

March 1988

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE AGASSIZ NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

Neighborhood Council Notes.....

from 2/10 meeting.....

Tot Lot

Rob Steck from Cambridge Community Development Department spoke to the council about the construction timetable for the renovation of the Alden Tot Lot located at the corner of Oxford and Sacramento Streets. He hopes to package it with the renovation of the Tobin School tot lot when it goes out to bid. This means that both communities designs will have to be finalized in a timely way so the renovations can be done before school opens next fall fall. Steck will not begin to meet with the tot lot committee until the King School playground is underway, which should be later this spring.

Some preliminaries were discussed. Steck explained that \$150,000 was not a large sum of money and he would like to most of it spent on play equipment. The Department of Public Works will be helping on demolition and sidewalk improvement, and this should save money.

The community requested that lighting be reinstated, and that the sprinkler and drainage be fixed for summer use. The dangers of children running into Oxford St. from the gate were brought up, as well as the need for a separate toddler space. The need for an adult space in the park was also added. The discussion touched on design, and Steck mentioned that if the design would stick with standard fixtures, etc. used by the DPW, repairs would be easier to make.

Several ways to allow community input were discussed. One was the possibility of obtaining an arts grant for a mural or other another kind of public art in the tot lot. Another was enlisting gardeners to help improve the space.

The tot lot committee will be meeting soon to co-ordinate efforts and be ready for the spring meetings.

School and Community Discuss Responses to Racism

Mrs Cox, Agassiz Principal, joined the council to discuss the racist/anti semitic graffiti found on the school at Christmas time. Mrs. Cox felt that the graffiti was the work of one child who was troubled, she felt that it was not a major incident, and she felt to overemphasize the incident was unnecessary.

Others felt that this incident had really served to uncover many other problems that we as a community must address. One was the level of tolerance we can allow our children to show toward racism of any kind. Many parents felt that their children tolerated much to much racism on an everyday basis, and that the community must give the children the message in some way, that they do not and should not have to tolerate racism from other children. This must be done both at home and in the school.

The discussion turned to the 7-8th grades at Agassiz School, and the racial tensions. They are exaggerated by a large number of new 7-8th graders, mostly minority, coming into the school from other neighborhoods. These children have not be able to achieve a sense of belonging at Agassiz, and an interesting discussion began regarding possible solutions to this problem.

The council agreed to approach the Department of Human Services to see if any staffing could be found for a teen worker one afternoon a week so the children could stay after school and have something to do. It was suggested that the children work together on a code of conduct which would give students the chance to work together on a document that would ultimately describe necessary limits.

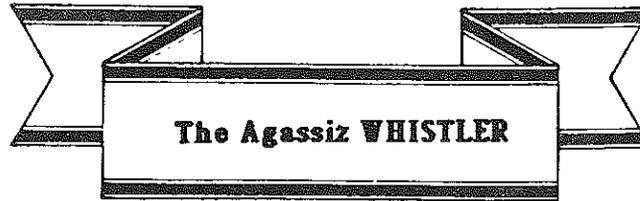
The Agassiz Community School director has been working with the upper grade teachers on a jointly sponsored 7-8th grade dance to take place in Baldwin Hall on Friday, February 26. It was hoped that this dance would help bring the students together in a positive social setting.

next council meeting...

- Agassiz Neighborhood Council Meeting
- Wednesday March 9, 1988
- 7:30 PM Agassiz Community Center, 20 Sacramento Street
- INDA
- 7:30-8:15 New Commissioner from the Department of Public Works, Wm. Sommers has been invited to meet us and hear local concerns and questions including the upcoming tot lot renovations
- 8:15-9:30 General Business



A follow up note on reporting racist or anti semitic graffiti to the police: A resident contacted the neighborhood council office after the police advised her that they showed no record of graffiti which she had reported. This was because it had been removed before the police arrived to see it. So when you report graffiti, do not remove it until the police are able to see it.



Other Neighborhood Updates.....

-City wide committee chairs

Councilor Thomas Danehy-
Claims, Transportation, Traffic and Parking

Councilor Frank Duehay-
Linkage Study, Finance, Health and Hospitals

Councilor Sandra Graham-
Housing, Economic Development, Training and Employment,
Sister Cities

Councilor Sheila Russell-
Elder Affairs, Legislative and Government Operations

Councilor David Sullivan-
Public Safety, Rent Control

Councilor Walter Sullivan-
Rules, Veterans

Councilor Wm. Walsh-
Ordinance, Cable TV

Councilor Alice Wolf-
Environment, Human Services and Human Rights

Porter Exchange to Open

Cambridge Deveopment and Investment Associates, Inc. (CDIA) has advised us that this June, Conran's and several other retail stores will open their doors for business in Porter Exchange (the new complex on the site of the old Sear's Building). The grand opening of the complex is scheduled for September.

It is a mixed use retail/office complex of which "approximately 120,000 square feet will be devoted to restaurant, health club, gourmet food marketplace and other specialty retail uses at the lower, first and second levels, with 50,000 square feet on the third and fourth levels for office space...parking will be available for 289 cars."

Conran's will occupy 30,000 sq. ft. and offer home furnishings and accessories.

The Holiday Fitness Center, a full service health club, will occupy 20,000 sq. ft.

Cottonwood Cafe will open as a southwestern grill restaurant. There will be a carryout adjacent.

Three retail stores include Porter Sports, a second store for the owner of Somerville Sporting Goods; Cherokee, which sells American made womens apparel; and Stefanel, selling Italian sportswear for men, women and children.

-March 8th Elections

Massachusetts Presidential Primary and State Committee

Registered voters in Ward 7, precincts 1 and 2 (everyone who votes at the Agassiz School) will have a change of polling place. The change was made because the Agassiz School is not handicapped accessible. For precinct one, voting will be held in Rockefeller Hall at the Harvard Divinity School. Precinct two will vote in the Lesley College Student Lounge. All registered voters in precincts one and two should have received a yellow card from the Cambridge Board of Elections advising them of the change. If you are in doubt, call the Board of Elections at 498-9087.

In this election, beside voting for our democratic or republican presidential choice, we will elect state committee members, both democratic and republican, who will endorse candidates and shape party regulations at annual state conventions. They are elected for four year terms and one man and one woman represent each state senate district.

For more information on the grassroots level, contact Ward 7 Democratic Committee member Josh Posner at 661-8470.

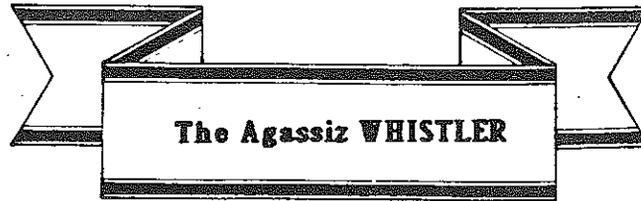
🌴🌴 FOR SENIORS 🌴🌴

The Cambridge Council on Aging needs volunteers to serve as visitors to the homebound elderly to chat or take short neighborhood walks. Meet an interesting new friend who will really value your companionship. Our volunteers offer friendship, enrichment and assistance during a once-weekly visit. Call Sandra Kahn at 498-9039 for more information.

The Somerville Cambridge Elders Services has a program, ADULT FAMILY CARE, which places elders in homes, not institutions. It is available to men and women aged 60 and above who cannot live safely alone and may be at risk of placement in an institution. The program is open to all regardless of income, and it is far less than nursing homes.

Host families receive a stipend, and they are supported with training from the family care center and visits from the family care nurse. Hosts can be families, retired elders, or anyone who can provide a friendly, supervised environment. For more information call 628-2601 and ask about Adult Family Care.

French Exchange- A boy, 12, and a girl, 14, would like to each find a place to live in the Cambridge area for July, and your child could visit their wonderful family in France this August. For details call N. Blanchard 547-9544.



Graffiti to premiere March 4 in Baldwin Hall

The Agassiz Community School will respond to the racist and anti semitic graffiti found on the Agassiz School this Christmas with *GRAFFITI*, a play in 9 acts, directed by Carol Hantman, written and acted by the *AGASSIZ AFTERSCHOOL PLAYERS*, children who attend the Agassiz Community Afterschool Programs.

Please join us on Friday March 4 at 7:30 PM in Baldwin Hall at Agassiz School for *Graffiti*. Look for a feature on the show in the *Cambridge Chronicle*. For information call 498-9056.

SACRAMENTO STREET GALLERY to host an oral History project done in the Agassiz School 4/5th grades. On display will be two quilts and interviews done by all students on people in their history. A slide show will be presented at the opening which will be announced in early March. Contact 498-9056 to receive an announcement for the show.

Free Concert on newly renovated pipe organ
The North Prospect United Church of Christ (formerly the North Congregational Church) located at 1803 Mass. Ave. will hold a Musical Celebration on Saturday MARCH 4 at 8 PM. The free concert of organ, choral and instrumental music will celebrate the major renovations of their AEOLIAN-SKINNER pipe organ first installed in 1947 and considered to be among the finest in the Boston area, similar to the one installed in Boston's Symphony Hall.

Organists will include Mark McLaren, Lawrence M. Kuipers, Susan Armstrong and Nen A. Jin. Other performers will include the North Prospect Choir, Harvard Square Community Choral, and a brass quartet.

LESLEY COLLEGE News and Events

AIDS Benefit-A Prayer for Life benefit performance featuring arts institute faculty

- *Paolo Knill
- *Elizabeth McKim
- *Mara Copy

Friday March 4 8 PM Welch Auditorium \$10 donation for more information call 868-9600 x56

Storytelling Conference-Lesley College will be host to the 7th Annual New England Congress on Storytelling "Sharing the Fire". March 18-20. Call Lesley College at 868-9600 for details.

School Document Completed

The Agassiz PTA has completed the By-laws of the School Improvement Committee (formerly the Parent Steering Committee) of the Agassiz School. The process formally began in October, although work had begun before that. Staff and parents met twice monthly, and put an enormous amount of sweat, time and energy into making this document a reality.

The document, which is the first of its kind in Cambridge Public Schools, will be reviewed by Supt. Peterkin, before it is finalized. It represents a consensus of parents and staff regarding how decisions (to the extent that parents and staff have decision making powers) will be made in the school.

CRIMEWATCH

This is a list of crime in the Agassiz Neighborhood
.....From 2/1 /88 through 2/25/88.....

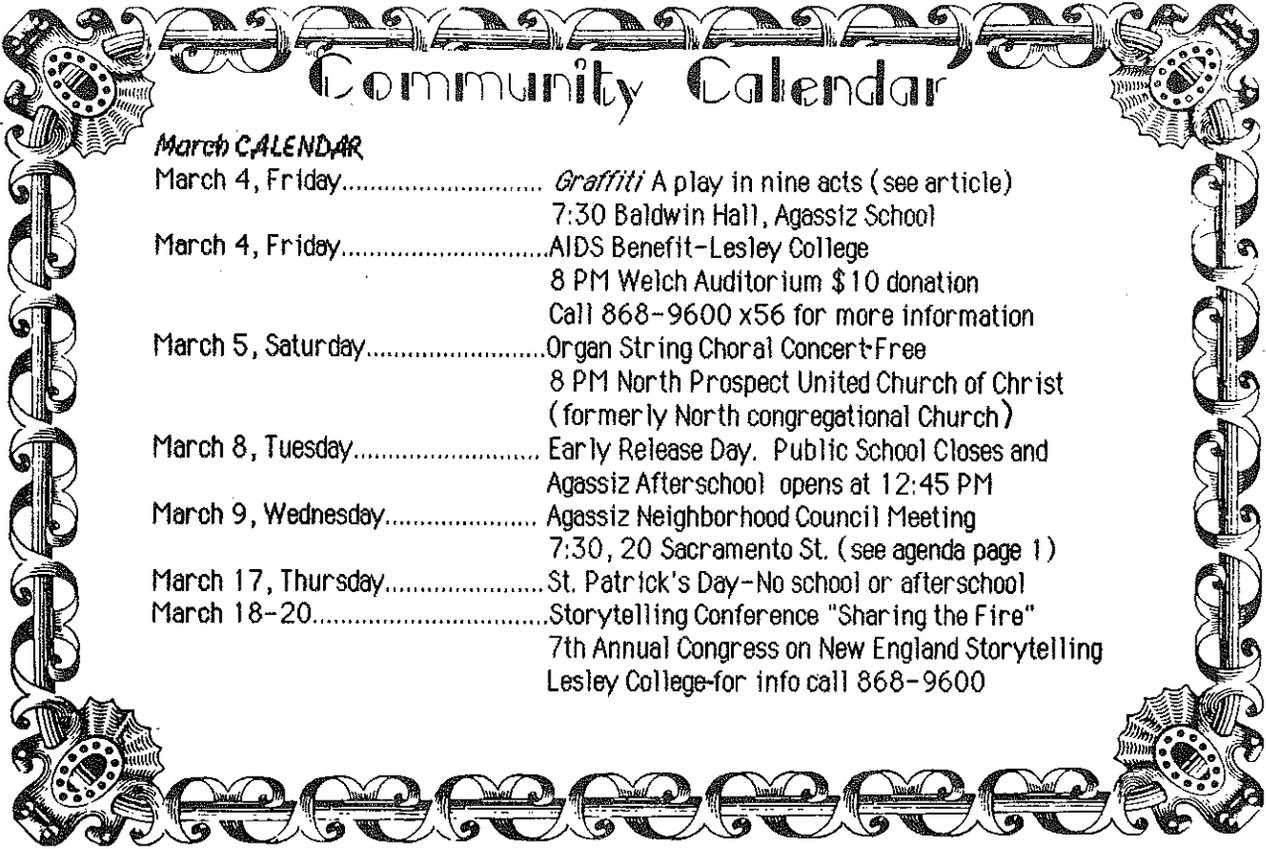
- Arcadia St.....Breaking and entry attempted (2/14)
- Everett St.....Theft from locked car (2/9)
- Forest St..... Breaking and entry, (2 incidents on 2/24)
- Garfield St..... Car theft (2/5)
- Hammond St.....Hit and run to property (2 incidents on 2/10)
- Kirkland St.....Hit and run to property (2/5), Theft from locked car ((2/9), Destruction of property (2/12)
- Mass. Ave..... 3 car thefts (2 on 2/15, one on 2/4) Theft from unlocked car (2/24), Attempted car theft (2/7), drunk driving (2/21), 2 thefts from locked cars (both 2/8),
- Oxford St.....Armed street robbery w/gun (2/24, at Eustis St.)
- Prentiss St.....Breaking and entry (2/16)
- Wendell St..... Hit and run to property (2/9)

Guitar Lessons-Superior Guitar Lessons for children. Taught in home of Agassiz school family by a professional. Call Idrees or Linda at 492-2241

The Yoga Experience.

A ten week class in Kripalu Yoga, taught by certified teacher Danielle Levi Alvares. For every age and condition-men and pregnant women encouraged to attend. Class information call Danielle Levi Alvares at 354-2113.

Classes are ongoing and you may begin anytime



Community Calendar

March CALENDAR

- March 4, Friday..... *Graffiti* A play in nine acts (see article)
7:30 Baldwin Hall, Agassiz School
- March 4, Friday..... AIDS Benefit-Lesley College
8 PM Welch Auditorium \$10 donation
Call 868-9600 x56 for more information
- March 5, Saturday..... Organ String Choral Concert-Free
8 PM North Prospect United Church of Christ
(formerly North congregational Church)
- March 8, Tuesday..... Early Release Day. Public School Closes and
Agassiz Afterschool opens at 12:45 PM
- March 9, Wednesday..... Agassiz Neighborhood Council Meeting
7:30, 20 Sacramento St. (see agenda page 1)
- March 17, Thursday..... St. Patrick's Day-No school or afterschool
- March 18-20..... Storytelling Conference "Sharing the Fire"
7th Annual Congress on New England Storytelling
Lesley College-for info call 868-9600

THE WHISTLER

Agassiz Neighborhood Council
20 Sacramento Street
Cambridge, MA 02138
498-9056

March 1988

*Whistler Deadline is the 25th of Each Month.
Send us articles, ads, letters to the editor, or
any information that you feel would be of
interest to the Agassiz neighborhood.*