



IN THIS ISSUE...

PLEASE JOIN US AT THE
ANNUAL MEETING

🌀 APRIL 26, 6-8PM 🌀

GARDEN VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

🌀 APRIL 22 AND MAY 20 🌀

SPRING 2023

WATERBURY NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

From the Waterbury Neighborhood Association

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Hello neighbors!

The Waterbury Neighborhood Association would like to wish you a happy spring and invite you to join us for our annual meeting on April 26 at White Willow, 6011 Grand Ave., from 6-8pm. There will be appetizers and a cash bar, with WNA hosting a drink ticket for each attendee.

This year we have some speakers from the community that we thought our neighbors might want to hear from. Speakers include District 36 Representative Austin Baeth, Polk County Supervisor Matt McCoy, and a special presentation at the end of the meeting by the Polk County Treasurer's office.

We hope to see you there!

Kelsey L. Knight

2022-2023 Real Estate Updates



WATERBURY
Des Moines, IA 50312

GARDEN VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: EARTH DAY CELEBRATION AND GARDEN CLEANUP



Each year, the WNA needs volunteers for important projects. First, there is the spring cleanup of the islands and garden space at the intersection of Polk Blvd and Ingersoll. This will take place on Saturday April 22nd from 9:00 am to noon. In addition to the normal cleanup duties, large amounts of leaves have to be removed from the endcaps along Polk Blvd. This will be a big job requiring a lot of extra help. April 22nd also happens to be Earth Day so your help will have extra significance as we continue to beautify the neighborhood.

Our other project is the annual plantings, on Saturday, May 20th at 9am. Each year, the city provides flowers free of charge for the Polk islands and gardens. This too is a big project and requires the help from many people. The number of volunteers has dwindled over the past few years so we can really use your help to make this easier.

Additionally, we are looking for volunteers to adopt an endcap on Polk for the summer. Periodic weeding and watering are essential to keeping these flowers looking nice. The effort to maintain these flower beds has also been a struggle over the past few years due to lack of volunteers. We may need to end this program without more help and participation this year.

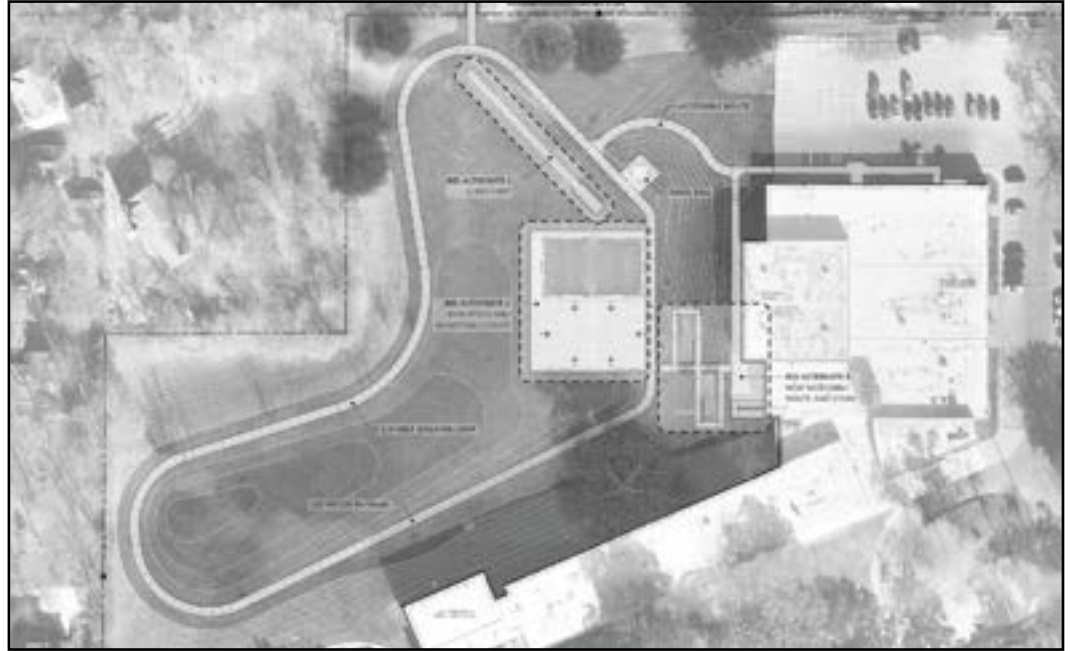
If you want to volunteer or have questions, please contact Tom McBride by email at thm3sticks@gmail.com, or by phone 515-771-8248. RSVPs for either volunteer date, or plans to adopt an endcap, would be greatly appreciated.

Please be sure to check Waterbury's Facebook and other social media for the spring and summer volunteering updates!

Thanks to Waterbury neighbor, photographer Annick Sjobakken, for this issue's cover image.

Destination Merrill

Merrill Middle School is in the process of planning improvements to the school's outdoor spaces, which will be open for community use. Principal Kate Panek shared that the goals of the project are to create a positive outdoor experience during school hours, and to provide a destination for neighborhood families to enjoy all year round. Current designs include a ¼-mile walking loop with a 100-meter runway, and potential space for a long jump, basketball court, gaga ball court, and mini-pitch for soccer. We'll plan to share continued updates and opportunities to support Merrill's plans in future issues.



Luminaries

Thanks as always to everyone who participated in lighting up Waterbury with luminaries over the winter holidays, and to the block captains and neighborhood coordinators who helped to organize. We'll have information for 2023 in the Fall newsletter, it's great to see this tradition grow every year!

Rider Cup 2023

The TRHS Foundation's annual golf outing is scheduled for Friday, May 19th at Waveland Golf Course. We hope you will join us for an afternoon of fun, food, and connecting with other members of the Roosevelt family. There are also great opportunities at various price points to sponsor the event. Visit www.TRHSfoundation.org/ridercup to learn more.

A promotional graphic for the Rider Cup 2023. It features a golf ball with a 'B' logo on a tee. The text reads 'Call Fore RIDER CUP Sponsors' in a mix of fonts. Below that, it says 'FRIDAY, 19 MAY 2023' in a grey box. The slogan 'There is a level for everyone!' is written in a cursive font. At the bottom, it says 'Don't miss this opportunity to feature your business, highlight your company or show your Rider pride with a personal/family sponsorship!' and provides the website <https://www.trhsfoundation.org/ridercup>.



Free Food for Seniors

The Polk County Commodity Supplemental Food Program provides supplemental foods and nutrition education in order to promote good health for seniors at NO COST. The program is provided by Polk County and the United States Department of Agriculture to those 60 years of age or older who live in Polk, Dallas, Boone, Jasper, Story and Warren Counties.

Individuals participating in the program are able to receive healthy nutritious foods from major food manufacturers. Eligible participants can shop in a grocery store like atmosphere Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at Polk County River Place, 2309 Euclid Avenue. No appointment is necessary. Volunteer delivery is available as well.

To apply over the phone, please call 515-286-3655.

Apply in person at Polk County River Place, 2309 Euclid Avenue in Des Moines.

Information shared from <https://www.polkcountyiowa.gov/community-family-youth-services/senior-services/commodity-supplemental-foods/>

SPRING & SUMMER | SAVE THE DATE

Annual WNA Meeting

April 26, 6-8 pm at Willow on Grand



Guests speakers will include State Rep. Austin Baeth, Polk County Supervisor Matt McCoy, and the Polk County Treasurer's Office

Garden Clean-Up

April 22, 9am at Waterbury Gardens, Polk & Ingersoll

Polk Planting

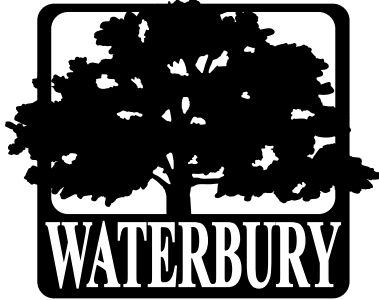
May 20, 9am at Waterbury Gardens

National Night Out

Tuesday, August 1, see Facebook and WNA site for details this summer

Ingersoll Live

Saturday, August 26, 3-10pm at 28th and Ingersoll



2023 Waterbury Neighborhood Association Membership & Volunteer Form

Online Option: Join or renew at www.WaterburyNeighbors.org

Personal Information

First Name:	Last Name:	
First Name:	Last Name:	
Address:		
City:	State:	ZIP:
Email:		
Home Phone:	Cell Phone:	

Please Select

- \$30 Family/Household Membership
- \$25 Single/Senior Family Membership
- \$250 Sustaining Membership (10 years)
- \$500 Lifetime Membership
- \$20 Non-Resident Membership
- Gift to the Foundation* of \$_____

Please send checks to:

Waterbury Neighborhood Association
P.O. Box 12054
Des Moines, Iowa 50312

Please make membership checks payable to the Waterbury Neighborhood Association. Membership is voluntary and follows the calendar year.

*Foundation gifts are tax deductible; please make these checks payable to the Waterbury Neighborhood Foundation.

Volunteer Opportunities

I am also interested in the following (please check all that apply):

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trees | <input type="checkbox"/> Improvement Projects | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Events |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter | <input type="checkbox"/> Membership | <input type="checkbox"/> One-time Project |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gardens | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Media | <input type="checkbox"/> Board of Directors (it's easy!) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Luminaries | <input type="checkbox"/> Advertising | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

If you haven't paid your 2023 dues yet, it's not too late!



Walnut Hill Place Development

This article is part of an ongoing series on the history of Waterbury neighborhood. This issue focuses on the development Walnut Hill Place.

Walnut Hill Place was the first significant development in the Waterbury Neighborhood. The 1885 map, below, shows the location and boundaries (shaded) of this 20-acre tract, which was part of a 160-acre homestead, originally purchased by Charles Murrow.



The Murrow family were early pioneers of Des Moines. An April 1924 Des Moines Register article recounted the family's beginnings in Des Moines:

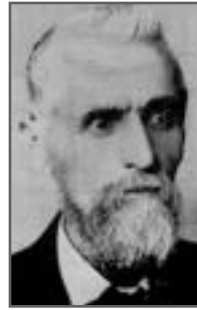
Away back when Des Moines was a village, a man by the name of Charles Murrow, who had come with his family of thirteen children all the way from Park County, Ind., in a covered wagon, halted his ox team on the banks of Walnut creek and made a camp.

For three years, the Murrows lived on the creek bank, and then the father purchased a quarter section of land from the government. For the land, he paid \$1.25 an acre, and there he built a house. The same farm which Charles Murrow purchased for almost a song lie within the city limits of Des Moines today and remains in the original tract of 160 acres.

Charles' son, David Blue (D.B.) Murrow, succeeded his father as owner of the property and over time, acquired adjacent land, including holdings within the city limits of Valley Junction (indicated by the yellow outline on the map above).

When D.B. died on April 27, 1911, the Des Moines Tribune printed this obituary:

David B. Murrow, 79 years old, one of the earliest settlers of Polk County, retired farmer, and wealthy land owner and business man, died early this morning at his home... Death was due to advanced age...



Mr. Murrow moved into Iowa in 1843, and in 1846 moved to the farm where he spent the greater part of his life. This farm now lies inside of the city limits. Other of his holdings are within the city limit of Valley Junction, a part of the city being on land at one time owned by him.

Mr. Murrow made an early success of his farm ventures and, at an early date, built the home which stands at the foot of Murrow hill. At that time, it was the finest farm building in central Iowa. His farm was a model for many years. He retired from active farm life in 1889 but has always refused to sell his 160-acre homestead, which probably is the most valuable in the state. An attempt was made to buy it at the time of the permanent location of the Iowa state fair, but it was not for sale at a price which the state could afford to pay...

With the establishment of the Iowa National bank, Mr. Murrow became a stockholder in this enterprise, and when the Des Moines City railway was inaugurated, he also backed it heavily. The line to Valley Junction runs directly through the home farm for a distance of one mile. Mr. Murrow was married in 1859. His wife died a number of years ago. He is survived by Charles H. Murrow, former county treasurer, at present a practicing attorney in Tulsa, Okla., and by three daughters.

As mentioned in his obituary, D.B. Murrow's farm was "the finest farm building in central Iowa." Below is a rendering of his farmstead, which was published in the 1875 A.T. Andreas Atlas of the State of Iowa. Note the carriage heading east on the road (the far right of the illustration). This road would become known as Grand Avenue. To provide perspective, below is a map showing the approximate location of Murrow's house and barn on Grand Avenue today.



The road going east out of the Walnut Creek valley was known as both Walnut Hill and Murrow Hill. In a June 17, 1928, Des Moines Register article by Frank Clarkson, he recalls the hill:



In the days before street pavement and traffic signals, Des Moines was a paradise for the young people in the wintertime, and coasting parties were even more popular than skating on the rivers. One favorite stunt was to get up a party of young folks and take the trip out Grand Avenue, or Sycamore Street, as it was then called to Murrow's hill. We would have a four-horse team pulling a farm wagon or a dray on runners with the wagon box filled with hay, and behind, we would have our bobsleds tied. From its summit Grand Avenue continued westward to Walnut Creek by long sweeping curves down Murrow's hill, and at the foot of the hill Dave Murrow lived in a hospitable farmhouse that was always open to the young people.

Walnut Hill Place was originally platted into 18 large one-acre lots, priced between \$800 and \$1,200 (\$25,000 - \$38,000 in 2023 dollars). Below are images from a 1907 advertisement describing the development and showing a map of the planned lots for "the finest acreage lots in the city." The red lines on the map reflect the lot lines as they are drawn today. Currently, there are 35 single-family homes with an average lot size of approximately 1/3 of an acre.



According to the Polk County Assessor, the median construction date was 1930. The oldest home on the legal plat is listed as 1905 and is pictured below (5720 Walnut Hill Drive) and the most recent construction date is 2016.

WALNUT HILL PLACE

ACRE TRACTS

located on West Grand avenue on the top of Walnut Creek hill, the most beautiful laying ground in or around Des Moines. The Valley Junction car line runs along the west end of the tract.

This tract is finely shaded and investigation will show it to be the best acreage to be had in the city.

Comparing price and location Walnut Hill tracts are the biggest bargains ever offered to the public.

Take Valley Junction car line, tell conductor to let you off at Walnut Hill Place. Big sign on tract. For prices and terms see us.

FRICK & ARMOUR
216 Clapp Bldg.
Mut. 1684. 191

In May 1907, J.W. Mullane of the First National Bank of Valley Junction purchased a twenty-acre tract from the Murrows. The deal was estimated to be worth \$300 per acre. The following month, the real estate firm of Frick & Armour bought and undertook the development of the land.

Sidney F. Frick (1862-1916) was raised in Polk County. In the 1890s, he was president of the Des Moines Baseball Association. After he was unsuccessful in bringing a western franchise league to Des Moines, he became involved in real estate and ran the S.F. Frick Land Company, with Walnut Hill Place being one of his developments.



Please be sure to check Waterbury's Facebook and other social media for the spring and summer volunteering updates!





Waterbury Neighborhood Association
P.O. Box 12054
Des Moines, IA 50312

Are You New to Waterbury?

If you are new to our lovely neighborhood, we wish you a hearty welcome! If you are looking to get involved in the neighborhood, we always have a need for the following volunteers:

- Advertising
- Assisting at Events
- Fundraising
- Gardening
- Special Projects
- Web Content Generator
- Welcome Committee



If any of these options sound interesting, please send us a note at news@waterburyneighbors.org



Waterbury Neighborhood

waterburyneighbors.org



@WaterburyDSM