

# **Council of Neighborhood Associations**

January 7, 2002

Dear Neighborhood Associations:

Welcome to another New Year!! It seems only yesterday that we were worrying about Y-2K. It is a certainty that each year brings new challenges for all of us - from global concerns to community ones. The commonality that we have found is that the individual actions are just as important in one sphere as the other.

On the local level, CONA realizes that we cannot have productive, progressive neighborhoods or an organization like CONA without the work of many individuals with a common goal - building better neighborhoods for Bloomington and Monroe County.

When the Strategic Plan Update was done in October and November, one of the items we included in our plan is a recognition program for the volunteers who put in many hours for our community's enhancement through its neighborhoods. We not only want to acknowledge this time commitment but we also want the community to be aware that thriving neighborhoods do not just happen but someone has to put in time and energy to make them so.

The program begins with YOU, the individual in the neighborhood. In order for it to work, you (each of you) must be willing to take the time to jot down the hours that you are contributing to neighborhood well-being. This time includes anything you are doing on behalf of your neighborhood or CONA. It might be an official meeting or an unofficial one where brainstorming is needed before an idea goes to the entire association. It could be a neighborhood project or it could be the time spent by you helping a neighbor. "Neighboring" is a very important activity needed to create a comfortable neighborhood.

CONA support hours reflect time spent in monthly meetings (for representatives), committee meetings, Action Team observers, fundraising activities, workshop attendance, committee work, officer time, etc.

During the 16 months I have been with CONA, I have been impressed with the amount of time neighborhood leaders, as well as neighborhood residents, spend on behalf of their neighborhoods. It is something we should celebrate and commend those persons who give of their time. Do not say "Well, I don't do that much so I am not going to bother." Every minute of time is important to the accomplishment at hand. We want to tabulate on the basis of the neighborhood association as well as individually.

Neighborhood leaders: Make many copies and circulate to your residents. Make sure everyone is accounting for his/her contributions to the neighborhood. What about those teenagers who shovel snow or mow lawns? Be sure they are filling out a form also.

We will be calling in the forms around May 10 so I will have time to prepare certificates for the BloomingNeighborhoods Day in late May or June. Post a form by your phone or on the refrigerator - somewhere where it will be easy to record your efforts. Together we can make Bloomington even a greater place through its neighborhoods.

Nancy Lumbley  
CONA Program Manager