

Spring 2014



## West Grand Neighborhood Organization

415 Leonard Street Grand Rapids, MI 49504

Phone: 616.451.0150 Fax: 616.451.3856 E-mail: mail@westgrand.org

*Celebrating 40 years of service, traditions, and the grassroots approach, to our residents  
Happy Birthday West Grand*

### Spring

“What winter has left behind”

It is that time of year when we start to see the effects of what winter has left behind. You may start to wonder where all it came from. That unmarked bag of open trash, strewn about by the critter who feasted upon it. Maybe it is pieces of someone's fence that the snow plow deposited in your back yard. Or it could just be that dreaded forgotten item that was meant for the trash collector but soon became covered with snow.

It is important that we start cleaning up as soon as possible. The Trash Reduction Program will start soon, and we all know when they have been here, there are pink slips on several doors throughout the neighborhood. This program is part of the Grand Rapids Department of Housing.

West Grand is now working out details to begin alley cleanups in the area. We will send out fliers to selected neighborhood throughout the spring and summer asking for participation in making your neighborhood look and feel clean.

One of the principles of “Neighborhood Watch” is showing would be criminals that neighbors care, and we are deciding what is and is not acceptable in a neighborhood. In your participation, we are starting out the spring and summer seasons with anticipation of reducing crime, creating new block captains, and creating a better environment for each and every one of you.

**Stay tuned for more details.**

The Grand Rapids Fire Department is still looking for HOMEOWNERS to qualify for the **Residential Safety Program**, which includes free **smoke alarm installations and home safety assessment.**



Please contact:

**Kim Panter 616.456.3966** for more information.

### Auto Theft

“Why are the criminals targeting my neighborhood”

You see a group of people walking down the street. They are not on the sidewalk, they are walking very close to the parked vehicles. What you may not see, is they are lifting the handles on each door to see if they are unlocked. They are also looking for anything of value through the windows. Items of value can be as simple as a few quarters, to computers, or phones.

Being a victim of someone going through my vehicle, is a struggle unto itself. They went through my glove box, leaving a mess of personal information all over my floor. All of the loose change that was sitting in my console was taken. All of my CD's were thrown around in my car, it appeared they didn't like my choice in music.

There is a sense of having your own personal space violated. They know your name, your address, and even your date of birth. All of this could have been avoided only if I had locked my doors.

Safety tips:

- Lock your doors
- Don't keep items of value in your vehicle
- Never leave the keys in your vehicle
- Park in well lit areas
- Always be aware of your surroundings
- Start a neighborhood watch group so that your neighbors are watching what is going on around your neighborhood, you will no longer feel alone.



Contact Crime Prevention Organizer, Danae to learn how to start your own neighborhood watch, or contact Jim or Rob, Auto Theft Coordinators, to have your vehicle VIN-Etched.

616.451.0150

### Crime Prevention Corner

#### What is “Suspicious”?

- When you THINK something is going to or could happen—CALL
- Prowlers / Window Peepers—CALL
- Same vehicle circling the block repeatedly or parked in the same spot for long periods of time—CALL
- People loitering or appearing to “look-out” - CALL

#### What do you do if you see a suspicious situation or person?

- Watch / Observe
- Write down
- **CALL POLICE!!!**

#### How do you call the police?

- Describe the situation with as many details as possible
- **Follow the dispatchers' instructions**
- Call back if the situation escalates

Like us on Facebook:  
West Grand Neighborhood Organization  
We are on the web:  
westgrand.org

### What is a Nuisance?

- Trash stored improperly.
- Indoor furniture stored outside.
- Litter all over your yard.
- Grass not being mowed.
- Yard waste not properly bagged or removed from property.
- In-operable vehicles stored on property,

Trash pick-up day is  
Friday  
for all City of Grand Rapids  
trash receptacles.

Most others are picked up  
on Wednesdays and they  
are not allowed to be picked  
up from the alleys.

Emergencies  
911

Non Emergency  
Police Department  
616.456.3400

Streets & Sanitation  
616.456.3232

Housing  
616.456.3053

#### Meet the Staff

Executive Director  
Nola Stekete  
nola@westgrand.org

Crime Prevention Organizer  
Dane Van Brocklin  
danae@westgrand.org

Community Organizer  
Jane Grischke  
jane@westgrand.org

ATPA Coordinators  
Jim Brower  
Rob Prescher  
mail@westgrand.org

2015 is a very special year for West Grand we are celebrating our  
40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary as a neighborhood organization

We invite you to celebrate throughout the year with us!  
Join us for our first event on  
**February 28, 2015**  
**Wengers Bowling Center**  
**11am-3pm**

Tickets are \$20 per adult for unlimited games and children under 5 are free.  
Check our Facebook page for more details.

Tickets available  
415 Leonard at the West Grand offices  
or will be available at the door.



We would like to introduce our newest member to the WGNO team:

Grace Johnson is our new Intern from Grand Valley State University. Grace grew up on the West Side of Grand Rapids and graduated from Union High School.

We are very excited to have her on our team. While Grace is here she will be helping with events and fundraising.

#### VIN Etching and Auto Theft Prevention

By Jim Brower and Rob Prescher

Did you know that your car has a VIN? VIN stands for Vehicle Identification Number, and every car has one. It is issued by the auto manufacturer when the car is made. The VIN is required to register a vehicle. The VIN is located on more than one spot on a car, including the dashboard. The VIN is also used by police to identify stolen cars. However, every auto owner can use their VIN to prevent their car from being stolen in the first place. VIN etching is a service in which your vehicle's VIN number is etched into the windshield, windows, or both. This etching is impossible to get off of the window, thus permanently branding your car as yours alone. If a car is stolen with VIN numbers etched on the windows, the glass must be replaced before the car can be resold. This is a very expensive process, which is why cars with VIN etching are rarely stolen. They simply aren't worth the trouble

Call today and have your car VIN Etched,  
Appointments are available 616.451.0150



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