

# HISTORIC IRVINGTON

## NEWSLETTER

A PUBLICATION OF THE IRVINGTON COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

WINTER 2013

FREE

## Exciting changes at Grant High School



Grant High School gets a new principal and plans for a new look. *Learn more on page 3.*

## A Look Ahead

by Peter O'Neil

It's almost 2014! Can you believe it? 2013 already gone.

Traditionally, year end is a time for reflection about the year past and a time for preparation and planning for the year ahead. This applies to organizations, businesses and neighborhoods as well as individuals. What can we expect in our neighborhood? What issues and challenges and triumphs will we see? What do we want to accomplish this year?

Here are some of the matters the Irvington Community Association is keeping tabs on that may affect our neighborhood in 2014. It's not an exhaustive list, and if you believe we've left out something important, please let us know. Contact any of our board members, or better yet, come to our ICA meetings the second Thursday of every month (except July and August) at 7:00 PM in the Irvington School library. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to attend.

### CRIME

We've seen a spike in crime in and around Irvington including widespread vandalism to vehicles parked on our streets. (See Police Alert p. 6) There has also been an uptick in break-ins and robberies. According to the Police Bureau this is partly due to winter's early darkness. Many people don't get home from work until after dark which gives criminals opportunity to get into unoccupied homes unseen. The ICA is exploring ways to make our neighborhood safer for all. If you see suspicious activity, call the Police immediately.

### TYPE 1 HISTORIC DESIGN REVIEW

The ICA, along with partners in the Buckman neighborhood, the Architectural Heritage Center and others, successfully worked with the city to create a new lower level historic design review at much reduced cost for small projects in all the city's historic districts. The Type 1 review is a streamlined flat fee process, implemented in May 2013, after an 18 month effort to reform the review process. It allows homeowners to do small projects with a flat \$250 design review fee and a 14 to 21 day decision from the city. According to the Portland Bureau of Development Services (BDS), there have been about 30 Type 1 reviews city-wide and more than half have been from Irvington.

The success of the Type 1 review is scheduled to be revisited by the city this spring. ICA land use representatives and representatives from BDS will meet to discuss how well the Type I successes and challenges. The ICA will continue to work to make historic design review easier.

### COLUMBIA RIVER CROSSING

The ICA and Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods (NECN) formally oppose the so-called Columbia River Crossing in its current form because of its severe negative

impacts on our north and northeast neighborhoods. The CRC is far more than a new bridge; it's a massive freeway expansion that will extend deep into our N/NE neighborhoods. The CRC seemed dead when the Washington Legislature failed to approve funding for it, but Oregon Governor Kitzhaber has revived it and is pushing for Oregon to spearhead the project alone. The ICA continues to monitor the situation and opposes this expensive project. (See President's Letter p. 2)

### BROADWAY TRAFFIC

There have been several proposals to calm traffic on NE Broadway. The goal is to find ways to make Broadway more pedestrian friendly to enhance the neighborhood's economic vitality and livability. The ICA is examining various ways to accomplish that goal, working with the Northeast Broadway Business Association and neighbors in Sullivan's Gulch. Although no specific plans have been made, Sullivan's Gulch Neighborhood Association is looking at the possibility of more traffic lights and improved pedestrian crossings between 16th and the Hollywood area. The ICA sees traffic through our neighborhood as an issue to monitor and weigh in on this year.

### IRVING PARK

The ICA will continue to work on a plan to create a path around the perimeter of Irving Park like the one shown in blueprints from 1972. The ICA has some capital improvement funds that may be available to help get work on the path started, and the ICA will help in fundraising efforts for the path and several other proposed park improvements, too. We will be working closely with Portland Parks Department to further plan and budget for this project, and of course, your input is welcomed.

### CHARITABLE GIVING

In 2013 the Irvington Community Association awarded a total of \$17,000 in grants to various organizations that serve our community. The awards went to a variety of great groups. They include \$900 to Hancock Street Preschool, \$2,000 to Meals on Wheels People, \$800 to the Community Alliance of Tenants, \$1,000 to the Beaumont Middle School Foundation, and \$1,000 to Kinship House. The Charitable Giving Committee will be reviewing new grant applications this spring. The ICA has helped worthwhile organizations in Irvington for more than 20 years.

### IRVINGTON HOME TOUR

Our primary source of funds for our Charitable Giving Program and other programs is the annual Irvington Home Tour. Each year several homeowners generously open their doors to allow visitors in for one day in May. Planning is already underway for the next Home Tour and among other things the Home Tour Committee is looking for homes to feature in the 2014. This year's tour will be Sunday, May 18. Mark your calendar!

### WEBSITE LAUNCH

The new Home Tour website was launched just before

the 2013 tour and it's been a huge success ([irvington-hometour.com](http://irvington-hometour.com)). The site is cleaner, easier to navigate, and much more graphically pleasing. At the same time the ICA funded the Home Tour website, we started working on a new Irvington website, too. The neighborhood website is scheduled to launch before the end of 2013, so fire up your browser and keep your eye on [irvingtonpdx.com](http://irvingtonpdx.com).

### PARTICIPATION

The Irvington Community Association is for all Irvington residents – homeowners, renters and business owners alike – so we invite you to get involved. ICA Board meetings are the second Thursday of every month, but that's not all. Committees are open to all, too: Land Use, Historic Preservation, Parks, Beautification, Home Tour. Pick one (or more) and get involved.



### OTHER IRVINGTON EVENTS

- NEIGHBORHOOD CLEAN UP

One of our most popular events, the Neighborhood Cleanup, will be happening again at the Holladay Park Church of God parking lot. Saturday, May 10, 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM.

- IRVINGTON COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION PICNIC

It's National Night Out and the ICA will host our annual neighborhood picnic in Irving Park. August 5, 5:00 PM to 7:30 PM.

- IRVING PARK TREE CLIMB

Join your neighbors in the northeast corner of Irving Park on September 27, 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM and climb a tree!

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Steven Cole

Recently a neighbor asked why the ICA spent funds fighting the five-mile-long massive highway expansion project known as the Columbia River Crossing (CRC) when the project (which he believed was beneficial) occurred outside the ICA's boundaries. I thought there might be others who were curious as to why the ICA continues to oppose the CRC in its current form.

When considering whether to take a public stand on an issue, the ICA considers various factors, including whether the issue involves a direct impact on the Irvington neighborhood.

The ICA and the NECN determined that the five-mile expansion of I-5 which would result in additional traffic being funneled into the NE neighborhoods and would increase adverse health effects such as asthma. Few experts (who do not have a direct financial interest in the CRC project) believe the CRC would be beneficial to the region.

Even if it were solely a bridge replacement project being done for safety reasons, the current I-5 bridges are safer than other Portland bridges, including the Steel Bridge where the light rail crosses. The I-5 bridges can be seismically upgraded for a fraction of the cost of the proposed project. In fact, the money already spent on CRC consultants would have paid for most of that upgrade.

Some other reasons we opposed the project: Light Rail can be extended to Vancouver without a massive highway expansion by utilizing a separate bridge. Tolling can be implemented without a massive highway expansion project. Transit time can be reduced more cheaply by changing the down-river railroad bridge lift, thus reducing the number of lifts on I-5. Commuter rail is an option. The Final Environmental Impact Statement is deeply flawed. Now that the state of Washington is not a partner, the project is even more financially dangerous for Oregon.

The Oregon Department of Transportation's record in regard to large projects is exceptionally bad and often includes enormous cost overruns. Based on ODOT's history, it is likely that the CRC project would end up more than double its current predicted cost. The tolling projections are unrealistic. The consulting firm which made the projections has been wildly inaccurate on other projects. Proponents have not included the cost of paying for mitigation because the new bridge will be too low. ODOT admitted that enforcing the collection of tolls from Washington drivers will be problematic.

The ICA has been involved with other issues which, while not necessarily falling within our neighborhood boundaries, affect the livability of our neighborhood. That is not unusual and it is one of the strengths of Portland that neighborhoods get a voice.

So, just as Irvington was opposed to the proposed Fremont Expressway several decades ago (you can still see the extensions coming off the Fremont Bridge), Irvington is strongly opposed to the CRC project. In addition to providing money to the NECN to support its legal challenge of the Environmental Impact Statement, the ICA has written letters and lobbied our local state representatives to oppose the project. Kudos to our representatives Lew Frederick and Jackie Dingfelder for their opposition. So, while we could have put the money toward something like a water feature in the park, as suggested by the neighbor, the ICA believes the money was well spent and if we are successful in defeating this incredibly ill-conceived project, we believe the neighborhood will be a far better place to live.

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Animal Control 503-988-3066  
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# THE IRVINGTON COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

P.O. BOX 12102, PORTLAND, OREGON 97212

The ICA meets on the second Thursday of every month (except July and August), 7 p.m. at the Irvington Elementary School, 1320 NE Brazee St.

Local issues are discussed and all Irvington residents are welcome to attend.

Are you looking for the minutes from our recent board meetings?  
Minutes are posted in full on our Web site at [www.irvingtonpdx.com](http://www.irvingtonpdx.com).

## New Grant Principal Wins Points for Openness, Prepares for Rebuilding

by Dave Anderson

In her first month as Grant High School principal, Carol Campbell dealt with a scheduling meltdown, a parent protest over Back to School Night and dancing so lewd it forced her to shut down Homecoming. As she looks ahead, she will be responsible for shepherding the school through a two-year rebuilding that will send students to another campus. It's clear that many are worried that Grant could lose students with other options, including those who can go to private schools.

Still, Campbell couldn't seem more serene. "It's been an easy transition so far," she said. "The work is great." Campbell believes her 31-year career as an educator has led her to this job. She taught Science at Grant from 1998 to 2007, and her two sons graduated from Grant. Campbell then went to Newberg as principal of a small high school. In 2011, she returned to Portland Public Schools as Benson High principal. In June, Superintendent Carole Smith asked Campbell to take over at Grant after Vivian Orlen announced she was leaving as principal and returning to New York. "I can't think of a more fortunate career path," she said.

Campbell decided to make a change to Back to School Night. In past years, parents followed their child's schedule and spent 10 minutes in each class, listening to presentations from teachers. This year, Campbell wanted a more informal open house, with parents free to wander and talk individually with teachers. Those familiar with the school were surprised at the uproar among parents.

Campbell said she has a thick skin, and as she welcomed parents that night, she seemed comfortable even as she addressed the controversy. "This is either the first thing I mess up at Grant High School," she told parents, "or the first thing that goes right."

But so far, most of the reviews have been glowing. After working with Orlen for two years as president of the Grant PTA, Monique McClean was sorry to see her go, but she's already become a fan of Campbell.

"Carol's been incredibly open, very willing to listen," McClean said. "She's calm, thoughtful and intelligent. I think she really sees the big picture, but is attuned to details to make things work."

Parents agree that Campbell communicates well and is approachable. She sends out an email every Friday to parents titled "Did You Know?" In fact, they had to discourage her from giving out her cell phone number, Montgomery said. For Campbell, the reason for the communication is simple. "I don't feel like I'm the holder of all the knowledge," she said.

In an interview in early October, Campbell said she wants to build on what makes Grant a good school. That includes its diversity, strong sense of community, rich curriculum and experienced teachers.

The priority that she most often mentions is bridging the gap between school and college or work. That means bringing more professionals and businesses into Grant to talk to students about their futures. That was

one of her successes at Benson, and already, she is developing a relationship with several businesses, including Walsh Construction.

"For me, it's about instruction," she said. She wants to emphasize teachers' professional development and is working on a doctoral dissertation about teachers helping other teachers to become better. She's also concerned that, although the student body is fairly diverse, most teachers are white.

And, every meeting Campbell has seems to add to her to-do list: bullying, cheating, cell phone policies, dress code and social media. But the elephant in the room often seems to be the rebuilding. Last year, voters approved a \$482 million construction bond measure for Portland schools. The district will spend an estimated \$95 million to rebuild Grant. The campus will close after June 2017 and not reopen until fall 2019. The most likely scenario is that Grant students will use the shuttered Marshall High campus in Southeast Portland for those two years.

Campbell is concerned that parents will send students to other schools rather than have them attend Grant, but what makes Grant successful, she said, is not the bricks and mortar. It includes the staff, activities and parents. And you still maintain your family even if your house is being remodeled, she said. Campbell told parents she plans to create several committees soon after Jan. 1, 2014 to start planning for the rebuilding.

One of the major issues will be the size of the performing arts auditorium. Campbell is already campaigning for a smaller, but higher-quality auditorium. She would prefer one with seating for about 500 and better acoustics, lighting and other "bells and whistles," she said, than seating for 1,500.

Although Campbell is becoming fluent in architecture and construction, her real passion is helping teenagers. She loves that they have high energy, but are also capable of conversation and deep thinking. "I believe kids are inherently good," she said. That attitude is apparent to those who work with her. "I think Grant is a great school," Zantler said, "and I personally feel like it's in fantastic hands."



(For more information on Campbell and an excellent profile, see the September 2013 issue Grant Magazine article of [www.grantmagazine.com](http://www.grantmagazine.com).)



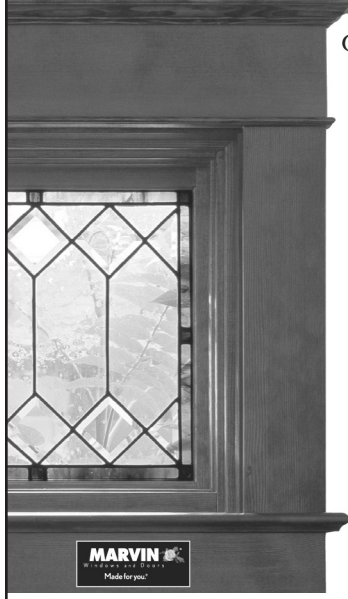
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## IHD FAQ

### Answering your questions about the Irvington Historic District

by Peter O'Neil

There have been many questions – and some misinformation – about what can and can't be done in our Irvington Historic District. We're here to help! From now on this Historic District FAQ will be in every issue of our newsletter. We hope it will increase your understanding and relieve some of your concerns. The questions in this issue are ones we've heard recently. We want to hear from you and answer your questions. Just contact me: [peteroneil@cbseal.com](mailto:peteroneil@cbseal.com)

**A**nd here's my disclaimer: Like so many things in life, the answer to many questions is "It depends". Each situation may vary, so the responses here don't claim to be absolutely definitive. However, I do hope they will give you a good idea of what the Historic District means to you and how it works.

#### I want to remodel my kitchen, but can I do that in the Historic District?

Assuming you remodel according to current Portland building codes, you can make all the changes you want to the interior of your home as long as it does not affect the exterior. Historic design guidelines apply to exterior changes only, so putting in a new kitchen does not trigger review. If the remodel also means you add a dormer, bump out a wall or move a window – exterior changes – then your remodel would be subject to historic design review.

#### But I do want to bump out a wall to make more room for my growing family. Can I add space to my house?

Of course. Enlarging the footprint of your house will require permits and review by several Portland bureaus or review groups whether you're in the Historic District or not. These could include the Bureau of Development Services, Water Bureau, Fire Bureau, Department of Transportation, Urban Forestry, Planning and Zoning, Bureau of Environmental Services and others. An exterior remodel in an Historic District requires another review – Historic Design Review. This review ensures that remodeling projects fit the "fabric of the district" – that the mass and scale of an addition don't overwhelm the house or neighboring homes; that the structural changes are appropriate for the home's architecture; that homes contributing to the unique feel of the neighborhood won't simply be scraped and replaced with McMansions. Design review helps preserve what makes Irvington such a beautiful place to live.

But before you head off to the city and pay your permit and design review fees for a remodeling project contact Dean Gisvold, Land Use Committee chair, or Barb Christopher, Historic Preservation Committee chair. These two Committees are happy to review your plans and elevations for compliance with the relevant city code. We're here to help!

#### Can I paint my house? That's an exterior change, right?

If you want a hot pink house with green shutters and purple trim – go for it. Historic design guidelines don't apply to paint color.

#### What about the garden? I want to remove a big bush that's too close to the foundation and blocking a window. It's probably been there a hundred years so it must be historic. Do I need review?

Historic District design guidelines apply to exterior changes to the structures, not the plants in the yard.

#### There's a rotten step on my front porch. What kind of review do I need to fix it?

Routine maintenance like replacing a stair tread can be done without design review – assuming again that whatever you do is within the proper building codes.

Tearing off the porch and building a new one may require review, though. Check with the city.

#### Check with the city? I thought the Irvington Community Association decided what can be done in the Historic District.

The Land Use Committee of the ICA comments on designs, but we do not make final decisions. That's up to Portland's Bureau of Development Services (BDS). BDS has often agreed with our comments, but not always. And we have not always agreed with BDS. For example, not long after we became an Historic District, BDS ruled that Fremont United Methodist Church had to undergo design review to replace its aging roof. The ICA went to bat for the church. We successfully argued that roof replacement was maintenance and need not be reviewed as long as it was done with like materials and did not include structural alterations. The church was allowed to replace its roof without review and without the associated city fees. This also means homeowners can replace their roofs with like materials and no structural changes without review and associated fees.

#### How do you decide what's an acceptable exterior change?

The ICA Land Use Committee doesn't decide. The city does. But both the city and the committee interpret the ten criteria set forth in city code which are loosely based on the US Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation. (Remember, we are on the National Register of Historic Places.) For all you code geeks out there, here's the city code: Zoning Code Section 33.846.060.G. You can get a one page .pdf of it here: [portlandoregon.gov/bds/article/421248](http://portlandoregon.gov/bds/article/421248).

#### Can I comment on some of these remodels?

Get involved! The ICA is open to all residents of Irvington – homeowners, renters and business owners alike. Our ICA Board meetings are held the second Thursday of every month except July & August at 7:00 pm in the Irvington School Library. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to attend. You can also join in at the Land Use Committee or the Historic Preservation Committee meetings. Just contact Land Use chair Dean Gisvold or Historic Preservation chair Barb Christopher for details.

**Save the Date!**  
**Irvington Home Tour**  
**May 18th, 2014**  
**11:00 AM to 5:00 PM**

Looking for a meaningful way to celebrate your love of Irvington? Consider opening your home to the Irvington Home Tour. Proceeds from the tour fund not only our community association, but also community programs and organizations working right here in our neighborhood.

To be considered or for more information email [committee@irvingtonhome-tour.com](mailto:committee@irvingtonhome-tour.com)

# Commercial Properties in the Irvington District May Be Eligible for Federal Tax Credits

by Jim Heuer

In 2005 when the Meier and Frank Department Store in downtown Portland was transformed by the addition of the swank The Nines Hotel in the upper floors, the project received millions of dollars in Federal Tax Credits which helped make it feasible financially. You may think that such Tax Credits are only available to millionaire investors and huge developers, but in the case of Irvington Historic District property owners, you'd be wrong!

The Federal Historic Rehabilitation Investment Tax Credit program has been around since 1976, and is potentially available to owners of commercial buildings designated as "Contributing" in National Register Historic Districts – like ours here in Irvington. Rehabilitation projects that qualify, result in a tax credit for the owners equal to 20% of the cost of the rehabilitation – that is a credit, which actually reduces taxes owed, not a deduction, which only reduces one's taxable income. And, for owners whose income taxes aren't high enough in one year to absorb that much credit, the credit can be spread over multiple years!

Now, the fine print. Read carefully, because not all properties will be eligible. Yours may be, so if you are one of the hundreds of commercial property owners in Irvington, read on...

There are several thresholds that you have to clear for your property to be eligible for this program:

- Most important, the property must be commercial or a rental residential property. Single family homes that you occupy are not eligible. Duplexes may be, if you don't live in one of the units. 3-plexes, 4-plexes and larger, plus storefront buildings with residential on upper floors, typically will meet the commercial requirement.
- It must be "Contributing" to the District. Every property in Irvington has a Contributing or Non-Contributing status as determined by the District Inventory. (See [irvingtonpdx.com](http://irvingtonpdx.com) for info on how to check on your property.)
- The rehabilitation project must preserve the historic character of the property, both inside and outside and meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Property Rehabilitation. Note that this is true on the outside of the structure for ANY building modification in the District under Historic Design Review, but only the Federal program regulates changes to the interior. However, this program's protection of the interior does NOT prevent modifications or adaptive re-use of the building – a good example is the well-known Ladd Carriage House in downtown Portland, which received Historic Tax Credits even though it was re-purposed from an empty barn to a restaurant!
- The cost of the rehabilitation must be at least \$5000 and more than the "Basis" value of your property. The "Basis" is the original purchase cost of the property (improvements only, not the land), plus any subsequent investments, less the

accumulated depreciation. For example, if you bought your apartment building in 1990 for \$300,000, of which \$250,000 was for "improvements, not including land", and didn't make any capital expenditures over the years, your "Basis" might be about \$250,000 less roughly \$192,000 in accumulated depreciation or a net "Basis" of about \$58,000. To qualify for the Federal Tax Credit, you'd need to spend at least \$58,000 on rehabilitation.

This last requirement is a sticking point for many properties. The program works best for owners who have owned the property for many years, such that the accumulated depreciation is substantial. Current real estate prices in Irvington are such that newly purchased commercial buildings would be eligible for this program only if seriously deteriorated and requiring substantial restoration investment.

Based on the District Inventory, 258 properties in the Irvington Historic District are both Contributing and Commercial in nature, and thus potentially eligible for the Federal Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit program. There are lots more details of the program relating to fees, application forms, and, especially, to how the tax credits can affect your income tax calculations, so if you think you may qualify based on the list above, you should get the brochure titled "Historic Preservation Tax Incentives" published by the U. S. Department of the Interior (which administers the program). A good starting point to get the brochure and learn more is this link: [www.oregon.gov/OPRD/HCD/SHPO/Pages/FED\\_TAXCREDIT\\_NEW.aspx](http://www.oregon.gov/OPRD/HCD/SHPO/Pages/FED_TAXCREDIT_NEW.aspx)



## Need to report a street light problem?

To report a street light outage, a light going on and off (cycling), a light on during the day, vandalism, or any other problem with a street light, call the Street Light Outage Hotline or use the online form.

When reporting a problem, provide as much information as you can about the location, especially pole numbers, adjacent addresses, and side of the street. Map and pole numbers are found on the Pole Tag. A Pole Tag is a three inch round metal plate on the street light pole located at eye level. (There may not be a Pole Tag on every pole.)

Simple repairs take about a week. With over 54,000 lights, the city depends on citizens to report problems. You may get voice mail, but just leave your name and phone number.

- Report: Street Light Outage Hotline  
Phone: 503-865-LAMP (5267)  
Online Form: [www.portlandoregon.gov/transportation/40884?action=UpdateItem&category\\_id=596](http://www.portlandoregon.gov/transportation/40884?action=UpdateItem&category_id=596)

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## Get a Tree, Clear the Air, Join the Irvington Neighborhood Tree Planting!

Once again this winter homeowners in Irvington can purchase trees for their yard or parking strip for \$75 through Friends of Trees. The cost includes a site inspection by the Urban Forestry Department to ensure you choose the right tree for your home, hole digging, help with planting your tree, stakes, mulch, ties, labels, follow-up monitoring, and information on proper tree care techniques.

Even if you don't plan to purchase a tree this season, you can still join Friends of Trees and your Irvington neighbors for the March 1, 2014 Irvington Tree Planting Day. Come out on Saturday morning to help plant trees in the neighborhood and create a healthier community.

Planting a tree in your yard or parking strip creates long lasting benefits enjoyed by everyone. According to Friend of Trees, a typical tree absorbs 10 pounds of pollutants, cleans 330 pounds of carbon dioxide, and creates 260 pounds of oxygen each year. Having cleaner air in your neighborhood has all sorts of health benefits, such as reduced asthma rates. Trees also intercept and retain 760 gallons of rainwater each year, which helps keep our rivers clean and reduce storm water fees. Trees can cool our homes in the summer and shade our city during hot summer spells. Also, unlike many other things, trees appreciate in value each year. And by planting trees now, we can keep our city green into the future.

Planning has begun for the Irvington Tree Planting Event. Contact Friends of Trees Irvington Neighborhood Coordinator Kyna Rubin at krubin317@gmail.com with questions about ordering trees and/or getting involved with the March 1, 2014 Irvington Tree Planting Event. friendsoftrees.org



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## Police Alert

Since late May 2013 there's been a spate of vehicle vandalism in Irvington and surrounding neighborhoods including Sabin, Alameda, Grant Park and Rose City. Primarily the vandals have punctured tires of SUVs, pickup trucks and vans parked on the streets, but there have also been reports of convertible tops and motorcycle seats slashed and deep scratches in car paint.

According to the Portland Police Bureau there have been more than 500 reports of vandalism, and on average 20-25 new reports are filed each week. The cost to victims of this damage is estimated at more than \$300,000 and perhaps as high as \$500,000. Reports indicate that the damage is generally occurring during nighttime hours, every day of the week.

If you find that your vehicle has been damaged, file a report by calling the police non-emergency number at (503) 823-3333. The more reports we file the higher up the priority list this goes, so don't ignore it.

Crime Stoppers is offering a cash reward of up to \$1,000 for information reported to Crime Stoppers that leads to an arrest in this case, or any unsolved felony, and you can remain anonymous: (503) 823-HELP (4357).

Learn more about this or other crime prevention efforts by contacting Celeste Carey our neighborhood Crime Prevention Program Coordinator with the Portland Office of Neighborhood Involvement: (503) 823-4064 or celeste.carey@portlandoregon.gov.

So keep your eyes open. If you see suspicious activity or vandalism happening call 9-1-1 immediately.



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## Sign Up Now to Get Your Century House Sign For 2014

Will your house be celebrating its centennial next year?

Party like it's 1914, and get an Irvington Century House sign to display in your yard.

Not sure when your house was built? You can check on-line at www.portlandmaps.com. Just plug in your address.

Century House signs will be available for pick up at the ICA Board Meeting - January 9, 2014

6:45 PM pick-up - 7 PM meeting - Irvington School library

Or contact ICA Historic Preservation Chair Barb Christopher for more information: barbfc@comcast.net

If you have had a Century House sign during 2013, the Historic Preservation Committee will be happy to collect your sign. Thanks so much for helping celebrate our neighborhood's architectural history.

# Tap into the Historic District Database (and More) to Learn about Your Home's History

by Jim Heuer

With national recognition of Irvington's historic significance as a result of the Irvington Historic District being listed on the National Register of Historic Places, all of us living here have become more aware of our homes' histories – the colorful stories that make our "place" unique. But how can you learn more about your house? Since the creation of the District – and the parallel expansion of on line resources for research – there are some great new ways to learn more about your house.

A good starting point for your research is the Oregon Historic Sites Database accessed at [www.heritagedata.prd.state.or.us/historic](http://www.heritagedata.prd.state.or.us/historic), which is the official State of Oregon database containing information on all designated historic properties in the state, including all 2800 buildings in the Irvington Historic District. Unfortunately, the database search tools have some problems, and the information you'll find is coded, so here are some clues to help you find your way:

- To find an Irvington property, select the "City:" as "Portland" and just type in the Street Name (put just 18th for 18th Avenue or Siskiyou for Siskiyou Street) and select NE as the "Dir:"). This will bring up a long list of properties listed by street address.

- When you find your listing, you'll already have some good information: Under Property Name you may find a person's name – that's who the researchers believe to have been the first real owner and occupant of your house. "Yr Built" tells you when your house was built, based on the best available records. "Elig" tells you if your home is considered "Contributing" (code is EC) (retains its exterior historic integrity) or "Non Contributing" (code is NC) (built after 1948 or altered and no longer historic in appearance). If your Eligibility code is ES, that means your house has been individually listed on the National Register because of its special historic importance.

- Click the "form" button to get even more detail: This displays the full detail for your house from the database. Note especially the box labeled "architect and builder". The architect is known for well over 300 homes in the District and will be listed here. Builders (who may also have been the architect) are known for about 800 homes, also listed here. Finally, note the "primary style" box. Here you'll see how the architectural historians categorized the style of your house – possibly bungalow or Colonial Revival, among many others. In some cases, you'll see additional information in the "comments/notes" box. If you see the code "CG" there, that means that your garage was built during the historic period and is considered "Contributing", too. You may also find more details there about the early owners or sources of information about your home.

Armed with the names of the original owners of your home and an idea of when it was built, you can tap into two of the great research tools provided by the Multnomah County Library on their [www.multcolib.org](http://www.multcolib.org) website (you'll need a library card to access these – but that is free). The full list of research tools is found under the Research Tools and Resources tab on their website. Look for the Sanborn Maps option. The Sanborn Maps were once used by insur-

ance companies to determine fire insurance rates. Maps for 1908/1909 and 1924/1928 show Irvington and give you a clue as to when your garage was built and how your original front porch might have been laid out. Here's a helpful hint to save you some time: In the 1908/1909 Sanborn, you'll find Irvington in Volume 3 in pages from 282 to 296. In the 1924/1928 Sanborn, you'll find Irvington in Volume 6 and you'll need the Index page to help you find the page where your home is shown. One thing that the Sanborn Maps show is the original (pre-1933) street address of your house. That is the key you need for the second great resource for tracking down history: the On Line Oregonian Historic Archive.

In the Oregonian Historic Archive you can do a full-word search in every issue of The Oregonian newspaper from 1856 to 1986! Try searching for the name of the first owner of your home (that you found in the database, right?). Or try putting in your home's original (pre-1933) address. You may be surprised at what you find! We discovered that the basement of our house was operated as a speak-easy in the early 1920s during Prohibition and caused neighborhood complaints for "drunken men and maudlin women" carousing nearby late at night!

Have fun with your search!



## Special Invitation to A Christmas Carol

Portland Playhouse invites Irvington neighbors to Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol! This new adaptation by Rick Lombardo highlights the classic ghost story and invokes the beauty of second chances. Brian Weaver, Artistic Director, describes the adaptation as "very inventive, having a whole cast who all play musical instruments as well as sing and act. I see it as a gift that we can give to our neighborhood." Irvington neighbors can see the show Saturday December 14th at 2:00 PM at a special price. Tickets are normally \$17 - \$38 but use coupon code "Irvington!" for 20% off. Tickets can be purchased online at [www.portland-playhouse.org](http://www.portland-playhouse.org).

Portland Playhouse is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization dedicated to producing quality intimate performances in which the interaction between artists and audience is paramount.

*Remember that Irvington is a City of Portland-designated Leaf Zone. And with this comes new service dates and fees for leaf removal. The City of Portland Bureau of Transportation has been working hard to improve the Leaf Day program for 2013. Information is now available to the public about this year's leaf pickup service. The city has launched a new Web site at [www.portlandonline.com/leafday](http://www.portlandonline.com/leafday) with all the details. New program elements include an online Leaf Zone locator and the ability to opt out or pay the leaf fee online.*



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## A tradition of giving back to our neighborhood: Our charitable giving guidelines

For nearly 20 years, the Irvington Community Association has made it a priority to supporting worthwhile organizations in our neighborhood. The Charitable Giving Program of the ICA has been in place since 1992 and is a committee of the ICA Board. The Oregon Community Foundation advised the ICA Board on the setup of the program and the guidelines for giving. The guidelines are oriented toward serving the needs of the young people and seniors in our neighborhood. The program has defined criteria for eligibility, specifically (1) that a recipient must be either a public school or a 503© organization under federal IRS rules, and (2) that a recipient must either operate within or be headquartered within the boundaries of the ICA.

# HISTORIC IRVINGTON

FALL 2013



## NEIGHBORHOOD CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### Irvington Community Association Board Meetings

7 PM Irvington School Library

December 12, January 9, February 13

contact Steven Cole for information (stevencole86@gmail.com)

### Irvington Land Use Committee Meetings

December 19, January 23, February 27

contact Dean Gisvold for information (deang@mce-wengisvold.com)

### Irvington Historic Preservation Committee Meetings

December 11, January 8, February 12

contact Barb Christopher for information (barbfc@comcast.net)

### Leaf Day Pick Up Dates

NE 3 – Irvington D (7th to 33rd & Knott to Fremont) Dec. 7th

NE 4 – Irvington A (7th to 24th & Broadway to Knott) Dec. 5th

NE 5 – Irvington C (East of 24th or 33rd) Dec. 8th

### SAVE THESE 2014 DATES

Irvington Clean Up Day – May 10, 2014

Irvington Home Tour – May 18, 2014

Irvington Picnic – National Night Out– Aug 5, 2014

ICA Irving Park Tree Climb – September 27, 2014



## The Spirit of New Orleans Comes Alive at Grant

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