Fremont Fest turns 31 on August 5
by Katie Meyer and Al Ellis

For the past 30 years, the Beaumont Business Association (BBA) has been organizing and implementing Fremont Fest, Beaumont-Wilshire’s premier summer festival, and this year’s event promises to be bigger and better than ever. The popular street fair held on the first Saturday of August has evolved from a modest showcase for neighborhood merchants, coupled with a horse-drawn hayride for the kids down Fremont Street, to the mega-happening of recent years attended by thousands. With Fremont closed to traffic, the 31st Annual Fremont Fest kicks off on August 5 at 10:00 a.m. with an open-to-all-comers kid/bike/pet parade, well over 100 food and merchandise vendors, live musical performances throughout the day, and a wide array of activities for all ages, including pony rides for the kids and a pub crawl for adults. Businesses along the Fremont Street Fest route, stretching from NE 41st to NE 51st, offer shopping specials. Along the route, eight taverns and restaurants provide beer tasters for the pub crawl (with mugs available for $10 at the information booth in front of Beaumont Market on day of the event). Festivities conclude at 5:00 p.m.

Local residents are encouraged to volunteer their time to assist with various activities (http://www.signupgenius.com/go/5080e4ea9ac23a0ff2-volunteer2), and additional information about this year’s Fremont Fest can be found on the BBA website (www.beaumontvillagepdx.com).

Don’t miss the neighborhood’s 31st celebration of Fremont Fest on the August 5!

Rock out to oldies-but-goodies at NNO Picnic with ensemble “Broke ‘N Hip”
by Al Ellis

The members of Broke ‘N Hip are seven Beaumont-Wilshire neighbors with day jobs who have also been playing music individually for as long as they can remember (which is a long time) and collectively for special occasions for a number of years. The initial force that brought them together was the wedding of a group member’s daughter. They had such a fun time playing that gig that they decided to continue, performing at weddings, parties, and other events ever since. It was BWNA Board member Cliff Goldman who first suggested featuring Broke ‘N Hip at National Night Out Picnic in Wilshire Park, and thanks to Cliff’s initiative, neighbors will have the opportunity to enjoy oldies-but-goodies performed live while noshing on juicy burgers. (Read Time Hemstreet’s “President’s Message” in this issue for more information about National Night Out Picnic in Wilshire Park on August 1.)

Band member Jean Czuba says, “We play cover songs, only the best cover songs, huge cover songs…you won’t believe how great these cover songs are! We enjoy bringing people and families together to share in our music. We like playing songs that you either know or remember and loved listening to…and we love it when folks get up and dance!”

Broke ‘N Hip is comprised of Jean Czuba (vocals, percussion, ukulele), Pat Hatten (vocals, percussion), Dan Hayes (keyboards, vocal), Karl Krcma (bass), Ben Dudley (guitar), Tim Janes (guitar, vocals, mandolin), and Joe Beede (drums). Rock on, B-W!
President’s message
by Tim Hemstreet

Building Community in the Neighborhood

Summer is in full swing after a rough winter that caused many a Portlander to question their love of the Pacific Northwest. But having emerged from our long hibernation, the neighborhood is abuzz with activity—gardening, kids playing, and neighbors taking advantage of the lengthy days and fantastic weather to enjoy the great outdoors—both in town and further afield.

As I mentioned in my previous message, one of the missions of your neighborhood association is to help build community. While we all take pride in the attributes of our neighborhood—the shops, gardens, well-maintained homes—what really makes any place special is the people and our connections to each other. Whether it is simply hanging out on the porch with friends, inviting neighbors over for a barbeque, or organizing a block party, there are many ways to build community. And it is important to make use of the opportunities afforded us in the summer months to invest in our neighborhood connections so that we can better watch out for one another, have more fun together as a community, and know the neighbors we can rely upon in case of emergency.

To help foster these community connections, one of the events the Beaumont-Wilshire Neighborhood Association sponsors is the annual Neighborhood Night Out Picnic in Wilshire Park. On Tuesday, August 1, BWNA will provide burgers (meat and veggie) and hot dogs beginning at 6:30 p.m. I hope you can join us and bring a side dish to share with your neighbors. Coordinating this year’s event is BWNA Vice-President Kathy Campbell, with fellow Board members and an array of other neighborhood volunteers stepping up to assist with setup and cleanup, barbecue grilling, procurement of raffle prizes from local businesses, and family-fun activities.

Another family-friendly Wilshire Park event even closer on the calendar is Movie in the Park scheduled for Friday, July 7. Organized by Portland Parks and Recreation and co-sponsored by BWNA and the Alameda Neighborhood Association (ANA), the musical entertainment and free popcorn begin at 6:30 p.m. Though rare for bad weather to spoil this outdoor celebration, that’s exactly what happened last year when rain forced cancellation. Hopefully clear skies return this year so we can enjoy the movie “Sing”—a delightfully entertaining hit musical with appeal for all ages.

I encourage you to come over to the park to enjoy these events, meet a few new neighbors and friends, and make those important neighborhood connections.

Central Northeast Neighbors Board
Beaumont-Wilshire Representatives:
Barbara Strunk 503-284-7502
Kathy Campbell 503-515-6225
Editor’s notes
by Al Ellis

So why no "Kathy’s Kitchen" recipe in the May/June issue? Similarly, why was a “Letter to the Board” editorial submitted by B-W resident Peter Mogielniki proposing a Wilshire Park enhancement project not published? It was certainly not the fault of Kathy or Peter, whose submissions reached me by e-mail well in advance of the article/ad submission deadline (which is the second Friday of even-numbered months). So who’s responsible for these omissions? Clearly the buck stops with the editor, right? But editorial decisions are rarely made in a vacuum, and this one was no exception—the result of collaboration with newsletter graphic designer Amy Gwilliam, who configures the layout (a jigsaw puzzle of a task!). We were faced with a good news/bad news dilemma: submissions aplenty…but not enough room to fit them all in. Something had to give, and it couldn’t be purchased ads, nor would it be regular columns (e.g., President’s Message, Calendar, etc.), nor articles with time-sensitive content (e.g., Movie in the Park, Beaumont alum reunion, etc.). In the end, it was decided to free space by postponing Kathy Campbell’s barbecue recipe and Peter Mogielniki’s editorial, both of which would remain relevant into July/August.

Another “buck stops here” responsibility of an editor is to field complaints as well as compliments from readers. Thankfully, positives have greatly outnumbered negatives over the years, but when constructive criticism does come our way, I do my best to respond promptly, thoughtfully, and respectfully. Case in point: I received an e-mail from a vocal music teacher who was highly critical of the lead article in our last issue based on an interview with Beaumont Middle School Principal Harriette Jackson Vimegnon. Here’s an excerpt:

I was extremely disappointed in the incredibly misleading front-page article, “Beaumont Middle School - music to the ears of our community” by Pat Bellamah.

While it may be true that Beaumont employs a full-time music teacher, the fact is they only offer BAND. There is NO VOCAL MUSIC!!! This is an extremely sad state of affairs. If you aren’t interested in playing an instrument, you don’t have access to music at Beaumont. When I grew up, all schools had choir programs as well as theater and art.

The instrumental program IS laudable and worthy of much admiration, but failing to mention the lack of other musical offerings, (or theater, or art) was a glaring omission and most disconcerting.

Editor’s response: As one who taught in the Portland School District for over 30 years, I join you in lamenting the elimination of valued electives due to budget cuts—from vocal music and drama to foreign languages and shop. Some schools don’t even have a band program, but Beaumont does, and it’s one of the best (thanks to the superlative Cynthia Plank). The writer accurately reported what she learned from Principal Vimegnon—admittedly all positives—and the article was as long as space permitted. That said, reporting on the shortcomings of Beaumont Middle School is fair game as well, and the door is always wide open for a Letter to the Board editorial.

BWNA Calendar of Events, cont.

Friday, July 21
1:30-6:00 p.m.
Beaumont Grade School Class of 1962 reunion, Amalfi’s, 4703 N.E. Fremont St.

Tuesday, August 1
6:30-8:15 p.m.
BWNA National Night Out in Wilshire Park (all-neighborhood potluck picnic), just west of park pavilion (National Night Out substitutes for the August general meeting.)

Saturday, August 5
9:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
Fremont Fest, organized by Beaumont Business Association
Fremont Street, NE 42nd-51st

Friday August 11
BWNA newsletter submission deadline for September-October issue. E-mail articles to Al Ellis, editor@bwna.us. E-mail photos and ads to Amy Gwilliam, design@bwna.us

Monday, September 11
7:00-8:30 p.m.
BWNA Board Meeting
Bethany Lutheran Church
Skidmore/37th
Library meeting room

Monday, October 9
7:00-8:30 p.m.
BWNA General Meeting
Bethany Lutheran Church
Skidmore/37th
Fellowship Hall
Well, since I decided to “borrow” the term as lead-in for periodic newsletter missives, the originator has exited Fox News and left the bloviating field wide open for me, so here goes.

While this year’s legislative session has rightfully focused on short- and long-term solutions to budgeting problems, there are also hundreds of other initiatives/bills that percolate under the media radar and might never be known beyond small cadres of ardent supporters and equally ardent opponents. The general public is often unaware of the details of most of these bills until it’s too late to get involved in the discussion. One such bill is HB2007, and, as is usually the case with legislation, the devil is in the details (26 pages of legalese to be exact). Summarized as an initiative to address the affordable housing crisis, which sounds innocuous enough on the surface, HB2007 actually allows the state to usurp local zoning and historical preservation management without meaningfully addressing affordability. One key concern is that it permits expansion of duplexes to all single-family zoned lots, not just on corner lots as is now allowed in Portland. Just walk by the development at Klickitat and 43rd to see an example of what this might look like plopped down throughout blocks of single-family zones. Priced at close to one million per unit, it’s anything but affordable to the vast majority of folks.

Supporters of HB2007 have deemed critics of the bill as NIMBYs (as in Not-In-My-Backyard whiners). Such trite, smug political sound bites only serve to exacerbate polarization and impede substantive discussion on balancing the need for higher density and (affordable) development, while at the same time recognizing and maintaining the value of existing homes and established neighborhoods.

More encouraging is SB871. Although amended several times, the basic intention of this enlightened legislation is intact—a strong attempt to allow cities to require responsible demolitions using best practices for mitigating the impact of hazardous dust on nearby residents. Key is how the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) meets its responsibility to establish these best practices within a timely manner. With deconstruction (i.e., recycling useable materials from demolitions) being the safest method to remove a house in an urban environment, it’s notable that Portland will host the national conference “DECON and REUSE ’17” in September, which will bring together experts from around the country. Hopefully this will challenge our City Council to be bold and accelerate the use of deconstruction when removing homes of all ages—not just those built before 1916, as is the case today. Best to keep this issue above the radar.
Contemplating selling your home?

Would you like to:
• protect your home from being demolished?
• preserve our neighborhood integrity?

Please consider selling your home to a buyer who will recognize its unique characteristics and won’t demolish it!

For more information, contact
John Sandie
sandiefam@gmail.com or 219/508-4162
When Central Northeast Neighbors (CNN) Director Alison Stoll moved to Beaumont-Wilshire in the early 1980’s, she saw a notice that BWNA needed someone to write for the newsletter and she volunteered. Not entirely willingly, she quickly found herself drafted onto the board. Recently married and expecting her first child, she really didn’t have time to serve, but she committed and so began more than 30 years engagement with Portland neighborhood associations. BWNA’s first big win when she joined the board was getting the Bloods and Crips (i.e., gangs) out of Wilshire Park. In those days our lovely park was a prime location for drug dealing. The neighborhood association organized to get some of the children’s play equipment installed, as well as the bark pathway around the perimeter. “All it took to get the bad guys out,” Stoll said, “was to get the good guys to reclaim the park.” This anecdote illustrates two important facts about neighborhood associations and Portland: one, if you have something you would like to see happen in the neighborhood, get involved; and two, contrary to skeptics, everything isn’t getting worse; some things have improved.

Most Portlanders are generally aware that their neighborhood has a neighborhood association: there are 95 of them. As a report from Portland’s Office of Neighborhood Involvement noted, neighborhood associations are “a basic building block of democracy in Portland. These Associations are a powerful resource which draw together a diversity of people who are concerned with issues affecting the quality of life in their neighborhoods.”

Portland’s neighborhood associations are structured under seven district coalitions, which are funded by and operate in collaboration with the City of Portland’s Office of Neighborhood Involvement. As one of these coalitions, Stoll said, “CNN has a contract with the city to provide services to the neighborhood associations, such as liability insurance, organizing, guidance with bylaws, finances, treasurers, and bank accounts. We are the fiscal administrator for anything the neighborhood association does.” Because CNN is a 501c3 non-profit, any donations made to BWNA are made through CNN.

The biggest issue for CNN right now is the Comprehensive Plan, i.e., the rezoning of the city to allow for denser development. "Back when neighborhood associations were formed, it was a way for neighbors to have a voice in decisions that the city makes,” Stoll said. Then as now, the hot-button issues were around land-use—zoning and development, as well as essential services such as fire, police, road, and sewers. “As time progressed and we have evolved, our voice has changed,” she said, putting into words the sentiments she hears from many of the Portlanders she represents regarding rising rents and home prices and the demolition and new development that are changing the character of the city. “It used to be that you could go down and testify before the city, and in many cases either change the decision or put conditions on the decisions. Now the feeling is that what we moved here for is slipping away. The qualities of the city are changing. The little mom and pop business are going way.”

BWNA has two representatives on the CNN board, our own board officers Barb Strunk and Kathy Campbell. BWNA has been active and vocal in pursuing the board’s objectives for the Comprehensive Plan, on which decision-making has now reached the state level, Stoll said. CNN has a land-use committee for the whole coalition. CNN has other objectives, including hosting public-safety action committee meetings (PSAC) with the Portland Police and facilitating coalition members with neighborhood cleanups. For more information, go to CNN’s website (www.cnncoalition.org).
Last general meeting until fall delivers on diversity of topics, issues, and presenters

by Al Ellis

With Neighborhood Night Out Picnic in Wilshire Park substituting for the August general meeting, June became the last opportunity until October for residents to express viewpoints and make announcements at a general meeting (normally held on second Mondays of even-numbered months, with board meetings on odd-numbered months). Chaired by newly-elected BWNA President Tim Hemstreet, the breadth and import of the agenda did not disappoint, running the gamut from end-of-session state legislature issues to adoption of revised BWNA bylaws to a neighborhood tour.

The evening began with State Representative Barbara Smith Warner, whose district includes Beaumont-Wilshire. A multi-term veteran legislator, Representative Warner served on several key committees during the 2017 session, with the emphasis on budgetary reform. After providing an overview of major financial challenges facing the state and proposed legislation aimed at addressing shortfalls, she fielded attendees’ questions and concerns. These included foster care problems (the elephant in the room being the inadequate number of foster care homes, urging those in the room to consider taking on a foster child); making corporations pay their fair share of taxes; and an especially troubling issue for established residential neighborhoods like Beaumont-Wilshire, the demolition of viable, relatively affordable entry-level-buyer homes. According to a unanimously-approved BWNA resolution, this is a problem that would be exacerbated by passage of House Bill 2007. (Read more about HB 2007 in John Sandie’s “Beaumont Bloviating” editorial in this issue.)

A second guest speaker was Kathy Buss, spokesperson for the Association of Retarded Children (ARC), providing advocacy, support, and services to families with children and adults who have intellectual and developmental disabilities. Ms. Buss is making the rounds in hopes of persuading neighborhood associations to participate in an ARC clothes drive, which not only benefits ARC, but also raises money for the contributing organization. Participation will be considered by BWNA.

Next, after months of discussion and fine-tuning, the final draft of a revised BWNA bylaws package was overwhelmingly approved by residents attending the general meeting. The revisions—some substantive (e.g., duties of President and Vice-President), others housekeeping (e.g., form and composition improvements)—are posted on the BWNA website home page, www.bwna.us.

Other topics discussed were proposed playground improvements for Wilshire Park (spearheaded by Board member Gary Hancock), BWNA’s push for City of Portland support for neighborhood-led volunteer maintenance of the Wistaria & 41st Traffic Island Garden (update provided by Vice-President Kathy Campbell), planning for National Night Out Picnic (coordinated by Kathy Campbell), the constructive CNN round-table discussion with City Commissioner Chloe Eudaly (reported by Secretary Barb Strunk), and the meeting finale—plans for a BWNA-organized Walking Tour of the Beaumont-Wilshire Neighborhood (initiated by Land Use Chair Jack Bookwalter).
A wide and welcoming smile, expressive hands, a ready laugh, and eyes alight with enthusiasm aptly describe Portland Early Learning Project Director Jessica Amezcua. For parents looking for a positive and passionate force in their children’s Spanish language and culture education, look no further than Jessica and her staff of six other teachers.

Portland Early Learning Project, often referred to as PELP, won the title of Best Language Camp in the 2017 NW Kids Magazine contest. In each of the two years prior to that, PELP earned a respectable runner-up position in the same contest, and in 2014 grabbed the top spot.

What’s the secret to the program’s success? Jessica attributes it to PELP’s emphasis on eliciting a love of Spanish language and its varied cultures through play, sign language, music and singing, reading, games, and even taste bud-awakening tamarind candies plus snacks such as cucumbers, radishes, or apples—with a sprinkle of salt and chile (considered a treat in some Latin American cultures).

“In Portland, children rarely have the opportunity to be exposed to how kids in other parts of the world live, so we bring that world to our students,” says Jessica.

PELP’s cultural education component isn’t limited to just one country, however. “There are many different cultures that speak Spanish, so our programming might include Guatemala one time, Mexico the next,” she said.

A key benefit from Jessica’s standpoint is that children who have a positive exposure to Spanish early on have a good base if they go on to take academic Spanish language coursework. “Children start to develop the facial muscles necessary to speak the language, so they are better equipped for the next step.”

Wonder what Jessica’s background is that brought her to leading this popular program? It includes living in Mexico on a college exchange program and achieving fluency by committing to speaking only Spanish while there. Additionally, after graduation, Jessica did a two-year stint in her field of study—biology—in Cuernavaca, Mexico, then married a Mexican man she met while working there, and later enrolled their children in a Montessori school in Tijuana. All of these experiences and more (too numerous to mention in the space available here) add up to plenty of credibility for Jessica in the language and culture that she loves to share with kids and adults.

Parents who drive by Bethany Lutheran Church at NE 37th & Skidmore might be familiar with the cheerful PELP sign that hangs out front. PELP is a year-round teaching program offered not only in the Beaumont-Wilshire neighborhood, but also in the West Hills, Beaverton, and beyond. Programming includes classes for children aged 18 months through the 3rd grade (and their parents!), as well as summer camps for kids ages four to nine. Class sizes are limited, and private classes are also available.
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Schedule a tour or learn more by contacting us at info@strosepdx.org or 503.281.1912.
It’s barbecue time at Kathy’s Kitchen!

by Kathy Campbell

BBQ Tarragon-Dijon Chicken Breasts in Foil

6 chicken breast halves, about 3 lbs., skinned
¼ cup Dijon mustard
¼ cup tarragon vinegar or white wine vinegar
2 T. olive oil
4 tsp. minced fresh tarragon or 2 tsp. dried tarragon
¼ tsp. freshly ground pepper
12 to 15 small thin-skinned potatoes (1 to 1 ½ inches in diameter)

Rinse chicken and pat dry. Combine mustard, vinegar, oil, tarragon, and pepper in a large heavy-duty plastic “Ziploc” bag. Add chicken and seal bag. Rotate bag to distribute marinade and place in a shallow pan. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour or until next day, turning chicken occasionally.

Remove chicken from bag and drain, reserving marinade for later use in recipe. Arrange chicken in center of a large heavy-duty piece of foil (18 x 30 inches). Parboil the potatoes for about 15 minutes in salted water. Pile potatoes over chicken. Spoon reserved marinade over potatoes and crimp well to seal.

Set foil bundle in center of cooking grate on BBQ grill. Close lid on grill. Cook until chicken is no longer pink and potatoes are tender when pierced (about 35 to 45 minutes).

Transfer bundle to a platter, and open foil to serve. Season to taste with salt.

Makes 4 to 5 servings.

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