AMANI NEIGHBORHOOD SEES DECREASE IN CRIME

According to data from the City of Milwaukee COMPASS database, crime in the AMANI neighborhood decreased 10.4% in 2016; and there was a 26.36% decrease in crime in AMANI over the past 4 years (2012–2016). One reason for this decrease is a collaborative effort between entities such as COA Youth and Family Centers, the Dominican Center for Women, and the AMANI United Community Neighborhood Association to engage residents and build community assets.

Barbara Smith, President of the AMANI United neighborhood association stated, “This information is very encouraging to me as a resident as well as an individual who has made a commitment to try to make AMANI a safer community for everyone. We were able to form a Safety committee which consists of AMANI residents, and we are equipped with a strong voice and the ability to make a change in the neighborhood. Neighbors have begun to communicate and know one another, not being afraid to speak up and speak out.”

COA Executive Director Tom Schneider noted 3 critical elements to this success: (1) Engaging residents to identify needed neighborhood assets, resident participation in planning, and residents seeing the results; (2) Building neighborhood assets in AMANI to provide badly needed services and make the neighborhood a more desirable place to live and raise a family, and (3) Building the fabric of the AMANI neighborhood as a community of residents who look out for each other, and who are regularly engaged in their community. In the past 4 years, new neighborhood assets include a pediatric and family clinic, the new Moody Park, a family resource center, the new Burke Early Education Center, and the AMANI United neighborhood association.

Sr. Patricia Rogers, Executive Director of the Dominican Center for Women, which is located in AMANI, said, “I strongly believe that the lower crime statistics for AMANI speaks to a community that moved from a neighborhood of least resistance to residents getting involved and voicing their concerns. I also believe that we will experience less crime as more residents take on leadership roles in the AMANI community.”

With the sustained and substantial decrease in crime, the AMANI neighborhood is seeing the results of the combined impact of resident engagement and building neighborhood assets.

According to AMANI Byrne Coordinator, Britney Roberson, continued efforts are being planned that will continue to be impactful in terms of addressing crime. The Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation (BCJI) program was launched in 2012 as part of the Obama Administration’s National Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative. BCJI was designed to help local communities develop place-based, community-oriented strategies. The hope is that Byrne will help increase neighborhood participation and relations, reduce crime, and increase neighborhood safety. BCJI will offer residents lots of opportunities to take part in the vision, research, and implementation.

The AMANI Neighborhood Initiative is also one of 8 “place-based population change” initiatives selected nationally by UCLA and the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation as models for community transformation.

Join the Friends of Moody Park!

By Pepper Ray, Interim Chair

August 20, 2015 marked the official grand opening of Moody Park in the AMANI community but efforts to revitalize the space started long ago. Endeavors to generate activities that benefit the neighborhood and to keep the park safe are some of the guiding principles for the Friends of Moody Park (FOMP). This group is an unincorporated association of volunteers established for the purposes of promoting the preservation, enhancement and enjoyment of the area.

Moody Park is the 2016 winner of the Brewers Community Foundation Public Spaces Award for Milwaukee Neighborhood Development Innovation (known as the MANDI). FOMP has also planned the grand opening celebration, coordinated park concerts, advocated for security cameras, hosted two go kart events and the annual Earth Day community clean-up.

ALL ARE WELCOMED TO THE MONTHLY GENERAL BODY MEETINGS THAT TAKE PLACE MARCH – OCTOBER, THURSDAY THE MONTH IN THE MOODY PARK PAVILION AT 4P.M.

For more information regarding the Friends group please contact Pepper Ray at Pray.bncp@gmail.com.
DEDICATION: MRS. LEATHA P. WEST
by Princess Byers, Marquette University

Mrs. Leatha P. West (February 29, 1948-February 2, 2017) was known for her kindness, her influence in the community, and for never biting her tongue. Her presence within the AMANI community was consistent and she was dedicated to finding solutions so that her community could thrive.

“I remember when we would have our meetings, and before the meetings Mrs. West would just sit in the corner and observe what was going on. Every now and again you would see her pull one of the students to the side and give them advice and they listened...that’s who was just Mrs. West was. If she had it, she would give it to you.”

“If I had never met Mrs. West, I wouldn’t be who I am, I would still be a rowdy had it not been for her strong words and unselfish guidance, says Antywon Williams, a former COA participant who was mentored by Mrs. West.

Safe Streets for Students by Michelle Allison, Community School Coordinator, United Way of Greater Milwaukee

At the beginning of the school year parents of students at Auer Avenue Community School expressed a concern regarding the one way street on Auer Avenue between 23rd and 24th. Drivers were totally disregarding the One Way, driving down and parking on the wrong side of the street. Auer Avenue suggested that the One Way Street be extended to Hopkins to hinder drivers from driving down the one way illegally.

The Amami Safety Organizers hosted a special meeting in September 2016 inviting residents and families to come and share their concerns about the street. Alderman Khalif Rainey was present to listen to the concerns and give feedback.

Auer Avenue hosted a community meeting with representatives from AMANI United and the City of Milwaukee, and they listened to the concerns and gave feedback. They then instructed the Department of Public Works to do a study to look at how we could create a safer street. A follow up meeting was held in January with Alderman Rainey, a representative from the City Department of Public Works, residents, and the Amami Organizers.

As a result of residents coming together with the families and staff of Auer Avenue, Alderman Rainey is moving ahead with the installation of the eastbound one-way control on Auer Avenue between Hopkins Street and 23rd Street. Legislation will be introduced at the April 7th, 2017 Public Safety Committee for this one-way control. If it is approved a work order will be issued for the installation of the necessary signage for the one-way control and work will most likely be completed in about three to four weeks after issuance of work order.

Congratulations to the Amami Residents and the Auer Avenue families and staff who worked together to get the one way street extended and calm down the traffic for the safety of everyone.

COA GOLDIN HOSTS BLACK HERITAGE PROGRAM by Scottie Posey, COA Goldin Operations Manager

On Friday, February 17, 2017, 150 residents came to COA’s Goldin Center for the bi-monthly community fun night, which focused on Black Heritage in celebration of Black History Month. Damien Smith (Safe and Sound) and Ashley Harrell (the COA Burke Early Education Center Director) guided the event as MC’s and welcomed several presenters.

- Alderman Khalif Rainey welcome attendees and also gave a special dedication to Mrs. Leatha P. West.
- Ajamu Butler, of Heal the Hood, and Destinynna Fletcher, community health navigator for Children’s Hospital of Wisconsin and poet, contributed to the program with strong poetry performances.
- NOVA School’s gospel choir performed songs throughout the program.
- Auer Avenue 5th Graders also performed a song.
- COA Goldin pre-teens, under the leadership of pre-teen group leader Ashley Shakelford, performed a beautiful dance melody.

Children from COA’s Burke Early Education Center performed a Black History skit.

Finally, COA’s very own, Elle Boone, gave a vivid performance that took everyone back to the way things use to be.

There was immense crowd participation. Entertainment was provided by the Milwaukee Reparatory Theater and Fly Gang Entertainment. Audience members were asked trivia questions with the opportunity to win prizes. Food was provided by Cousin’s Subs.

COA thanks everyone who participated in this event and invites you to attend the next free Community Fun Night, which will focus on health and wellness, on Friday, April 14, 2017 from 5:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m.

CHILDREN’S HOSPITAL OF WISCONSIN by Destinynna Fletcher, CHW Community Health Navigator

COA Goldin Center youth are working on the City of Milwaukee’s MKE Plays initiative with Artists Working in Education, Inc (A.W.E.), COA Youth and A.W.E. artists are creating artwork for a brand new playground at 21st and Keefe. Youth will be working with the artists this school year and summer at Goldin Center to design and create a piece of art for the new playground.

Based on neighborhood input, designs for what the new playground will look like are underway. The groups plan to unveil the playground and artwork near the end of the summer. Neighbors are invited to share their feedback and learn about the plans by contacting Joe Kaltenberg the MKE Plays Program Coordinator by calling 414.286.8532 or emailing mke-plays@milwaukee.gov.

You can also meet representatives from A.W.E. at the March 28, 2017 Amami United meeting where they will share their progress with residents.

The project is funded by the National Endowment for the Arts. Learn more at AWE-INC.ORG.

“The idea is to capture our community through connection and creative integrity. We are understanding and believe in our neighborhoods, so why not create a home within it?”

This is a quote from our new Children’s Hospital of Wisconsin Community Health Navigator, Destinynna Fletcher. Destinynna takes her role as an advocate for change and a resource within the community very seriously. She looks forward to continuing her commitment to improving the health and well being of children and families in the Amami and Franklin Heights community.

Please contact Destiny at 414-239-0904 for assistance with housing, medical care, jobs, educational opportunities, alcohol or drug abuse issues, and healthy food.

ARTS CORNER

by All Carlucci, A.W.E. AIR Program Director

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