be an under utilized solution. Ferrin says the zoning code allows for shared parking arrangements and for property owners to open their parking lots during off-peak hours for accessory parking. Accessory parking allows property owners to charge a fee to the parking public for use of their parking lots, as long as those spaces are not being utilized when the business is open. Ferrin says the city can provide a list of parking operators who may be able to assist property owners in such transactions, or such transactions can be worked out between involved parties.
- Safety issues included requests to look at a four-way stop at Arkansas and South Pearl, create delivery loading zones in the morning hours to help alleviate alley congestion, provide greater access for garbage pickup and provide additional sight distance entering existing alleys. Ferrin says that increasing site distance at alleys means a loss of parking. Ferrin needs to see a consensus among stakeholders before pursuing this option.

3PA will report and post on our website the results of the new parking study and report on plans to sponsor subsequent meetings among community representative stakeholders with Denver parking operations and traffic engineering to address the issues and solutions presented above.

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Neighborhood Notes

When I talk to people who do not have the good fortune of living in Platt Park, I find no shortage of reasons to explain why our community is unique and interesting. But I never expected Platt Park to be the site of national publicity about a pot shop. Yes, as I write this - no less than CNN has its monster “on-location” big rig parked a block away covering the goings on over at **Evergreen Apothecary** (1568 S. Broadway). Of course I rushed over to the phone to alert my 86-year-old mom to turn on the TV to give her yet another curiosity to share with her friends about her son’s life in his urban environment.

It’s been days now since Colorado has symbolically stood at the Brandenburg Gate of Pot prohibition demanding of our nation (and the local narcs) to “Tear Down this Wall.” The lines, although diminished from the 800-people-plus lines of January 1, are well out the door even at opening time, attesting to the resolve of the “yay” voters of Amendment 64 to now vote their pleasure with their pocket books.

Among many interesting yet concerning sights has been the Winnebago RV parked across the street from my place now for five days, which has that “been hanging with Jerry Garcia” look about it. Pretty sure the owner’s plans of picking up a bit of pot and heading home are getting derailed each day when they can’t resist getting baked in their chariot, burning the whole ounce with hopes of trying again next day. Good luck my friends—might hit you up for a little property tax if you can’t seem to make it out of the neighborhood any time soon.

Taking a stroll past the line on opening day was pretty much like taking a snapshot of society as a whole. Old and young were lined up, a few fitting the more typical stoner stereotype and most just looking like ... well anyone in our neighborhood—a pretty normal crowd. I suppose as more medical marijuana dispensaries get their retail licenses, the frenzy over at Evergreen will diminish.

Moving on from the cannabis front, one of the most asked questions I get is what is going on with the **Platt Park Tavern**? As you may recall, the building that was the former home of India’s Pearl at 1475 S. Pearl St. was purchased back in 2012 by the Tavern Hospitality Group. Original plans were to open a new tavern later

that year. That obviously didn’t happen. For the better part of the past year, at least to the general public, the project appeared stalled. The project had gotten bogged down in design hurdles and controversy over a request for zoning variance regarding patio operating hours.

Now it seems all such roadblocks have been removed and construction will begin by the time you are reading this. The Tavern Hospitality Group has secured the rights to adequate parking. Some of the design has been changed to keep a portion of the original Victorian-era storefront design. The outdoor patios, which will include a rooftop deck, will be closed at 11 pm on weekdays and midnight on weekends. Look for the extensive construction work to take about nine months, with a projected opening for late fall of this year.

A couple issues ago we reported on the new Platt Park North project going on in the northwest corner of the neighborhood. We reported on the row homes to be built fronting primarily Mississippi, but the other developments were yet a mystery. A little more information has become available. Looks like there will now be—on lots fronting Logan, Grant, Sherman and Lincoln—a total of 29 single family detached homes built. The homes will be two stories in the 2,200-square-foot range (not counting the basement). The builder, TRI Pointe Homes, looks to be attempting to make the homes fit, to some degree, the character of the neighborhood, with more traditional brick facades and Tudor-like porches. Likely they will have a similar look and feel to many new-construction homes that dot the neighborhood now. The builder is stating that prices will “start” in the \$600,000s. I’m guessing that will be the upper \$600s.

Also get asked a lot about the now underway demolition of the Gates Rubber Company property. (Read more at <http://www.confluence-denver.com/features/>) Most asked question is: What is going to be built? Answer for now is: Nothing. The Gates Corporation made the decision it would be in the best interest of all to do the demolition of the existing structures and corresponding environmental remediation as a first step toward finding an eventual developer. Essentially, the initial plan is to return the site to dirt and then take it from there. Denver’s Community Planning and Development Department approved in 2005 a plan calling for a “mixed-use urban village that maximizes multimodal transit opportunities.” It is a good bet such will be the outcome. For now the demolition will take the better part of the year. Developers are being actively sought. We’ll keep you posted.

Should be another exciting year around Platt Park. By our next issue should have coming on line at least one new restaurant, a coffee shop and not one but potentially two new micro-breweries to report on as well. Maybe by then the line outside Evergreen Apothecary will be shorter and I’ll be on a first name basis with my RV neighbor. Till then, enjoy the winter and first hints of spring that will soon be in the air. From all of us here at the Platt Park Post, we wish you all the best year yet in 2014.

See you around the neighborhood,
Tom Snyder



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No More Meetup Group

by Amy Vaerenyck

In an effort to streamline community-building efforts, the 3PA Board decided not to renew its "Platt Park Community" Meetup Group. The group was registered on the Meetup.com website but had experienced minimal participation in recent months. Meanwhile, neighbors have been connecting with one another through other venues, both online and offline. For this reason, the Meetup Group was shut down as of January 9.

As a reminder, here are a few other groups and online outlets through which you can still get involved in your Platt Park community:

- Platt Park People's Association, www.3pa.org
- Platt Park Parents, www.plattparkparents.com
- Platt Park on Nextdoor.com, plattparkdenver.nextdoor.com



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Excitement at Platt Park Elementary Schools

Asbury Elementary School

By Jeanne Johns, *Asbury Parent and School Committee member*

Asbury Elementary is a diverse school of 315 students, kindergarten through fifth in the University of Denver neighborhood. Every day, the staff at Asbury is afforded the opportunity to support the academic and emotional growth of the students we serve. We strive to develop our students into independent, life-long learners and encourage them to develop critical thinking skills through trans-disciplinary learning.

As you walk through our school, you will notice our dedicated staff using technology to present engaging lessons. We are pleased to inform you that Asbury has just purchased an additional 70 computers, as well as another classroom set of iPads. This additional technology will further enhance instruction and student learning. The collaboration between our parents, staff and community exemplifies the dedication to Asbury's success. We are fortunate to have many parent volunteers who help in the classrooms, work in our gardens, organize activities outside the school day and assist in setting goals for our Unified Improvement Plan.

Asbury has much to celebrate this year! Asbury is ranked "Blue [Distinguished]" on the School Performance Framework for Growth. Growth reflects how the students are improving and growing each year in their learning. In fact, the students at Asbury ranked 2nd this school year, based on TCAP scores. In addition, Asbury had the highest growth in the district for fifth-grade math. In terms of overall scores, Asbury is ranked "Green [Meets Expectations]," which reflects a variety of different scores but primarily TCAP scores. According to TCAP results, 81 percent of our students were proficient or advanced in math, 80 percent were proficient or advanced in reading and 69 percent were proficient or advanced in writing.

McKinley-Thatcher Elementary School

By Alona Hastings, *Principal of McKinley-Thatcher*

At McKinley-Thatcher Elementary, we know that it's our people and our relationships that truly matter for students. Recently, I have had heard from staff members and the community how they feel about our service to children, the relationships we form and what makes McKinley-Thatcher great. I was pleased by the positive comments and humbled by the praise we received.

We have some new staff members at McKinley-Thatcher. In speaking with them about their impressions of McKinley-Thatcher, the responses were exclusively complimentary and positive. All expressed that our community and staff are some of the nicest, most supportive and caring they have ever had the privilege to work with. Of course, our existing staff has long known how wonderfully supportive, kind and caring our community and their colleagues are. Many parents provided feedback, but this statement captures the heart of McKinley-Thatcher:

"We have a kindergartener and a first-grader at the school, and we LOVE IT! The principal is incredible. She is often in the classroom, knows all of the kids and all of the parents. The teachers are terrific and go above and beyond. They are active, caring and engaged, and both of my kids are excelling and thriving academically. I can't imagine anywhere else I would want my kids to spend their day. They are excited about school every day. It is a small school with a great community. I would give it more than five stars if I could!"



Tom & Denise Snyder



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NOTE: You can now join 3PA at 3PA.org where you can fill in the form online and pay through PayPal. Go to 3PA.org, click on "join 3PA."

Want to be informed? Join the email distribution by emailing our president at plattparkpres@yahoo.com.

PLATT PARK PEOPLE'S ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP FORM

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Want to help maintain our neighborhood character?

Want to meet your neighbors through fun
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Are you concerned about graffiti, traffic and construction?

Join your neighborhood association!

The Platt Park People's Association is a Registered Neighborhood Organization with the City and County of Denver. The Platt Park People's Association is notified directly by the city of various activities in the neighborhood. Be involved. Be Informed.

Send the membership form with annual dues of \$20 payable by check to "3PA" to: 3PA

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Silent Auction

Please come join us for McKinley-Thatcher's Silent Auction. Alumni families, prospective families, current families and neighbors are all invited and welcome!

McKinley-Thatcher Elementary is a small, local Platt Park school. The silent auction is a vital part of the school's annual fundraising efforts. In the past, it has allowed the school to update the library, subsidize after-school enrichment programs, provide Denver Zoo programs and fund many other things that cannot be funded through the school budgets alone. It cannot be done without the support of the parents and community! Thank you!

WHEN: March 7, 2014, 6:30-9:30pm

Silent auction, food, music and drinks from 6:30 to 8 pm, followed by Live Auction

WHERE: Mortgage West, 1705 S. Pearl St.,

(owned and donated space from Mark Gill). SPREE will provide childcare at Cameron Church - \$5 donation requested. Tickets are \$10 per person.

Please visit the website to learn about items in the Auction: <http://www.mckinleythatcher.com/silent-auction/>

Space is limited. Please RSVP to mctauction@gmail.com. For questions or to make a donation, please email: mctauction@gmail.com.



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• Parents

• *Continued from page 1*

• Platt Park Parents is looking for new ways to grow in the upcoming year. Platt Park Parents hopes to strengthen its relationship with 3PA, double its membership and get even more dads involved in 2014.

• There are also plans for more neighborhood events, like an Earth Day celebration and a possible movie night at the park. Whether you are a mom, dad or neighbor, Platt Park Parents wants you to help join in its mission to strengthen our community. Check out the website to get next month's newsletter, come to the next MNO or DNO, or head over to the park for the next playgroup. Stay connected with what's happening in our neighborhood and just a little bit beyond. For more information, check out plattparkparents.com.

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Platt Park Events Calendar

3PA Happy Hour

Tuesday, February 11
Black Pearl, 1529 S. Pearl St., 5-7pm



3PA General Meeting

Tuesday, March 11
Fleming Mansion, 1510 S. Grant St., 6:30pm

Annual Business Meeting and General Election

Tuesday, May 13
Fleming Mansion, 1510 S. Grant St., 6:30pm

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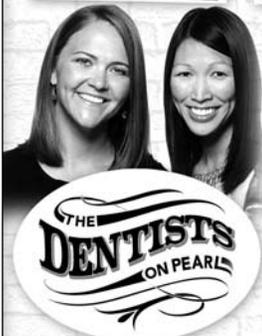
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Neighborhood Watch

What exactly does it mean to be in Neighborhood Watch?

To become a part of the program—and get Neighborhood Watch signs and stickers—residents must meet the following requirements:

1. Designate a block captain. At least 75% of your neighbors in a set area—typically a block—should be willing to participate. It is up to the neighbors how to define a block. For example, a block might be both the east and west sides of a street. Some block organizers decide to include the neighbors across the alley.
2. Next, participants must complete a Valuable Property Inventory and Registration Card. The Inventory Record is stored by residents in a safe place, and the registration card is returned to the police department.
3. Finally, the neighbors hold a block meeting to get to know each other. A Denver Police Department community resource officer will attend to train residents on how to prevent, detect and report crimes.

Neighborhood Watch does not mean taking a vigilante approach. According to the police department FAQs on Neighborhood Watch, residents should not expect to “patrol” their blocks or act as security guards for the neighborhood. They should stay a “safe distance from any potential crime and be a good witness.”

To sign up or learn more, contact Carrah Torrence at ct3PAAsc@gmail.com.

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