



# Happenings

JANUARY 2013

PO Box 7809, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49507

## Running - A Community Activity

- by Maia Sieplinga

As one who is not a regular runner and has never been a part of the running community, I had no idea what the community was like. I had the privilege of getting a glimpse into the community while volunteering at the Alger Heights 5k.

Running is one of the cheapest forms of exercise as it requires nothing more than a pair of running shoes. It also has many health benefits such as increased blood flow throughout your cardiovascular system, burning, on average, 500 calories per hour, and strengthening muscles and bones. Increasing in recent years, are also the social benefits. With the increased number of races, social running groups and more frequent races have also created a community bonded by a common activity.

Right in our own neighborhood is the very popular Alger Heights 5k ([alger5k.com](http://alger5k.com)). With another successful year (4th annual) including a costume contest, a kids fun run, the Halloween themed 5k, and the challenge of running with 1996 Olympian Paul McMullen, this year's race was indeed a success. For the race results and photos visit the 5k website. The 5k has also very generously donated their profits to local charities every year.

Coming up in our neighborhood, as well, is the Dash Down Division Run/Walk 5k ([dashdowndivision.com](http://dashdowndivision.com)). The race course goes through the Alger Heights neighborhood and includes a kids' fun run as well. Being one of the few runs in the winter, this race is a great way to start off your running season or even your running career!

Not a runner? If you are like me and haven't been a runner I would highly recommend joining a local running club or even taking a class, such as the "Couch to 5k" (run at the Kroc Center - [grkroccenter.org](http://grkroccenter.org)) to give you tips and tricks on how to improve your skills, enhance your technique, or get beginner tips.

If running isn't your thing you can still be involved! Races like the Alger 5k or Dash Down Division are only possible with the support of the community and volunteers like you. Volunteers are needed for race day, before race day, or even to head up committees (such as the kids' run, the sponsors, etc.). If you are looking for another way to get involved volunteering for one of these or the many other races is a great way to help! If you are interested in volunteering for the 2013 Alger Heights 5k on a committee or for race day, contact Liz at [liz.carter@alger5k.com](mailto:liz.carter@alger5k.com). To volunteer for the 2013 Dash Down Division contact Kraig, at [Kraig\\_Schmottlach@usc.salvationarmy.org](mailto:Kraig_Schmottlach@usc.salvationarmy.org).

Good luck and happy running! 🏃



## President's Notes...



In the blink of an eye, 2012 has come and gone. In many ways, it was a remarkable year. We reached to the stars and sent a rover to Mars. Not to be outdone, we sent Felix Baumgartner to the stars and he jumped back home. We celebrated Olympic Games, elected leaders, and finally got the long-awaited iPhone 5. In others ways

though, we can't wait to forget it. Tragic shootings in Colorado and Connecticut stole innocent human life. Storms battered the eastern shoreline uprooting more than just trees. A stubborn economy refused to grow as quickly as the pile of unpaid bills required it to. We are asked by the old Scottish poem Auld Lang Syne, "Should old acquaintance be forgot, and never brought to mind? Should old acquaintance be forgot, and old lang syne?" I say no. Do not forget the trials of 2012; be strengthened by them. Do not be hampered by challenges of 2012; learn from them. We only get one spin around the sun named "2013." Let's

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## Updated and Organized Neighborhood Bulletin Board at Ken's Market

Be sure to check out the updated bulletin board at Ken's Fruit and Vegetable Market. You'll find a place to post items for sale/rent, local services and events. There's also a section for 'Neighborhood News' that will be updated with neighborhood news and events that don't make it into the AHNA newsletter. If you are not on Facebook this will be a great place to find out the latest from the neighborhood.

Questions or comments... please contact Jennifer Reidsma at 988-9268 ext. 205 or [jenn@tablernaclecommunity.org](mailto:jenn@tablernaclecommunity.org)

make it a great ride. And there's a hand my trusty friend! And give us a hand o' thine! And we'll take a right good-will draught, for auld lang syne. 🏃

Jordan Bush  
President

# Alger Heights Neighborhood Association Dues

- by Sam Evans

Enclosed in this winter's newsletter is our annual dues envelope. We are asking that you contribute this year as our dues go toward the cost of the following items: Newsletter printing (4 newsletters per year), flyers for special events or alerts to the neighborhood, yearly activities (Annual Garage Sales,

Flower Contest, Trash Day, National Night Out, Christmas Lights contest, etc.). Our expenses are over \$3,000.00 annually. As you well know, if you have attended any of our activities, we do not charge anything for participation. We are utilizing our Facebook pages, but not everyone has a Facebook account or a computer. All newsletters are delivered in person either by a block captain or a board member. Our board is an all-volunteer board with no salaries. We all have a passion to help make Alger Heights

the best and safest neighborhood in the city. Our dues are as follows: Seniors (\$10.00), Household (\$20.00), and Business (\$25.00).

We know that we are still in hard economic times and ask that you please help contribute the Alger Heights Neighborhood Association this year. 🌱

# Neighborhood Crime Watch

- by Sam Evans

We had our first crime watch training a few months ago and would like to have another one this winter. We would like to hear from you on what day of the week and time would be best for the 1 ½ hour long training. If we need to break it up into two separate trainings due crowds and over capacity we can do that also. We will be holding these sessions at a public facility. We have materials to hand out and we will have an officer there to answer any questions. If interested please e-mail me or call me if you don't have e-mail at: massnave1@att.net or 540-2107.

As the winter months come before us please keep the following in mind:

**The odd – even parking ordinance** is in effect from November through April. This means to park on the odd side of the street on odd numbered days and on the even side of the street on the even numbered days. This allows the city snow plows to plow the streets better.

**Don't leave your snow blowers out** on the walk or in your driveway even if you are going indoors for just a minute as it is an opportunity for a passer-by to stop and pick up your equipment before you realize it.

**Keep your car doors shut and locked up.** We have had a rash of items in cars being taken of late. Did you know that 95% of them were unlocked. Please remember to lock your vehicle, make sure all valuables are taken into the house, and that any connections to your electronics (i.e.: phone charger, GPS cords, or game systems, etc.) are put into your glove box or taken in. This gives the potential thief no reason to go into your vehicle.

With the winter months before us, now would be a good time to get to know your neighbor and help each other with the shoveling or blowing of the snow.

Let's keep an eye out for each other and report any suspicious persons or vehicles to the police at the non-emergency number 616-456-3400 or if a crime is being done then call the police at 911. 🌱

# Here's the Scoop on Sweet Mellisa's



Current hours are Tuesday - Thursday 9am-8pm, Friday 9am-9pm, Saturday 9am- until sold out, closed on Sundays (and Mondays). Beginning in February, we will also be open on Mondays.

Sweet Mellisa's will be closed beginning January 24 through February 4 for a well-deserved family vacation.

We started a new coffee program about three months ago and it has been going well. Customers should know that the coffee is locally sourced from Direct Trade Coffee Club and Rowsters. The coffee beans we use are at their peak when we use them, which is about 5-14 days after roast. Because coffee is a produce and it changes daily, we adjust our grind setting and the amount of coffee used in each cup to ensure the best cup of coffee is served. Alger Heights should know that they have a very good cup of coffee available at our shop.

Soup, soup, soup. Our soup has been going very well. We have had good response. Soup lovers should know that the produce and proteins are locally sourced. The flavor and complexity in our soups have been noted by those who try them.

The renovations have hit a snag as we found out that some of the regulations have changed which doesn't allow us to do a lot of the things we thought we could, thus costing more money and taking more time. We are moving as quickly as possible and want the cafe to be opened as soon as possible.

Sandwiches and salads should be in mid-February. We are awaiting a visit by the inspector before they can serve those.

Cupcakes have continued to do very nicely for Sweet Mellisa's. We are putting together some fun cupcake cakes for kids which will be unrolled here soon. Think super heroes...

Ice cream continues to be available year round.

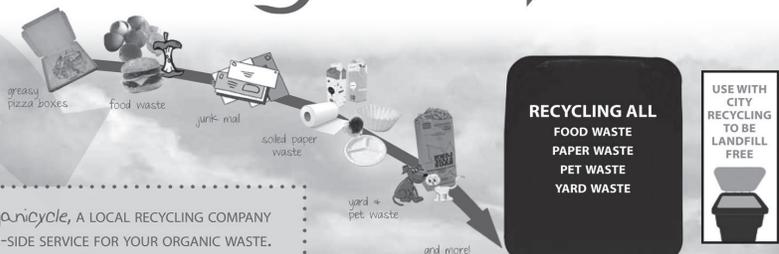
Stop by and say hi to Steve and Mellisa and try our coffee and soups and of course our famous cupcakes and ice cream. 🌱

## DID YOU KNOW?

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Sign up for the Alger Heights Neighborhood Watch page: [http://www.facebook.com/AlgerHeightsNeighborhood Watch](http://www.facebook.com/AlgerHeightsNeighborhoodWatch)

Brad King

# Alger

## Shoe Repair & Dry Cleaning

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Dear Alger Heights Resident,

Healthy Homes Coalition is offering a FREE 90-minute Healthy Homes Healthy Kids Class at Tabernacle Community Church on Monday, February 11th at 6:30 PM.

Healthy Homes Coalition will give you a free spray bottle, double mop bucket and mop just for attending the class.

If you live within the City of Grand Rapids, there is a possibility that your home could be contaminated with lead. Even if you live in a newly built house, there is still a possibility that lead hazards can be tracked into the home on shoes or pets. Hazards can be present in or around your home due to neighbors' homes, lead hazards at work, etc.

Do you have small children (under 6) visiting your home often? Any amount of lead ingested is harmful and it's almost impossible to keep small children (especially babies and toddlers) from ingesting it if it is in the dust. That's why it's so important to know about safe cleaning practices regarding lead in your home.

Please RSVP February 8th to Candace E. Chivis at (616) 241- 3300 or [candace@heathlyhomescoalition.org](mailto:candace@heathlyhomescoalition.org). 🌱

Sign up for the Alger Heights Neighborhood Watch page: [http://www.facebook.com/AlgerHeightsNeighborhood Watch](http://www.facebook.com/AlgerHeightsNeighborhoodWatch)

## Lead Paint poses serious health risks to children

Lead is a heavy metal that was used in paint before 1978. Whether or not you are certain if there is lead present in your home, if your home was built before 1978, assume that lead is present. The primary source of lead poisoning is lead-based paint and residual lead dust in the home. Lead dust is a microscopic dust that you may not be able to spot. Lead poisoning in young children causes learning disabilities and brain damage.

**Here are 10 tips to help keep children lead-safe.**

- Get every child aged 1 year to 6 years TESTED for lead.
- WASH children's hands, toys, pacifiers and bottles OFTEN.
- Good NUTRITION: a diet with lots of calcium and iron (green veggies, lean meat, low-fat milk and 100 percent fruit juice) and low in fat is very important.
- Clean weekly: wet mopping floors and wiping window sills and wells with soap and water helps control lead dust.
- Do not let children play in bare dirt. Cover bare soil with grass, woodchips or bushes.
- Make sure everyone takes off their shoes or wipes them on a track mat before entering the house.
- When using tap water, let the water run for 30-60 seconds until the temperature changes. Do not make bottles or cook with hot tap water.
- When doing home repair or remodeling, remove children from home and consult lead-safe work practice materials before starting any work that involves disturbing paint. Better yet, use a professional contractor for all repairs if possible.
- Be sure that no one brings home lead from work on clothes and shoes (especially those employed in auto mechanics or construction).
- Help get the word out about lead poisoning.

There will be a FREE class at Tabernacle Community Church on Feb. 11, 2013 from 6:30-8:00pm on making your home healthy and lead-safe. Please phone Jennifer Reidsma at 988-9268 ext. 205 or Candace Chivis at 241-3300 by Feb 8 to sign up.

## ALGER HEIGHTS BARBER SHOP

2422 EASTERN AVENUE SE

Hours:

Monday - Friday: 7:30am - 5:00pm

Saturday: 7:30am - 12:00pm

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### Like Us on Facebook...

The official AHNA facebook page can be found at:

<http://www.facebook.com/AlgerHeightsNeighborhoodAssociation>.

## Community Coordinator Update

You might be wondering just what a community coordinator does. My efforts as the Community Coordinator will be focused on Asset Based Community Development (ABCD). ABCD is a methodology that seeks to uncover and



utilize the strengths within communities for community development (you can find out more at [www.abcdinstitute.org](http://www.abcdinstitute.org)). The assets in a neighborhood include the businesses, institutions and residents within the community, as well as the physical landscape of a community. I'll be working on connecting neighbors with one another but I need your help to do this.

There are several ways to get involved with the work that I'll be doing within the Alger Heights community:

You can open your home to your neighbors for an evening by hosting a brain-storming session (contact me for available dates and times).

You can attend one of the upcoming Community Roundtable Meetings happening on:

- Thursday, February 28th, at Tabernacle Community Church
- Wednesday, March 13th, at Seymour CRC.

You can also help with my efforts by volunteering to canvass the neighborhood in the spring. The information that is gathered during the canvassing will be added to a neighborhood database that can be used to connect neighbors to one other.

If any of these opportunities appeal to you please contact me at 988-9268 ext. 205 or [jenn@tabernaclecommunity.org](mailto:jenn@tabernaclecommunity.org). 🙏

## Being a Thoughtful Dog Owner

- by Bob Synk

My wife Theresa and I try to be good citizens regarding our dog Murphy. Although she sometimes gets away from us, she is almost always leashed and we pick up after her on walks. My coat pockets carry plastic bags all the time. We did slip up though. Our mail carrier left us a note asking us to clean up our front yard. Never thought of that!

Recently, we renewed Murphy's dog license and learned a few things:

- Licensing your dog makes it much more likely you will get your pet back if it runs off. The Kent County Animal Shelter will hold

# Church and School News

## Mobile Food Pantry at Seymour Church

840 Alger SE, Grand Rapids MI 49507  
(at Eastern & Alger)

### A distribution of perishable food for those in need



Saturday, February 2, 2013  
in the church parking lot

Registration begins at noon

Distribution begins at 1:00 pm

We request my name, address, (and phone number if available), where you heard about us, and to specify your reason for needing free food.

**Any questions,  
call 616-245-8726.**

## News from Alger Middle School

Alger Middle School urgently needs our community support to assist students and teachers in the classroom during the 2012-2013 academic year.

Alger is looking for any volunteers interested in providing school-based mentorship and/or tutoring to students grade 6-8. More specifically, there is a great need for math and reading tutors. Additionally, there is a great need for volunteers to assist teachers in the classrooms.

If you or someone you know is interested in volunteering to provide these services or any other school-based services, please contact Tersee Nande, Community School Coordinator, at 819-7896 or [trande@dablodgett.org](mailto:trande@dablodgett.org).

Alger truly appreciates its volunteers for their time, effort, and dedication put into positively changing the lives of our youth.

Be sure to ask about our volunteer incentives! 🙏

## Tabitha's Closet Holiday Clothing & Toy Giveaway

Tell your neighbors, co-workers, and friends and mark your own calendar for Tabitha's Closet giveaway that will take place on Saturday, April 13, 2013 from 9-11 AM in the Worship Center at Tabernacle Community Church, 2550 Eastern SE. The giveaway is open to the public and only costs .25 cents per bag. Keep in mind that it will be spring and time for lighter weight clothing.

NOTE: If you would like to donate any clothing or household items, please feel free to drop them off at the church (Entrance A) during office hours (Monday - Thursday, 9am-5pm). 🙏

**POLICE NON-EMERGENCY NUMBER 456-3400 REPORT SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY**

licensed dogs longer and, of course, the license enables the shelter to contact you.

- Animals not claimed in time are destroyed. That is sad but it is unavoidable with so many more animals out there than homes willing to take them. Much animal suffering and human expense could be avoided if we all had our pets spayed or neutered. Sterilized animals also make better pets. They are more affectionate; have fewer behavioral problems; live longer, healthier lives and are 3 times

less likely to bite.

- A license for a spayed/neutered dog is \$12, un-sterilized dogs are \$26. Senior Citizens (62 and older) get half off. But all fees are doubling on March 1st.
- The animal shelter also offers microchip identification for \$20.
- You can renew your dog license on-line at <https://www.accesskent.com/DogLicense> 🙏



## Business News

- by Sam Evans

The **Alger Heights Business Association** is nearing completion of a new business

directory. They will be distributed at local businesses by the end of the month.

Please continue to support these local businesses with your patronage.

A Grand Skein  
 Alger Barber Shop  
 Alger Hardware & Rental  
 Alger Height Neighborhood Assn.  
 Alger Pediatrics  
 Alger Quick Stop  
 Alger Shoe Repair & Dry Cleaning  
 Beauty House  
 Blondie's Hair Salon  
 Chase Bank  
 Continuum Healing  
 CVS Pharmacy  
 Dahlberg CPA

Express PC  
 Farmers Insurance Group  
 Fifth Third Bank  
 Dr. K. Frieswyk, D.D.S.  
 Gentleman Fashion  
 Grand Rapids Public Library  
 G. Robert Carpenter, Attorney  
 Great White Fish Chicken  
 Joanne Grzeszak, D.O.  
 Hearts In Step  
 Jack's Automotive  
 JB's Pizza  
 Ken's Fresh Market

Metro PCS/LA Insurance  
 Michael Malinowski, Attorney  
 Dr. T. Nykamp, D.D.S.  
 Open Arms Daycare  
 Over The Top Dance Studio  
 The Posh Pet  
 Real Food Cafe  
 Ryan & Hart Party Store  
 Sherwood Realty  
 Dr. L. Soper, D.C.  
 Sweet Mellisa's Ice Cream

## Chase Bank

Hello Alger Heights!

My name is Michelle Hoopman and I'm the Branch Manager at Chase Bank, located at 2430 Eastern Ave SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49507. I have lived in Grand Rapids for the past 13 years, after moving here from a small farm community. I'm am blessed to be the proud mother of two teenage boys, Ryan and Joey, two crazy dogs, and three cats that think they are dogs!

I have been with Chase since 2006, and handling the community's financial needs for

over 20 years. Our neighborhood Chase branch is a full service financial institution, where you will find expertise and personal service to help you reach your goals, plus a wide range of innovative products and solutions that make it easy to bank however you prefer. We are conveniently close by, and our knowledgeable, friendly staff has combined years of service at Chase of 60+ years! WOW!

Our hours of operation are Monday - Friday 9am-6pm and Saturday 9-2pm. Stop by and visit with us, or just relax and have a cup of coffee! ☕

## Our first ever "super festive" Christmas Decorating Contest

- by Laura Muresan

It might be the quickest the AHNA Board of Directors has acted in its decades-old history.

At our November meeting, a member suggested a Christmas decorating contest; within a few minutes we passed a motion and planned the event. Why wait until next year? The only catch was we didn't have time to announce it in our newsletter. We apologize if this is the first you've heard about the contest.

For 2012, we invited AHNA residents to submit photos of their Christmas decorations and lights on our Facebook page. December 13 commenced a week of voting. Rules were simple: the photo with the most

Facebook "likes" wins. Thanks to each person who submitted decoration pictures for themselves or a neighbor; those who helped spread the word; those who voted; those who helped create a festive atmosphere in the Heights by decorating, even if they didn't enter; and those who didn't get miffed with us for not announcing the contest earlier.

We plan to hold the decorating contest again next year and invite YOU to participate. Watch for further details in coming newsletters. While we'd love to have you join us on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/AlgerHeightsNeighborhoodAssociation](http://www.facebook.com/AlgerHeightsNeighborhoodAssociation)), you won't need to be a computer user in order to enter.

We extend our congratulations to Meghan Behrmann of 845 Walsh Street for winning our first contest with her colorful well-lit display. She receives a gift card for a neighborhood restaurant. Joy to the tummy! 🍷

# Worth Considering

## 2nd Annual St. Patty's Day Block Party

- Saturday, March 16, 2013, from 3 - 7pm
- 2561 Belfast Avenue
- We'll have fun and party like it's Belfast Ireland
- Activities include a dog parade, face painting, diet coke mentos, music, dancing and more
- Look for more information at local businesses

## Alger Heights Get Rolling

- by Laura Muresan

When I posted a video on Facebook of my son enjoying roller skating at Woodland Skating Center, an Alger Heights friend responded, "I went to roller skating parties there when I was a kid. I'd love to try that again!"

Whether you'd like to relive your youth, get some exercise, watch the grandkids, meet your neighbors, or simply have an excuse to get out of the house on a cold February day, this reasonably priced event is for you.

**What:** Open skate, with AHNA receiving a deeply discounted group rate.

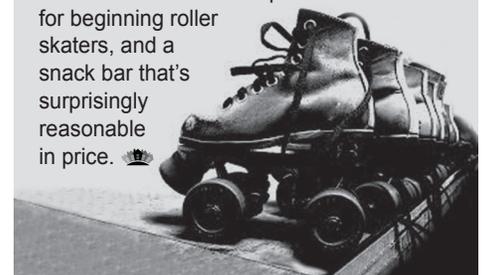
**Where:** Woodland Skating Center, 2100 28th St (behind Aldi).

**Who:** Alger Heights area residents (non-neighborhood family and friends are welcome, too).

**When:** Saturday, February 16, 1:00-4:00pm. Meet near the door a few minutes before 1:00 so we can enter together for the group rate. If you come later, mention Alger Heights Neighborhood Association to get the discounted rate.

**Cost:** \$4.00 gets you admission and free skate rental (normal cost is \$7). Children 3 and younger are free, as are those who simply want to watch (grandparents, there's no excuse not to bring the grandkids).

**Additional details:** With plenty of room on the skating floor, strollers and wheelchairs are welcome. There's a practice area for beginning roller skaters, and a snack bar that's surprisingly reasonable in price. 🍷



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## Tales from an Icy Sidewalk

*A true story by Jill Sieve (a self-admitted klutz)*

It was early Christmas morning three years ago,  
The neighborhood was full of holiday lights,  
such a beautiful glow.

My dogs & I were out walking on our normal  
routine.

But what was about to happen I couldn't have  
foreseen.

In less than a second, I fell to the ground,  
My left arm hurt so bad but I couldn't make a  
sound.

The sidewalk was so icy and the snow hadn't  
been cleared,

As I lay on the ground, a broken wrist is what I  
feared.

A trip to the Emergency Room that Christmas  
Day,

Was not exactly on my agenda... if I must say,  
For it was a broken wrist in 3 different places,  
But I was lucky it wasn't anything worse by  
God's good graces.

Fast forward to last winter & we're out for a  
stroll,

Staying vertical & upright is clearly the goal.  
But I fell once again and you'll probably guess,  
A sidewalk not shoveled, creating an icy mess.

Another trip to the hospital with a large gash in  
my knee,

Fifteen stitches later I hope you can see,  
The moral of this story and the obvious flaw,  
Is that sidewalks must be shoveled; it's Grand  
Rapids city law!

Let's respect our neighbors this winter and keep  
the sidewalks clear,

So I don't have to write another poem like this  
next year!! 🙏

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NUMBER**

**456-3400**

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RAY & JOAN

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AGES 12+



AGES 11  
& UNDER



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## AHNA Board of Directors

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**Bob Synk:** Vice President  
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Term ends 2014

**Maia Sieplinga:** Secretary  
304-5952  
Maia\_Sieplinga@usc.salvationarmy.org  
Term ends 2015

**Sam Evans:** Treasurer, Block captain  
coordinator  
540-2107 massnave1@att.net  
Term ends 2015

**Jerry Montague:**  
308-9904 jerry@montaguedesigngroup.com  
Term ends 2014

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**Kyle Herrington:**  
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Term ends 2015

**Jill Sieve:**  
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Term ends 2014

**Ginny Hartger:**  
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## Alger Heights Neighborhood Association Block Captains

- by Sam Evans

The general requirements for a Block Captain are to be friendly, welcome new neighbors, and be the eyes and ears of your block. We do give you training and materials that will be helpful for you in this fun role for your block. We will also work beside you for introductions.

We are still in need of Block Captains for the following Blocks:

Alto, Alger (north side Kalamazoo to Brooklyn), Brooklyn (Nevada to Alger) and (Nevada to 28th St.), Walsh (north side Eastern to Blaine), Nelson St. (Kalamazoo to Burton), the Nelson apartments (need 2 Block Captains), Merrifield (Eastern to Blaine), Hazen (Eastern to Blaine), Merritt (Eastern to Blaine) and (Blaine to Nelson), Griswold (Blaine to Nelson), Jennings, Louise & Oakfield, Otillia (Eastern to Blaine). 🙏

## Advertising in the AHNA newsletter

You can advertise your business or home business in the Alger Heights newsletter. The newsletter is distributed to over 1900 homes and businesses in Alger Heights. The rates are very reasonable:

**Business Card size:** \$25.00

**Double Business Card size:** \$40.00

**1/4 Page size:** \$75.00

If you are interested, please call Sam Evans at 540-2107. 🙏



## Like Us on Facebook...

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[AlgerHeightsNeighborhoodAssociation.](http://www.facebook.com/AlgerHeightsNeighborhoodAssociation)

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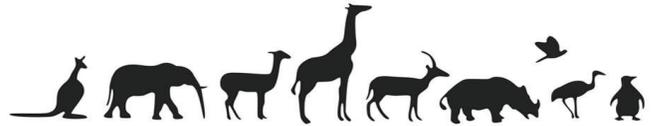
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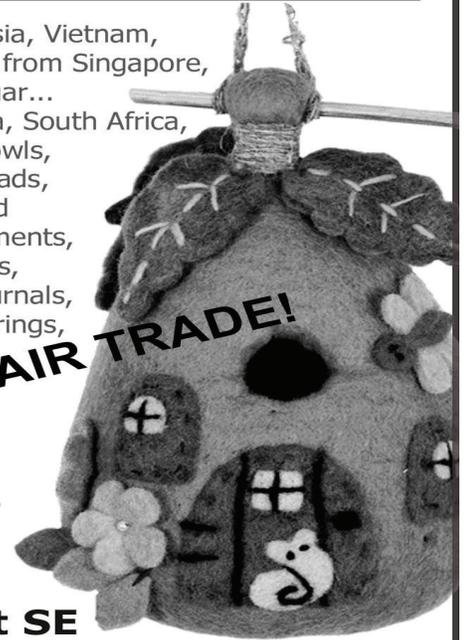
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