

the AGASSIZ WHISTLER

July 7, 1975

AGASSIZ COMMUNITY SCHOOL SUMMER PROGRAM:

The Nortons Woods program is now fully enrolled and well underway with a staff of five "counselors" and an average of 35 children attending daily.

For those children who are not attending Nortons Woods, there is the Sacramento Field Recreation Program, which runs Monday-Friday from 9:00 to 12:00 and includes all kinds of sports activities and possibly some field trips. This is run on a drop-in basis so feel free to join in anytime you feel like it. The more the merrier!

Here is a schedule of our other activities which happen once or twice a week:

MONDAY

Swimming in Harvard Pool, 2:30-4:30 p.m. All non-swimmers or children 8 or under must be accompanied by an adult. Meet at school to go as a group (at 2:10).

Tennis, 6:00-7:00 p.m. for kids ages 10-14, with instructor. There is still one more opening in the class. Cost is \$2.00 for the summer. Call or drop by school to sign up.

TUESDAY

Comic Strip Workshop, 1:00-3:00 p.m. Learn to draw your own characters and comic strips. No charge or experience necessary. First class Tuesday, July 15th at school.

Tuesday, Cont.

Adventure Playground, 2:30-4:30, a program of design and construction in the school yard. Tools and materials provided. All ages invited. Work will get underway this week.

WEDNESDAY

Swimming in Harvard Pool, 2:30-4:30. See Monday-Swimming for details.

Tennis, 6:00-7:00 p.m. for kids ages 7-9, with instructor. We have one opening in this class as well. Cost is \$2.00 for the summer. Call or come by to sign up.

THURSDAY

Photography - starting July 10th, 2:00-4:00 at school. Open to kids from 10 to 14, to learn fundamentals of taking and developing your own pictures. Class size is limited to 10 so call or come by to sign up soon. (The cost hasn't been set yet, but it will be minimal, to cover cost of materials only)

Adventure Playground 2:30-4:30
See Tuesday- Adventure Playground for details.

Also, we are still planning CAMPING TRIPS for a number of weekends over the summer for kids from 12 to 15. The cost will be between \$2.00 and \$5.00 a trip. Please come by and

Camping. Cont.

sign up now if you're interested so that we can make some definite plans for the first trip.

COMMUNITY SCHOOL OFFICE HOURS:

Monday-Friday 8:30-10:00 a.m.
Tues, Weds, Thurs 1:30-4:30 p.m.

During the summer we will be doing a great deal of planning for next year's Community School program at Agassiz. If you have ideas or needs which you'd like to see the program meet, please come by and talk with us any afternoon during office hours. Look for Ken or Julie (or both).

COMMUNITY SCHOOL PHONE NUMBER:

876-9268

The entire Community School Summer Program, including Nortons Woods, will run through Friday, August 15th. The Program will then begin again when school opens in September.

COMMUNITY NOTICES

Piano Lessons - concert pianist with M.A. from New England Conservatory will begin lessons for all ages and levels in September. Call 245-5066 for more information (Wendy Covell).

EXTRA!

There is still EVENING VOLLEYBALL (for adults) every Thursday night from 7:00 to 10:00 in the gym at Agassiz.

AND, plans are underway for a series of children's movies, to be shown at the school one evening a week. Call the school for more information.

*
*
*
*
and
*
*
*
*

CONGRATULATIONS
to Ken and Kitty Basler on the birth of their beautiful baby girl, Amy Kathryn Basler, on June 25, 1975.

*
*
*
*
*
*
*

For Sale

ADMIRAL FRIDGE 5 years old - coppertone
18 cubic ft. - perfect condition
\$125.00 354-5963

AGASSIZ COM. VS. HARVARD U.
(Agassiz Wins)

Brett Donham

Last Monday, the Agassiz Neighborhood, next door to Harvard and filled with Harvard owned properties, won a major victory in the battle to control its own destiny. After weeks of delay, legal maneuverings and postponed final votes, the Cambridge City Council voted to down-zone two blocks in the Neighborhood. Down-zoning reduces the allowable density of future development, in this case, reducing the maximum density from an allowable 144 apartments per acre to 36 per acre. The lower figure is still higher than the density presently existing in Agassiz, which is equal to the City average of about 22 apartments per acre.

Harvard owns about one-half the land that was down-zoned. For at least a decade, the University has developed internal proposals for graduate, married student and faculty housing on their land. Down-zoning means that if Harvard proceeds with building plans, only one-fourth as much housing can be built as previously allowed. And if Harvard should want to build at a density greater than the new zoning allows, a variance must be obtained, necessitating a public hearing and a public forum for examination and discussion of the plans.

For the Agassiz Neighborhood, down-zoning has removed the immediate threats of over-development, and given the community leverage over Harvard if the University seeks a zoning variance. In the zoning controversy, the Agassiz community demonstrated a cohesiveness and a strength as a neighborhood that has its own reward. Their concern about Harvard's land arises, not only because of the threat of high density development, but because a large portion of the land is one of only two large open spaces in the neighborhood (the other is the Sachs Estate—also owned by Harvard).

The Agassiz Neighborhood is a richly diverse neighborhood, composed of a great variety of people; families, children, students, couples, married and unmarried, elderly persons; incomes and aspirations ranging from low and poor to upper middle and upwardly mobile; structures ranging from largely wood frame single, double and triple houses to a few low and mid-rise apartment buildings. It is in microcosm the urban mix, with all its problems and its promise. It is bounded roughly by Massachusetts Avenue on the west, Beacon Street (the Cambridge-Somerville line) on the north-east and Harvard University and Museum Street on the south and south-east; its main street is Oxford Street.



Its awakening as a neighborhood with a collective identity began in 1969 with the advent of the Community Schools Program; a city-wide program of social services, recreation, adult education and alternative learning run out of neighborhood elementary schools, in this case the Agassiz School on Oxford Street. Consciousness raising continued in 1972 when the neighborhood organized successfully against a zoning variance petition for a high rise apartment building and formed the Agassiz Neighborhood Planning Group.

The north end of the neighborhood was successfully downzoned, and Harvard's attempts to develop the Sachs Estate (dubbed Norton Woods by the instant ecologists in the neighborhood) in high density, high rise, faculty housing were successfully resisted, both in 1973. In 1974 the Planning Group met several times with Harvard to discuss issues, formulated a community response to Harvard's "Long Range Plan - An Interim Report," supported attempts to down-zone Massachusetts Avenue within the neighborhood and most recently has launched a successful effort to down-zone the two block area described above.

Lesley College, which borders the Agassiz Neighborhood, is considered to be the worst offender in recent years in trampling over neighborhood sensibilities. Lesley is aggressive when acquiring residential properties for institutional use and in altering the physical and social character of the neighborhood. Less than ten years ago, Lesley was confined to the corner of Oxford and Everett Streets, but not it covers most of Everett and Wendall Streets and a two-block frontage on Oxford Street from Hammond to Sacramento. Harvard, however, has taken most of the heat for neighborhood intrusion, largely because it is a bigger target and because the University's holdings include the only large open spaces now used for recreation in the neighborhood. Unfair it may seem to Harvard, but it was ever thus.

Harvard needs to ask itself, "what do these neighborhoods want and why is it important to them?" Part of it is a need to control their own lives, or at least to feel that they are not the victims of forces beyond their control. Neighborhood stability and preservation of the quality of life motivates these people. They want to live among friends and neighbors, in a residential neighborhood with small scaled buildings, children, green space, playgrounds, corner stores and the certainty that it will remain that way. Large buildings, buildings filled with transients, people who have no long term interest in the area, heavy traffic, loss of open space, are all changes they resist.

COMMUNITY NOTICES

Any parent interested in helping kids start an Agassiz School newspaper which would be a real voice for students, please call Sheila Hoffman at 492-5131.

Beautiful, soft, tiger-striped kitty-cat needs new home due to over-crowding. Female, spayed, trained, 8 months old. If interested, call Scott or Betsy at 547-8946.

Brenda Williams is looking for a small, second-hand guitar to buy for her son so that he can start taking lessons. If you have one you'd like to sell (or just pass on), call 354-4957.

OTHER NOTICES

In response to a call from the Boston Police Relief Association, we are printing the address of the association so that any who are interested can send in donations for the relief fund which cares for families of policemen who die or are disabled while on duty.

Boston Police Relief Association
131 Clarendon Street, 5th Floor
Records Department
Boston, Mass. 02116

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY HOLIDAYS

TO YOU ALL !!!

A SPECIAL NOTICE

The friends and neighbors of Muriel Whitman deeply regret her sudden death this past Thanksgiving Day. Although Miss Whitman was born in Nova Scotia, she had lived in Cambridge since the age of twenty. The last twenty years of her life were spent on Gorham Street. She was a kind, lively, and energetic woman who was especially fond of children. Miss Whitman was very proud to be a member of the Agassiz community, and we will all greatly miss her presence among us.