



The Armour Star

The Newsletter of the Armour Fields Homes Association
Including homes in Armour Fields & Romanelli Gardens

Our security service:
Chesley Brown International
 816-753-2945

c/o Homes Associations of Kansas City
 4200 Somerset, Suite 216
 Prairie Village, KS 66208, Tel. 913-385-2440

www.armourfields.org

August 2014

AFHA Notes

Kansas City has had incredible summer weather this year. The brown grass was banished by timely rain and low temperatures. Remember the old KC weather adage “just wait, it can and will change tomorrow”.

Early Notice

The Kansas City Marathon WILL effect traffic on October 18, 2014. Morning travel out of our neighborhood will be a challenge.

Note for all our homeowners, particularly new ones, before you change a fence please communicate with your neighbors BEFORE you make any change along adjacent property lines.

The fun Armour Fields event is coming!

Octoberfest will be held October 18.

Beer, wine, great food and pony rides for the kids.

Your AFHA board will be available to answer your questions including the fee change.

The 67th and Wornall fountain is now running. We found a way to go around the city by using water from the house at 401 West 67th. Special thanks to Lillyan Storm.

The current AFHA board roster and contact information is on the last page of this issue. Welcome to new board members; Alex Kopulis, Craig Nulan and returnee Shelley Cetin

Coming soon - new internet communication tools including a recommendation service for home repair & service, and a security group.

Please Support our advertisers

Upcoming Special Events

Octoberfest Social
Sunday, Oct. 18
4:00 pm
Romanelli Island

AFHA leaf, brush & trash pickup
TBA
8:00 to Noon

KCMO leaf & brush curbside pickups
November 6
December 11



Parks And Islands Information – Jane Aylward 816/520-0750

TREES The City has a fabulous, interactive map on the KCMO.org 311 website where you can get a bird’s eye view of your property, point to a specific tree, click, and get the exact address of the tree. Yet some City departments and their subcontractors don’t refer to this when a 311 Action report is filed. It took John Murphy and me numerous emails and phone calls—with photos—to prove there was a two-story tall completely dead maple tree at Ward Parkway Park before it was removed. A replacement maple tree will be planted this fall. If you would like to donate the tree and planting, please call me. The city will not plant a new tree, we have to. As the head of Public Works told Mr. Murphy, KCMO owns but does not have the money to take care of our parks and islands. If we don’t maintain them, Public Works will remove everything, then pave over them. That is interesting since they like to show off “the most beautiful areas of the city” by routing every blessed run and bike race past them, but refuse to mow them, much less manicure them the way we do!

For damage to a city tree in the right-of-way on your property, please call 311 or use the kcmo.org 311 Action Center website to file a report and be patient because it may take a while for them to get to you—KCMO is a huge geographic area. Don’t pile the city tree limbs on parks and islands, because your neighbors will then be forced to pay to have them hauled off, stack them on the curb and wait for the city.

Trees on the parks and islands: The two aged cedars at Banana Island and three crabapple trees at Banana Island and Seville were removed. Two Colorado blue spruce trees will be planted at Banana Island this fall and the crabs will be replaced. Someone asked, Why we removed old crabs with interesting shapes which still bloom in the spring. The answer is that one of them fell over and the other two were out of balance and not growing new limbs to correct that, so we removed them before they fell on someone.

Other parks and islands questions I have been asked:

1. What happened to plans to build a new east entrance wall and flower bed on the Banana Island? All winter we look forward to spring improvement projects, then winter damage starts to show up. We had budgeted a curved, sitting height wall with urns to match the one on the west end of the island, but had to use that money to rebuild and repair four entry walls on Ward Parkway and the Sentry House walls on Gregory instead.

2. What happened to the dogwood tree at 68th and Wornall? The tree was a newer variety of city-air tolerant, full-sun dogwood. It was growing fast, had buds and leaves, then suddenly died within a week. According to two tree experts, someone sprayed it with weed killer. There were no dogwoods of that variety available in May, so we planted a new version of a Bloodgood Japanese Maple, city-savvy, full sun. Next spring, if we can get the type of dogwood we had before, we will move the maple to a new location and the residents who helped design that island can have their requested dogwood again.

(Continued on Page 5)

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The Block Kitty
By Molly Williams

We all know the adage that it takes a village to raise a child. In this part of Armour Fields, it apparently takes a block to keep a cat.

Over the last several months, a full grown all-over-gray cat with gorgeous green eyes has been spied in and around the 600 block of West 69th Terrace. When I grew concerned that she was lost and couldn't find her way home, I sent out an email for information. I got back a flood of responses from neighbors who have had their own experiences with this resourceful feline.

At 645, the kids call her Smoky and she does NOT get along with the terrier of the house. Down at 627 she goes by Kitty Gray and likes to cuddle and have her tummy rubbed. She has been seen leaping the fence in the back yards of houses backing up to Romany, and to Valley, and spending lots of time on the cushions behind 609. At 628 she gets chased out by their large poodle, and across the street three year old Robert calls her Glen, his generic name for any kitty he sees. She's been known to stroll in through the open back door at 622, and like Batman, seems to be everywhere, and yet nowhere.

(Continued on Page 4)

**Welcome to Our
 New Neighbors!**



We welcome the following new neighbors to the Armour Fields Homes Association. Please take a few moments to welcome them to our neighborhood!

Christopher & Lori Callegari
 400 West 69th Street

Richard & Lorretta Bradley
 608 Romany Road

Sandra & Frank Cannon
 624 West Dartmouth

Matt & Kadi Ensz
 440 West 67th Street

Ryan McFarland & Jennifer Eng
 408 West Dartmouth

Susan Hansen
 1022 West Gregory

Aaron Kuddes
 417 West 70th Street

Gerilyn Goeddel & Connor Ornce
 417 West Dartmouth

Denise & Daniel Portnoy
 603 West 68th Terrace

Jason & Stacey Roske
 625 West 67th Terrace

Jennifer Schuster & Charles White
 636 Romany Road

Jason & Kari Sweet
 604 Romany Road

Jillian & Ryan Wahrenbrock
 800 West Gregory

Here at 641 she goes by the name Cat Benatar; she has taken up more or less permanent residence on our threshold, or napping on the deck couch in the sun.

Thanks to our nephew who recently visited from Hollywood and was taken with the idea of a transient pet, she also now has over 400 likes on Instagram.

She's clearly well-fed, although no one will admit feeding her. And always up for a leg rub.

She's friendly, independent, and to me symbolizes some of the best things about living in this neighborhood. Close neighbors make for strong communities, and those who are willing to help tend another's pet will also help look out

for each other's homes, families, and well-being. We are open, but responsible, and will reach out to one another. We will look for solutions, but in the meantime make sure a stray kitty doesn't go unloved. Brad in 615 summed it up by noting that after the communal cat experience, he is reassured that if any of his three little boys goes astray or "runs away from home" as only a six year old can, he will be well taken care of. Maybe not fed, but watched over.

That's what neighbors do. We look out for one another. Thanks, Cat Benatar, for allowing us all to be just that much more neighborly.



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Parks and Islands – continued from Page 2

P&I Wish List Items: Benches: We wish we had 501C3 funds to buy cast steel benches like the ones at Romanelli Park for Ward Parkway Park and the Banana Island. In order to get the best prices, they should be installed two at a time. The benches are approximately \$1500 each, the cost for footings, pads and setting the benches in place on the pads is approximately \$5,000 per pair, maybe less if we did four at one time in each park. We won't install any until we can do at least two. It would be lovely to have four at Ward Parkway under the shade trees. At the Banana Island, we could place four at the east and west sides of the "circle of cedars", all angled toward the circle. Someday, we could have a fabulous urn or bird bath on a pedestal there. If you want to make a tax-deductible donation, please contact Hank Van Arsdale for information.

Other than parks and islands, some things have come up:

1. It is not legal in KCMO to pipe your sump pump, washer, pool or French drain/gutter water

just to the house side of the front sidewalk and dump it there—it is supposed to go under the walk, not be drained onto the walk. Tell your landscaper or contractor to call 513-1511 if they don't believe you. If something on your property does not conform to code, your homeowner's policy will not cover you if someone falls on ice, mud, whatever that slimy stuff is growing on the sidewalk in front of your house.

2. Similarly, if a contractor tells you KCMO does not care about or check for permits, code violations, etc. they are dead wrong and too full of hubris to be someone you will enjoy working with. There are fifty codes inspectors. Call 513-1511 to ask code questions or inquire if you need a permit for a certain project.

3. If a contractor tells you the same size/shape/type of window or door or whatever originally installed in your house is not available, they are ill-informed or lazy. Everything in your house can be replaced—maybe not at a big box store—but they are available. Call me and I will give you sources. There is no reason to lower the value of your property with cheap stuff.

Thank you, everyone, for your interest, good ideas and willing hands. We are lucky to live where we live, and we know it!

Barbara Roche, GRI, CRS, ARB
Armour Fields Specialist
Master Gardner 



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AFHA Fee Change – Stew Bintner, Treasurer

So, what do you get for the “extra” seventy-five dollars? That’s a reasonable question.

As most residents of Armour Fields remember, they agreed to membership in the homes association at the time they purchased their property. Among other things, they agreed to pay annual dues which sustain the work of Armour Fields association. Currently dues are ninety dollars per year. This funding pays for a wide variety of expenses ranging from maintaining common-area islands, fountains, walls and other statuary to paying expenses for the annual meeting, October Fest etc.

So, what is the current optional security/snow assessment about? Basically two items are covered by

this seventy-five dollar, voluntary fee. The first provides funds for neighborhood safety by hiring Chesley Brown Security Service to patrol the area included in Armour Fields. The origin of this activity dates back to the 1980’s when a series of frequent burglaries in our area understandably concerned many residents. It is impossible to prove exactly how effective the security patrols have been. However, the level of burglaries has never returned to the rates that were present prior to having these guards on regular duty.

The second use of the optional fee is removing snow in a timely manner. Kansas City public works does provide for snow clearance in the winter. However, that service

is often a day or more after the event and often results in a single path cleared in the center of the street. The current snow clearance, clearing both sides of the street, that begins as soon as four inches of snow falls, is provided by the Armour Fields Homes Association. Kansas City plows often also make a later pass, but the initial and primary clearance is paid for by this fee.

Security patrols and timely snow removal. That is what we get for our seventy-five dollars. Most residents think that it is a good investment.



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A WHO'S WHO OF KANSAS CITY WOMEN by Shelley Cetin

If you have spent any time in Kansas City, you have become familiar with the names of many prominent men who hold their place in the city's history.

Walt Disney? Used as inspiration for Mickey Mouse a KC mouse that appeared in the future film maker's desk drawer at a studio where he created short animated films. Does the name Kirkland Armour make you try to recall where you heard it? Remember the hot dog song? "Hot dogs / Armour hot dogs / What kind of kids eat Armour hot dogs?" Yes, that Armour. Or what about jazz greats Charlie Parker, Count Basie, and Bobby Watson? There are even some men connected to KC that we'd rather forget. Like the infamous Tom Pendergast.

How many women's names can you rattle off if asked about the rich and famous of the area's

history?

Here are just a few:

Jean Harlow – The original "Blond Bombshell" was born in KCMO.

Kate Spade – Born and raised here, she graduated from St. Teresa's Academy. How's that for close to home?

Joan Crawford – The actress of Mommy Dearest fame spent time here as a child.

Dianne Wiest – Born in KCMO, she starred in such films as Parenthood and Hannah and her Sisters.

Dee Wallace Stone – Born in KCKS, but we'll include her anyway because hey, it's the metro area. She appeared in E.T. and The Hills Have Eyes.

Ginger Rogers – Yes, Fred Astaire's favorite dancing partner hails from Independence, MO.

So next time you're asked about famous people from the KC area, pull out this list and start naming names.

Advertising

The Armour Star reaches about 850 homes in our neighborhood each issue, and accepts advertising at the following rates: Size of the ad on this page: \$30 per issue or \$105 for four issues. Quarter page ads (such as ads on page 6) are \$55 per issue or \$180 for four issues. Residents of the Armour Fields Homes Association receive a 20% discount from these prices. Other rates available upon request. Contact the Editor, Shelley Cetin 816.588.2817



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Safety and Security	Craig Nulan	7001 Edgevale	816.651.1424	cnulan@gmail.com
Newsletter Editor	Shelley Cetin	441 West 67th Ter	816.588.2817	toto_fan19@yahoo.com

The Armour Fields Homes Association is a non-profit organization, with board members who donate their time and work for the benefit of the neighborhood.

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