



**BROOK RUN
NEIGHBORHOOD
ASSOCIATION
2010 YEAR IN REVIEW**

Officer Elections

The year began with elections in January, when the Brook Run Neighborhood Association (BRNA) welcomed the following officers and board members:

Michele Stiles – President
Jean Van Wyk – Vice President
Jill Dunn – Secretary
Tai Duong – Treasurer
Charley Bogwill – At-large Board Member
Pam Schwartz – At-large Board Member
Kevin Van Wyk – At-large Board Member

Neighborhood Goals

One of the first projects lead by the new board was a goal-setting activity for the neighborhood. Brook Run residents were given the opportunity to participate in a neighborhood needs survey. With feedback from over 60 residents, Dave Dunn, City of Des Moines Senior Planner, worked with the BRNA board in February to help set goals for the organization. As a result, the following goals were established for 2010, many of which we will continue working on for years to come.

1. Provide a variety of social activities to get Brook Run residents to get to know their neighbors.
2. Build a positive relationship with elected local and state officials to help ensure that future development is consistent in nature with the Brook Run Neighborhood.
3. Maintain property appearance and enhance property values by encouraging private property maintenance, enhancing the roundabouts and other shared areas, and educating residents about tax abatement and foreclosure.
4. Enhance pedestrian and bike connectivity around the neighborhood and the surrounding communities by providing access to Brook Run Park, Des Moines, Altoona, and Pleasant Hill by widening Douglas Avenue and providing connections to the Des Moines metro area trail system.
5. Highlight the Brook Run Neighborhood as the premier neighborhood in Northeast Des Moines by raising awareness of the area through special events both inside and outside of the neighborhood.

Membership

In 2010, the BRNA conducted its first Membership Drive. Letters were mailed out to all Brook Run households, asking for their support. The annual \$20 per household dues help the BRNA continue to sponsor special events, monthly meetings with guest speakers, *Brook Run News* and much more. More than 30% of Brook Run residents paid their annual dues to become BRNA members in 2010 – up from approximately 20% in 2009.

Neighborhood Relations

In February, the BRNA applied for funds through the Polk County Betterment Grant and received a grant for \$3,000 in April. A portion of that money was used to help sponsor the *Fun in the Run* neighborhood festival in July. Plans are underway for the remaining funds to be used for artwork and new plantings in neighborhood traffic circles.

The BRNA welcomed several guest speakers to our monthly meetings throughout the year, to discuss topics of interest to our residents. Some of the speakers included **Tom Hockensmith**, District 3 Polk County Supervisor; **Nadine Hogate**, Des Moines Neighborhood Revitalization Board; **Rita Conner**, City of Des Moines Economic Development Coordinator; **Jesse Leckband**, City of Des Moines Stormwater Environmental Technician and **Bruce Braun**, City of Des Moines Street Maintenance Administrator.

The BRNA has also worked to establish relationships with the Brook Run Owner's Association, Des Moines City Council representatives, local media, etc.

Central Iowa experienced a very rainy summer, which resulted in flooding and other water-related damages in a number of areas. As the rain continued throughout the summer, various watershed issues began to surface at Brook Run. The BRNA facilitated several meetings with residents to hear their concerns and took action to get the support of City and County government representatives to help resolve some of the issues. Polk County officials presented a creek stabilization project for one of the hardest hit areas in the neighborhood – the creek that runs along Stream Side Circle and E Hull Avenue. Financial solutions for that project are currently being discussed with residents.

Representatives from Des Moines Public Works contacted the BRNA in September to educate us on a new snow removal program available to the Brook Run neighborhood. The Snow Priority Streets program was piloted in a select few Des Moines neighborhoods for the 2009-2010 winter. The program was very well received so the City decided to open the program up to more neighborhoods for the 2010-2011 winter. Residents are required to remove vehicles from the streets during snow removal, which allows the city to use wing plows to clear snow from curb to curb – making it a faster process and eliminating the extra snow and ice build-up that occurs when plows have to navigate around vehicles parked on the streets. After consulting with residents, the BRNA decided to try the program and we feel that snow removal efforts are much improved over past years.

Communications

The quarterly *Brook Run News* neighborhood newsletter was distributed to all Brook Run households in January, April, July and October. New for 2010, the BRNA secured sponsorship ads to help offset the costs of producing and distributing the newsletter. Many Brook Run residents who own businesses stepped forward to sponsor this piece, as a way to show their support for the BRNA and promote their business to fellow Brook Run neighbors.

Communicating to our residents via e-mail and through online resources is a high priority for the BRNA. In an age when almost all Brook Run residents have access to e-mail and the Internet, we must take advantage if this quick and affordable way to communicate.

The BRNA web site hosts a great deal of information for our residents to access at any time at **www.BrookRunNA.com**. The addition of a BRNA Facebook page in 2010 provided another popular way to talk to Brook Run neighbors. Find us there by searching "Brook Run Neighborhood Association."

We have continued to increase our database of resident e-mail addresses and have found that to be a valuable tool for getting information out to our residents and hearing back from them as well.

Special Events

To help fulfill the neighborhood goal of providing a variety of social activities to get Brook Run residents to get to know their neighbors, a number of special events were hosted by the BRNA in 2010:

Neighborhood Garage Sale - Friday, June 18 & Saturday, June 19

Over 50 Brook Run residents participated by hosting sales at their homes. Hundreds of shoppers flooded the neighborhood to purchase items at the sales. The BRNA placed ads in the Des Moines Register and Altoona Herald to promote the neighborhood-wide sale. The BRNA also coordinated a neighborhood sale map with a map of the neighborhood, sale addresses and a description of items at each sale. The map was sent out electronically to all Brook Run residents so they could pass it along to others. Hard copies were also distributed to all sale locations so they could distribute to residents.

Chill on the Hill – Brook Run Night on Friday, June 25

Brook Run residents were invited out for a fun night at Chill on the Hill, the Friday after work party sponsored by the Pleasant Hill Chamber of Commerce.

Fun in the Run Neighborhood Festival - Saturday, July 17

This was a day full of fun for all Brook Run residents! The day started off with a 2-mile walk around Brook Run, beginning and ending at Brook Run Park. Refreshments were served and participants enjoyed lots of prize drawings. Thank you to CL Brown & Associates for sponsoring the walk. The fun picked up again later in the afternoon with a Kiddie Parade, followed by games, food, a magic show, live music and more prizes for everyone. Close to 200 Brook Run residents participated in the various activities. Lots of Fun in the Run!

National Night Out Celebration - Tuesday, August 3

Brook Run joined more than 15,000 communities from all 50 states, U.S. territories, Canadian cities and military bases around the world in celebrating National Night Out with ice cream treats and refreshments at Brook Run Park.

National Night Out is designed to: (1) Heighten crime and drug prevention awareness; (2) Generate support for, and participation in, local anticrime efforts; (3) Strengthen neighborhood spirit and police-community partnerships; and (4) Send a message to criminals letting them know neighborhoods are organized and fighting back. Residents are asked to lock their doors, turn on outside lights and spend the evening outside with neighbors.

Halloween Parade and Party at the Park - Saturday, October 23

Over 50 kids and their parents joined us at Brook Run Park for Halloween games, treats, prizes and a Halloween costume contest! Special entertainment was provided by Brook Run resident, **Pam Moody**, with her balloon creations.

The Santa visit and **Light the Night** at Brook Run were canceled on Saturday, December 11 due to inclement weather.

Officer and Board Member Changes for 2011

In September, the BRNA board began discussing potential changes to the at-large board member positions for 2011. The board could see value in further defining the duties and responsibilities for those positions. This would provide better job descriptions for new board members, as well as evenly disburse responsibilities amongst the officers and board members. At the November meeting, attendees voted to approve changes to officer and board member positions to include the following: President; Vice President of Neighborhood Relations; Vice President of Special Events; Vice President of Communications; Vice President of Membership; Secretary and Treasurer.