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The robins are smart to migrate.

Special Thanks to Mr. Lee and Westwood Liquors for continuous and generous support of GRO

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Share Your Stuff - Enrich Your Life!

Most of us have borrowed and shared stuff with neighbors, but we've really only scratched the surface of what's possible. How can we get better at sharing more, consuming less, and helping each other?

Come learn more at the next GRO meeting, or go to:
www.OhSoWe.com

You can sign up for one (or more) of the groups in the neighborhood:

- Greater Rockwell Organization (9 members)
- Rockwell Neighbors (31 members)
- Friends of Jacob Park (128 members)

GRO Newsletter in Transition

Sara Spitz has worked hard for several years as the editor of this newsletter, but she needs a break. We need to recruit someone or several people to continue the tradition of reporting neighborhood news.

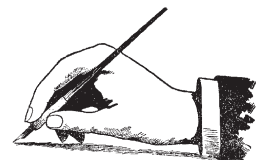
The ways we communicate with each other, both as individuals and as an organization, have changed over the years since GRO was founded and we first started delivering the newsletter to your door and local businesses.

GRO is very interested in finding out how you would like to hear from us, and how you like to learn of neighborhood news, issues and events. In addition to the newsletter, we also use numerous electronic and social media, including our

website, email lists, Facebook page and Twitter feed. We also post notices of special events around the neighborhood. Which of these do you find useful? Do you think the newsletter still provides value?

What do you think? Please talk to one of our board members, or email GROnews@greaterrockwell.org or president@GreaterRockwell.org. You can also visit our web site at greaterrockwell.org or our Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/greaterrockwell>. If you prefer to use regular mail our address is Greater Rockwell Organization, P.O. Box 25561, Chicago, IL 60625-0561.

Mark Dawson



Permit Parking in the 47th Ward

On January 17 at the DANK House, Alderman Ameya Pawar held one of several community meetings to talk about permit parking for the ward, focusing on Lincoln Square. About 40 residents attended and stayed for 90 minutes to listen and ask questions. The meeting included your correspondent from GRO. Many ideas were shared and facts were learned about the current state of parking in and future options for the 47th Ward.

The 47th Ward features dozens of permit parking zones that are poorly coordinated and poorly considered. Times vary from one zone to the next, new zones appear unannounced without an opportunity for public comment, and the impact of new permit zones on surrounding blocks is not treated as relevant until the neighbors of the new zone start to complain.

These permit parking zones are nearly always intended to meet a real need and serve to make the lives of the residents who share them easier. They also represent taking a public right of way for private use. They tend to simply push a congestion problem somewhere else. The average block in the 47th Ward has 97 homes or apartments. Some blocks with several large apartment buildings boast as many as 400 dwelling units. A typical block can hold about 120 parked cars (without snow, construction or street cleaning). Most blocks don't have enough street parking available for the people who live on the block, even if only one car is owned per house or apartment. Would we have enough street park-

ing in the ward to satisfy demand, even if the entire ward was one giant permit parking zone? A single giant permit parking zone in the 47th Ward would force most local businesses and institutions to move elsewhere, eliminating much of the reason so many people settle in the ward—with their cars—in the first place. More off street parking won't help, either.

We can make more efficient use of existing lots. In fact, the Alderman's office is working on helping the Old Town School of Folk Music share the parking of local institutions such as Queen of Angels and St. Matthias parishes. Building more public parking areas would be prohibitively expensive, because the land in the 47th Ward remains very expensive -little undeveloped property remains available. Even without the cost of the real estate, surface lots cost about \$4,000 per space to build, and parking decks much more than that, about \$20-30,000 per space. Parking garages are very expensive to operate as well, meaning that the only places

in northern Illinois where an owner can operate a parking garage that turns a profit are the Loop, O'Hare Airport, and Midway Airport.

That means that talk of building a parking garage near the L stop at Western Avenue in years past has always remained just that—talk. Furthermore, the permit parking system barely generates enough revenue to cover its own costs. The city cannot use the permit fees to subsidize capital improvements.

Currently, the Chicago City Council must vote to approve any new permit parking zones. Each community must formally apply for a new zone. The current standards require that a block to receive permit parking must be at least 80% residential and that 45% of the cars parked on the block belong to nonresidents. The Department of Transportation does careful research for each request, but the city ordinance is vague, biased, and arbitrarily enforced.

Alderman Pawar would like to cre-



One car parked on West Leland Ave. submitted by Donna Pfaff, ca. 1913

ate a method for managing the permit parking zones in the 47th ward that is fair and equitable. He also looks to consolidate the existing parking zones in the ward (including those in our community) into a smaller number of larger zones so that they can be managed more efficiently. There are no plans to add new permit parking zones at this point, or otherwise change existing parking restrictions.

Alderman Pawar's office would seek to make sure that no neighborhood features unreasonable parking restrictions, but also that no neighborhood should have to deal with unreasonable or excessive parking demand on their blocks from people who live elsewhere. To study the issue, he set up a committee of 27 residents last August, with the goal of creating an objective and less political way to manage permit parking in the ward.

The Alderman has set these goals for managing permit parking in the ward in the future:

- If a block requests a permit parking zone, 65% of the residents must vote in favor.
- Parking by non-residents must create a clear, recurring, and major impact.
- The hours for the permit parking restriction must be consistent with the need. A block won't get a permit zone that bans outsiders from parking there 24 hours a day if the problem is limited to weekend evenings.
- Every permit parking zone must be reassessed every few years to make sure it is still needed. With each review current residents will vote to determine whether or not the permit parking zone remains, or is altered.

We had an excellent, vigorous meeting. Bill Higgins, Alderman Pawar's Program Analyst, invites questions and comment at bill@chicago47.org or at (773) 549-2745.

Mark Dawson

Local, Low Cost Fitness Classes for Women

Fitness expert and certified trainer Lucia Sanchez-Vaca is offering high impact aerobics classes for women at McPherson Elementary school. The school is located at 4728 N. Wolcott, at the corner of Wolcott and Lawrence. There is a parking lot entrance on Lawrence, just before and opposite of the Sears building. Entrance for the classes is through the doors off the parking lot, near the playground, in the Multi-Purpose Room immediately on the left.

The cost is \$3.50 per class, per person. Each class is an hour long and fast-paced. I always bring a bottle of water and dress lightly since the room, basically a small gymnasium, tends to be really warm. Lucia is a high energy instructor that gives a full-body, cardiovascular routine. I could barely keep up when I started with her over a year ago. I kept coming to the classes and have really increased my strength and endurance. I slimmed up, lost several pounds and many more inches. There are two classes available:

Zumba Dance Fitness: A diverse combination of Latin, American and Middle Eastern dance styles. Tuesday, 4:00 - 5:00 pm.

Fitness Boot Camp: A cardio-boxing and biometric movement class targeting the large muscle groups, Monday, 4:00 pm - 5:00 pm.

There is no kind of contract or obligation. Participants can pay on the days attended, before or after class. I like to pay \$21.00 and have six classes paid for in advance at a time because it is convenient for me. Teachers and mothers picking up kids at the school join the class. Children accompanying a mother must stay in the Multi-Purpose room and not wander the halls of the school. If the security door is locked, ring the buzzer or wave to a classmate. I show up early to get in and put on my workout shoes.

Shellie Lewis

Lost & Found Pets

I have learned this past year the police and city animal control will not take a report on a lost or found pet. You can only call to have them retrieve and impound an animal.

Lost Dogs Illinois on Facebook has an online form, tips to find a lost pet, tips to return a found pet, free forms to create fliers and an ongoing posts from people. Posting on Craigslist is highly recommended.

In my experience, holding onto the lost pet while putting out fliers and online ads has been the most effective return method. I know the pet is safe and well while I search for owners. Nothing is more effective than your pet always having tags with an accurate phone number, followed by a working microchip.

Shellie Lewis

GRO/RGHA Food Drive Nets 344 Pounds for Local Pantry

The Greater Rockwell Organization and Ravenswood Gardens Homeowners Association collected 344 pounds of food during a January food drive.

An assortment of food and personal items were collected at three locations throughout the area. Donations were made to benefit the Common Pantry.

Missed your chance to donate? The food drives will happen quarterly this year. The next food drive will take place April 20-22. Subsequent collections will take place July 20-22 and October 19-21.

Collection points will be at 4738 N. Artesian, 2527 W. Eastwood, and 2612 W. Eastwood. Neighbors

February Calendar

- 7 GRO Meeting, Luther Memorial Church, 7:30- 8:30 pm, speaker Nate Hutcheson
- 14 Happy Valentine's Day
- 19-23 Shedd Aquarium Free Days
- 20 President's Day**
- 29 Museum of Science & Industry Free Day

interested in becoming a drop-off point should email president@greaterrockwell.org.

The Common Pantry, 3744 N. Damen Ave., is Chicago's oldest operating food pantry. It provides emergency food and personal items to more than 1100 individuals every month. The pantry serves the Lincoln Square community and the demand is higher than ever before. To learn more go to <http://common-pantry.org>.

For more updates on the food drive and other 2012 GRO activities,

visit our web site at <http://www.GreaterRockwell.org/>, our Facebook page at <http://facebook.com/greaterrockwell>, and subscribe to our Twitter feed at http://twitter.com/gro_org.



GROnews is published by the Greater Rockwell Organization

(GRO), a community group dedicated to making our neighborhood a safe and pleasant place in which to live. Tenants, homeowners, landlords, and business owners are welcome to join us in improving our community.

Officers:

Eric Sinclair
President@GreaterRockwell.org
773-561-4772
Sara Dell
VP@GreaterRockwell.org
773-878-8243
Lois Graziano
2VP@GreaterRockwell.org
773-704-5647
Bea Tersch
Secretary@GreaterRockwell.org
773-561-0794
Tracy Bartholomew
Treasurer@GreaterRockwell.org
773-329-5964

GRO Board/Committee Chairs

Membership: Patti Huetteman (506-0795); Newsletter: Sara Spitz (275-7786); Public Safety: Maria Bappert (728-8127); Special Events/Fundraising: Anne Zender (561-4772); Beautification: Bea Tersch (561-0794) (clean up and graffiti); Mary Conway (907-8502) (corner gardens); Urban Development: Abbey Botkin (989-6861) Tom Gundersen (539-1665), Budget: Ron Graziano (704-5647)

Newsletter drop points

Beans & Bagels, Rockwell & Leland
Carol's Hair Care, 2556 W. Lawrence
Brown Line Station at Rockwell

Address correspondence to:

newsletter@greaterrockwell.org or
GROnews, P.O. Box 25561
Chicago IL 60625-0561

Newsletter staff

Editor: Sara Spitz
Proofreader: Ellen O'Donnell
Distributors: Allie Botkin,
Michael Buckwalter, Joyce Dall, Mark
Dawson, Sara Dell, the Donnelly boys,
Holly Gerberding, Patti Huetteman, Bill
King, Tom Kosinski, Nancy Kramer,
Martin Perdoux, Karen Peterson, Nina
Sandlin, Eric Sinclair, Graham Van
Swearingen and Marianne Werner

GRO logo created by Randy Sweitzer

Newsletter layout by Shellie Lewis

Printing by Printed Impressions
4432 N. Kedzie, Chicago IL 60625
773-604-8585

Webmaster: Tom Kosinski

www.greaterrrockwell.org