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www.SabinPdx.org

Our Community in Action

Go Fund Me Campaign Saves Sabin Home

“Diane is the heart and soul of our neighborhood, and sometimes the neighborhood should win, not the BIG banks!” That’s the tag line on Diane Williams’s Go Fund Me page, created with help by concerned neighbors when her bank threatened to foreclose on the Sabin home she has owned for nearly 35 years.

Williams, a Sabin resident on N.E. 11th Ave., bought her house for \$25,000 in 1981. Since that time, she has provided a home and shelter for many family members including her nieces, her dying brother, her parents in their old age, and her nephew’s daughter, whom she adopted out of foster care when she was a year old.

By 1996, Williams had not only created many memories in her home, she had managed to pay off her house in full. Shortly thereafter, she faced a series of challenges including losing her job of 16 years at a nursing home, when new management took over and hired younger workers and subsequently denied



Diane Williams stands on the front porch of her Sabin home.

her claim for unemployment. Diane also suffered from health problems and, unfortunately, the insurance she described as “iffy” did not fully cover the costs her hip replacement.

Following her hip surgery, she was out of work for two or three years. During that time,

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Sabin Triangle Update: Planning and Funding

In 2011, the Sabin Community Association worked with Architects Without Borders to design a community park concept at the corners of N.E. 15th Ave. and N.E. Prescott St. (on the triangular lot across the street from Grain and Gristle and next door to the Prescott Corner Market).

This lot once served as a terminus for the Irvington-Jefferson “IJ” line of the Portland Trolley but was decommissioned around 1940 when Portland’s trolleys began to be replaced by buses. Ownership of the lot remained with the city, and for the last three years SCA members have been working closely with a variety of city agencies on refining the proposal, with considerable help from Portland State University (PSU) students.

In spring 2013, ten PSU civil engineering students surveyed the so-called “pocket park” as part of their senior capstone project. The students examined site issues such as ground and groundwater elevation, potential soil contaminants, and utility lines, among others.

With a working concept in hand, elements of the design have been vetted for cost, feasibility, and long-term impacts. This past October, SCA was thrilled to obtain provisional city approval for the Triangle, a critical step to moving forward with the project. The Sabin Triangle will now enter its planning phase, where the logistics of supporting, funding, and building the project will be detailed.

2015 SCA Meeting Schedule

Board meetings are open to all and are held from 7-9 p.m. on the second Monday of the month (except in July, August, and December) at Whole Foods' upstairs conference room, Northeast 15th and Fremont. Upcoming meetings:

January 12
February 9

EVENTS CALENDAR

www.facebook.com/sabinpdx
FOR SELECT INFORMATION
ON SABIN EVENTS

Strategies for a Sustainable Income in Retirement: Albina Library (registration required) Jan. 27, 6:30-7:30 p.m.

MLK Celebration at Sabin School
January 22 at 6 p.m.

Sabin Community Association



NORTHEAST COALITION
OF NEIGHBORHOODS

This newsletter is produced with the support from Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods and Portland's Office of Neighborhood Involvement.

Sabin Community Orchard Stewards Needed



Sabin Community Orchard stewards prepare beds at a work party. Join the community group to help keep the orchard project thriving.

Come be a part of the great things happening at the Sabin Community Orchard! Over the past four years, Sabin neighbors and Mother Nature have worked together to grow a fantastic community fruit orchard on Mason Street between 18th and 19th avenues. It is not gardening weather outside right now, but we are gathering a team of Orchard stewards for another wonderful season in the Sabin Community Orchard. Orchard stewards are a core team of volunteers who help maintain the orchard, learn about basic fruit tree care, and build community with their neighbors.

We invite you to consider becoming an Orchard steward. No experience is necessary, though gardening or orchard experience is a plus!

Further information and applications to become an Orchard Steward are available by calling 503-284-6106, or by emailing gareth@portlandfruit.org with 'Sabin Orchard Steward Interest' in the subject line. Applications are due by January 26, 2015.

Sabin Briefs

Sabin School Playground Renovation Meets Fundraising Goal

Thanks to everyone who donated to the project, the Sabin Campus committee met its fundraising goal of \$7,500 to match a \$15,000 donor gift to make improvements to the north playground at Sabin School. The Sabin Campus committee is currently applying for grants to provide additional support.

The committee held two planning workshops to gather input from the Sabin community. Eleven teachers attended the faculty workshop and about 30 people attended the community workshop. Playground designer Michelle Mathis led both sessions, which were informative and inspiring. The project will be implemented during the summer of 2015.

Sabin School Auction: Saturday, April 18, 2015

Lights, Camera, Auction! Save the date and walk the red carpet at the 10th annual Sabin School Auction. For ticket and donation information please visit the auction website: www.sabinauction.com

ACCESS SABIN NEWS ONLINE

Readers can catch up on breaking local news that affects Sabin by "liking" SCA on Facebook or checking Nextdoor Sabin (www.sabin.nextdoor.com). To view Sabin Community Association newsletters starting with the January 2014 issue, go to SCA's website (www.sabinpdx.org). Click on "More" at the top of the page and select "Newsletter Archives."

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Clay Veka

Dear Sabin Residents:

As we welcome the New Year, I pause to identify goals I hope the Sabin Community Association achieves in 2015. My hope is that we:

- Continue to focus on efforts that support diversity in Sabin
- Increase last year's trash repurposing at the Sabin Clean-Up (May 30, 2015)
- Build the Fremont Green Street improvement at N.E. 9th Ave. (following a five year effort!)
- Engage additional Sabinites to join the SCA team (contact me if you are interested)
- Support the first ever Sabin Street Tree Inventory (thank you, Street Team!)
- Find a new Sabin Orchard Project coordinator (six volunteer hours per month)
- Secure grant funding to advance the first phase of the Sabin Triangle Project at N.E. Prescott and 15th Ave.

What a year to dive into! The Sabin Community Association is excited to work on our list of goals. May 2015 also be full of joy and activity for you and your family.

— Clay

Sabin School Seeks SMART Volunteers

Sabin School is looking for a several SMART (Start Making A Reader Today) reading volunteers. SMART readers spend an hour each week during the school year reading one-on-one with pre-K through third-grade children, modeling and fostering a joy of reading while supporting the child's efforts to read independently. This is a great opportunity for Sabin community members to give a little time for the kids in our neighborhood.

Visit the website for volunteer information and the application process: www.getsmartoregon.org/get-involved/volunteer (make sure you include that you want to volunteer at Sabin on your application).

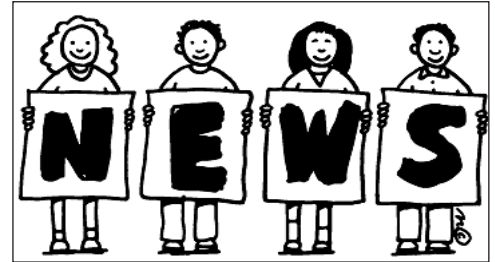
Please contact Darci at sabin@getsmartoregon.org with any questions. The students at our local school will thank you!

Sabin Neighborhood Emergency Team

We are seeking neighbors interested in reviving Sabin's Emergency Preparedness Committee to coordinate with adjacent Neighborhood Emergency Teams (NET). NET members are citizens trained by Portland Bureau of Emergency Management (PBEM) and Portland Fire & Rescue to provide assistance to neighbors following a disaster, such as earthquakes, severe storms, or floods. PBEM provides free training and field exercises. Please visit www.portlandonline.com/oem/31667 for more information on NETs.

Contact Clay Veka (503) 961-3702, clayveka@gmail.com if you are interested in participating in emergency preparedness activities in Sabin.

Sabin Residents! Call for Stories



The SCA communications team is a small group working to share important news with our community. While we hold regular meetings to discuss current news, upcoming events, and neighborhood trends, our team needs your help to keep SCAN relevant.

We want to hear from you! Tell us about Sabin events you are planning. Recommend a resident who has made a difference in our community for a Sabin neighbor profile. Have you researched an interesting local historical event that you would love to share? Please send photos.

We welcome fully written articles, news briefs, or even just story ideas. To share a story or idea, please contact our newsletter editor Erin Brasell by phone (503) 224-9727 or email ebrasell@gmail.com.

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Sabin SUN School: Winter 2015 Adult and Family Offerings



Sabin SUN School “aims to improve the lives of children, their families and the community” by “striv[ing] to be a community hub.” As part of that mission, Sabin SUN

offers free, drop-in classes for adults and families. Registration forms are available and required for the 2015 winter session (Jan. 14–Mar. 7) on your first visit. The winter class schedule includes:

Tuesdays: Yoga (5:30–6:30 p.m.) in the Sabin School Library

Wednesdays: Zumba, Latin-inspired fitness class with free childcare available (5:30–6:30 p.m.) in the Sabin Gym.

Fridays: Family indoor soccer (3:15–4:15 p.m.) in the Sabin Gym.



This apple is one of many varieties of fruit grown in the Sabin Community Orchard. Sabin is still seeking a Sabin Orchard Liaison, which is an essential position for keeping up this important community asset.

Diane Williams, a Sabin Resident for Nearly 35 Years

Continued from page 1

she had to take out a loan to help cover surgery costs and to repay the Portland Development Commission that had given her a low interest loan in 1992 to make some necessary repairs to her house.

Although Williams was eventually able to find work again, she has not been able to find a full-time job like her position at the nursing home. By 2006, Williams had taken out an additional loan on her home to help cover new medical expenses. It was then that she met with a representative from Lending Tree who convinced her, despite her hesitations, to consolidate her debt into an Adjustable Rate Mortgage (ARM) loan with a payment that was more than she could afford. The representative assured Williams that he was going to keep working with her to help refinance her mortgage to get a more affordable interest rate. Instead, he left Lending Tree and Williams’s interest rate and monthly payment continued rising.

“Since last year it’s been snowballing like crazy,” Williams reported. Although she was working three jobs, she could not keep up with the payments and the bank eventually demanded full payment and threatened foreclosure. At that point, Williams finally opened up and told her neighbors about her financial problems and the likelihood that she might lose her home.

Those neighbors helped Williams set up a Go Fund Me site in September 2014 with a goal of raising \$25,000. So far Diane has raised nearly \$8,000 with donations from 149 people, many of them choosing to remain anonymous. Williams estimates that she only knows about 20

people who have donated through the site and her largest anonymous donor gave \$1,000.

With the help of funds raised through her Go Fund Me campaign and mediation with the bank through the Oregon Foreclosure Avoidance Program with representation from Hacienda, Williams was able to negotiate an affordable trial payment plan for October through December of this past year.

In her most recent Go Fund Me update, Williams reports that she has successfully completed the trial payment plan and has entered into a loan modification, which starts in January 2015 and will continue for four years. Williams ends the post by saying: “Thank you so much in helping me stay in my home. Your support and donations have helped.”

Throughout this ordeal, Williams continued to help her friends and family. Currently her house is also home to her cousin and a friend who is suffering from cancer and would be out on the street if it were not for Williams. And, her generosity and community spirit is not limited to her close friends and family members. Williams’s observe that “as one of only two African American families left on our block because of gentrification, Diane is our local historian. She is also our welcoming committee, our block party organizer, our neighborhood patrol, and so much more.” No wonder the neighborhood could not bear to lose her, and now, thanks in part to the generosity of friends, neighbors and sympathetic strangers, they won’t have to!

For more of Diane’s story, or to donate, visit her Go Fund Me site at: <http://www.gofundme.com/savedianeshome>.

— *Kyann Kalin*

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