

Waste Reduction

This year, in each newsletter, we are going to be working to reduce the amount of solid waste produced by the Oakwood Neighborhood, this means both the residents and the ONA center as well. In this first article we are going to provide some facts about waste and the first initial steps to help you reduce the amount of waste you produce. Reducing waste means cost savings on every level from reducing the size of the trash receptacle that you pay for monthly, to reducing costs to create new plastics and paper from trees vs. recycling existing materials.

- Every Sunday, more than 500,000 trees are used to produce the 88% of newspapers that are never recycled.
- Packaging accounts for 50 percent of all paper produced in North America, 90 percent of all glass, and 11 percent of aluminum.
- The United States generates approximately 208 million tons of municipal solid waste a year. That's 4.3 pounds per person per day.
- Every year we dispose of 24 million tons of leaves and grass clippings, which could be composted to conserve landfill space.
- North Americans throw away 2.5 million plastic bottles every hour.

*Facts from Green Network, <http://www.green-network.com/facts/waste.htm>

Now that we have some facts, what can we do to reduce the amount of waste we produce. The first thing is to start recycling. Kalamazoo offers a dual-stream system in which paper products go together and metals and plastics go together. If you do not currently have a recycle bin or perhaps need another because one just doesn't seem to be enough, you can call 337-8215 and tell them you would like a recycle bin. Usually within a week one will be dropped off at your house. You'll also want to check out the recycling guide, <http://www.kalamazoo.org/docs/RecyclingGuide.pdf>, to find out what you can and can't recycle. In upcoming articles we will feature other ways to reduce your waste production, beginning with the first of the three Rs: **Reduce, Reuse, Recycle**, as it is easier to consume less than to try and reuse or repurpose items. For more tips and information check out our web site.



What is Building Blocks?

It's that time of year again when the Building Blocks sites are being selected and the students are getting ready to organize neighborhoods. What is Building Blocks you ask? It is a partnership among WMU, Building Blocks of Kalamazoo, and the Neighborhood Associations in the city. It is a program to bring neighbors together to get to know one another and look out for each other as this is one of the easiest ways to keep crime down and ensure a vibrant and enjoyable neighborhood to live in. This mission is accomplished by bringing together neighbors to work on exterior projects on each other's homes. Grants pay for supplies and the neighbors and student volunteers from WMU put in the time to complete the projects. The program usually begins with a couple of meetings to lay out the how the program works and for the neighbors to meet and get to know one another. Then you decide which projects you want to work on at your house. The projects must be visible from the street. All of the participating neighbors come back and decide how to split up the grant money; some groups split it up evenly per household, and other groups have split up the money based on the cost of a project, as some houses might only want shrubs planted, while others may need a new porch or their house painted. The group decides when and how long they will work and there usually is lunch on work days, whether donated by a local business or made by the participating families. When the program is complete there is usually a final 'party' to celebrate the accomplishments and for the neighbors to relax and continue to build that bond with one another. People are asked to put in what time and work they can, but it is understood that not everyone has the physical ability to climb ladders and lift heavy items. Those individuals can still contribute through contacting businesses for food donations or helping to cook meals for the work days.

Usually there are other follow up grants that the group can apply for to help with weatherization of homes, or other projects or ideas the group comes up with.

So in the next few months, if students from WMU knock on your door or leave a flyer explaining that your street has been chosen for Building Blocks, seriously consider participating in the program as a way to get to know the people living around while getting some projects done on your house.

One of the youths receives his present from Santa Claus during the ONA Holiday party. Thank you to all who donated gifts, food, or their time to make the event a huge success.

Check out the new Public Safety web site to look up crime stats, calls for service, and to report non-emergency events. <http://www.kalamazoopublicsafety.org>

Fletcher's Pub

3013 Oakland Drive
Kalamazoo, MI 49008
(269)342-5208



SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 20TH

**STARTING AT NOON
BOOGITY BOOGITY
BOOGITY...LET'S GO RACING
BOYS!**



**ANNUAL DAYTONA 500 CHILI
COOK OFF**

**ENTRY FEE \$5
ALL YOU CAN EAT CHILI \$5
WINNER RECEIVES \$25 GIFT CERTIFICATE**

**PLUS, ALL PROCEEDS GO TO THE
OAKWOOD NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION**



The Bell, Book, and Canto group held their Christmas Cantata on December 17, as a benefit for the ONA food pantry. Many people attended to hear the beautiful Christmas music and to join in on a few of the songs themselves.

To the right, neighbors join in the music at the Christmas Cantata.

We would like to thank Bell, Book, and Canto for providing us with this memorable opportunity and for the beautiful music they provided and for their generous gift of can food that was the proceeds of the event.

February Cooking Class!

Hope that you guys are staying warm and safe! As I promised before, we are making dumplings for Chinese New Year. It is the year of Rabbit as of February 3rd, New Year's day.

Announcement: The Kalamazoo Chinese Association has a New Year Celebration performance. If you or your friends are interested, you can buy tickets at Pacific Rim.

Menu:

1. Shrimp & Pork & Watercress Dumplings
2. Napa & Veggie Dumplings
3. Chinese Seaweed Soup (this is very different from Japanese seaweed)

Potential Class Dates - Please Vote for your favorite dates!!!

- Saturday, Feb. 12 from 12 to 2pm.
- Wednesday, Feb 16 from 6 to 8pm
- Saturday, Feb 19 from 12 to 2pm
- Sunday, Feb 20 from 1 to 3pm
- Wednesday, Feb 23 from 6 to 8pm
- Saturday, Feb 26 from 1 to 2pm
- Sunday, Feb 27th from 1 to 3pm.

PS: The class may be longer than 2 hours.

Location: Oakwood Neighborhood Association - 3320 Laird Ave, Kalamazoo, MI 49008

Cost: \$25 per person, \$20 for vegetarians. A \$10 deposit is required for RSVP.

Pacific Rim Food is a premium Asian market located at 1926 Whites Road. Business hours are Mon - Sat 10:00 AM - 8:30 PM and Sun 12:00 PM - 6:00 PM.

Phone: (269)382-0888, Fax: (269)382-1388

eMail: Pacificrimfood@yahoo.com

Website: www.Pacific-Rim-Food.com (with online shopping)

