



THE HILLTONE

HILTONIA ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER
Winter 2004

Magnet School Planned for Trenton, *Jennifer Leynes*

One doesn't have to travel far in Trenton to hear parents discussing the educational options for their children.

Unlike parents in the suburbs, who typically send their children to the local public school with hardly a second thought, those of us in the city have many more questions. Will the city schools meet my child's needs? Will he achieve his potential? Will she be safe?

Faced with these questions, a group of parents and other concerned citizens have been meeting the past two years to discuss the educational choices facing parents in Trenton today. As a result of these discussions, the group has proposed establishing a magnet school within the city school system. City schools superintendent Dr. James Lytle has been supportive of the project, and the school is scheduled to open in September 2004.

The magnet school will be the first of its kind in Trenton. Unlike charter

schools, which select students by lottery, magnet schools use an application process to form the student body.

As a result, applicants who best fit the profile established by the magnet school are accepted, forming a student body with similar interests, goals, and/or approaches to education. Like the traditional public schools and the charter schools, the magnet school will be free to all city residents.

The school proposed for Trenton has at its core three basic concepts. First, the school will teach the fundamental building blocks for future educational success at an individualized pace and using hands-on learning opportunities in the community. Second, parents will play an instrumental role in their children's education, working in the classroom or on class-related activities on a weekly basis. Finally, the school will represent the diversity of the city's population, encouraging students to appreciate the similarities and

differences that exist among people of varying races, religions, and socioeconomic backgrounds.

The foundational basics—reading, writing, and math—will be at the core of the curriculum, which will also stress science, history, art, music, and health. The school will foster understanding and respect for the inter-relationships between people, people and places, and the natural and built environment. Students will participate actively in the learning process through hands-on learning experiences in the community. The school will take advantage of the many historic and cultural sites in Trenton and the surrounding area—for example, the New Jersey State Museum, Howell Living History Farm, and the Old Barracks—to enhance the educational experience.

Parents will be involved in their children's classrooms on a weekly basis. Parents are their children's greatest

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Zoning Protects Our Neighborhood, *Don Waller*

Most of us live in Hiltonia because we really enjoy the neighborhood. Despite its age, or perhaps because of it, we like the charming, unique, well kept houses; the tree-lined streets and mature landscapes; and that sense of satisfying ownership we feel when we drive up to our own sweet home.

How is it that Hiltonia has continued to be attractive to most people, and to hold its value for the past 80 years? Unlike a lot of neighborhoods, there are no apartments, no retail, professional, or public businesses in our homes. As a result, there is widespread pride of ownership and meticulous home maintenance. How has Hiltonia avoided apartments, beauty parlors, auto repair garages, doctors' offices, gift shops, and outrageous home

additions that other neighborhoods experience?

Trenton's zoning and land development laws are the rules by which we decide what to build, where it can be built, how high it can be, where the fence can be, how we can use the property and so on, and so on. These zoning rules protect us all from a neighbor's (or our own) ill judged use, or remodeling of a property, which would lower the desirability, enjoyment and value of the neighbors' properties.

Hiltonia is zoned Residence A. The rest of the City is Residence B-1, B-2, or other. The rules for the zoned areas are published, and maintained by the City Clerk at City Hall. Things like fences, backyard salvage yards, commercial truck parking, landscap-

ing, lot drainage, driveway improvement (expansion), etc, are included. You can review the entire book in the Clerk's office at City Hall.

If you are aware of a zoning problem, you can notify the City Zoning Officer, Ray Bucci, at 989-3549. His role is to verify the zoning problem and to ask the property owner to correct it. The problem will then be resolved by the property owner, and if necessary, under the supervision of the court. If you have questions about zoning issues, the best answers will come from Ray Bucci, or his supervisor, Len Pucciatti. Of course, your Hiltonia Association is always interested in neighborhood matters such as these. Feel free to let us know how any zoning issues you raise are resolved.

Around the Neighborhood

Children's Activities

The Hiltonia Children's Activities Committee enjoyed a busy year. In April, the annual Easter Egg Hunt attracted a large number of children and featured a visit from the Easter bunny. All of the children found plenty of eggs filled with candy, and prizes were awarded to the lucky kids who found the golden eggs.

In September, the committee hosted the neighborhood's first teen party. About 15 teens attended a back-to-school barbecue. The teens made t-shirts and door signs and enjoyed an afternoon of fun, despite the rainy weather.

In October, the committee held its annual Halloween Parade and Party. The party attracted about 35 neighborhood children, who enjoyed games and fun on a beautiful fall afternoon. Festivities included a doughnut eating contest, a game of musical chairs, and a piñata. The Trenton Fire Department once again sent a fire truck to lead the children on a parade around the block. The children's Holiday Party was held on a snowy weekend in December. Despite the inclement

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Worthy Projects

In November our neighbors collected about 30 pair of men's white athletic socks that were donated to Annette Lartigue in conjunction with her annual drive. Socks will be donated to the Trenton Rescue Mission.

The Hiltonia Association made its annual donation to the City of Trenton Children's Christmas Party.

Thanks to all who contributed for your kindness.

Happy Birthday

Lamar Rabara Brokate	01/19/88
Maya Reese McGrath	01/30/03
Aubrey Gervaise Crowder	01/31/02
Abriella Safan Crowder	01/31/02
Aidan Michael Crowder	01/31/02
Victoria Woolfolk	02/02/95
Noah Autorio Reyes	03/02/98
Adrianna Montano	03/13/90
Christina Zeppenfeld	03/18/95
Connor Lewis	03/19/88
Lee Peyton (grandson of Audrey Blackburn)	03/25/89
Bethany Chance	03/29/96
Samoa' Thomas	03/30/01
Joshua Rabara Brokate	05/13/89



Hiltonia Events Calendar

General meeting, 10 Buckingham
Easter Egg Hunt

3/9/04
TBA

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Animal Rescue

Friends of Animals

Low cost certificates for spay-neuter
1-800-321-PETS
www.friendsofanimals.org

Alley Cat Allies

A national clearinghouse on feral cats, offers detailed instructions on how to run a trap-neuter-release program
(202) 667-3630
www.alleycat.org or www.pets911.com

Animal Allies

Rescues, fosters and manages adoptions of homeless animals. Low cost spay-neuter services, medical treatment and food
(609) 394-3000 or (609) 637-0102.
www.petfinder.org/shelters/aa.html

APAW Animal Placement Agency of the Windsors

No kill shelter provides cats and dogs with a safe haven until adopted
(609)799-1263
www.apawpets.org

Focus on Animals

Finds permanent homes for strays
(609)275-1280
www.focus-on-animals.org

Pet Rescue of Mercer

Foster, adoption, and trap-spay-neuter-return programs
(609) 587-2423
www.petrescueofmercer.org

Save

A no kill shelter in Princeton Township
(609) 921-6122
www.save-animals.com

Straykatz

Trap-spay-neuter-return programs for feral cats, foster and adoption programs
(609)586-6676
www.straykatz.org

Tabby's Place

A last resort sanctuary in Ringoes for stray cats
(908) 237-5300
www.tabbyplace.org

Magnet School *(from page 1)*

teachers, and research suggests that children whose parents volunteer to help in school usually do well in school. At the magnet school, parents will commit to assist the teacher weekly, either as an assistant in the classroom during the school day or in support activities, e.g., planning field trips or meetings, for the class and school. Flexibility will be offered to allow working parents to be involved in the educational process.

Finally, the magnet school will represent the diversity of the city. Trenton has a diverse population, in terms of race, culture, and economics. Because children can best learn to appreciate similarities and differences between people through regular interactions with others, the student body will represent the diversity of the city. Students will discover and affirm themselves and others as they come to know and value differences in ability, language, skin color, religion, culture, family structure, and family income.

Classes at the magnet school will be limited to 15 students, and the adult to student ratio will be 1:5. The initial classes will be for children ages 3-6 with full- and part-time options. The school will grow with these first classes, until it covers Pre-K to Grade 8. The magnet school will be located in its own space in downtown Trenton for the 2004-05 school year, within easy walking distance of Mill Hill Park and various historic and cultural sites.

At least three open houses will be held at locations throughout the city during February to inform parents about the school and the application process. The deadline for applications for the 2004-05 school year is March 8, 2004. If you are the parent of a 3-6-year-old child and are interested in learning more about the magnet school or receiving an application, please contact Jennifer Leynes at 656-9565 or jbleynes@yahoo.com.

Children *(from page 2)*

weather, about 12 children listened to stories about winter holidays, including Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, and Christmas. The kids made winter-themed crafts and enjoyed a visit from Santa Claus.

Many thanks to our gracious hosts for each of the parties: Donna and Bob Steinmetz and Jennifer and Andrew Leynes, Anthony Rabara and Donald Brokate, Mary Beth Barenborg and Anthony Lucas, and Debby D'arcangelo and Ed Dippold. Thanks also to everyone who helped with planning and brought goodies to share.

Keep your eyes out for information about the annual Easter Egg Hunt in April and a possible family event during the summer!

Teen Babysitting Class

The Children's Committee is organizing a babysitting class for kids ages 11-14 in the neighborhood this spring. The 8-hour "Safe Sitters" class will be offered at Robert Wood Johnson Hospital in Hamilton. Teens will learn infant and child CPR in addition to the basics of infant and child care. The course costs \$50. For further details or to sign up, contact Stephani Register at csnpp@juno.com or 695-6352.

Hiltonia Kids Census

In order to better plan for neighborhood parties, the Children's Committee would like to take an informal census of the number of children and teens in Hiltonia and their ages. When you return your membership form with dues, please note the number of children in your household and their ages. You can also email the information to Jennifer Leynes at jbleynes@yahoo.com. The information will help us when buying favors, prizes, and treats for events. Thanks!

Hiltonia On Line

The Hiltonia Association is going global with its own web site! The site will feature a calendar of events, civic concerns, and other information pertinent to Hiltonia residents. Check out the work in progress at www.hiltonia.org.