

WASHINGTON HEIGHTS HIGHLIGHTER

The Magazine of the Washington Heights Neighborhood Association • WHNA.NET



Winter 2019



WASHINGTON HEIGHTS HIGHLIGHTER

The *Highlighter* is a quarterly publication of the Washington Heights Neighborhood Association. Washington Heights includes Highway 175 to North 60th Street and from Vliet Street to North Avenue.

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Collation

Thanks to all who help collate and deliver the *Highlighter*. The next collation will be at Dandy Midventurous Modern, 5020 W. Vliet Street, on Wednesday, March 18.

To receive the *Highlighter* by mail, contact membership@whna.net

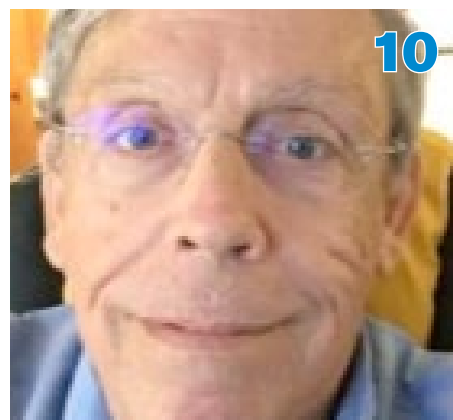
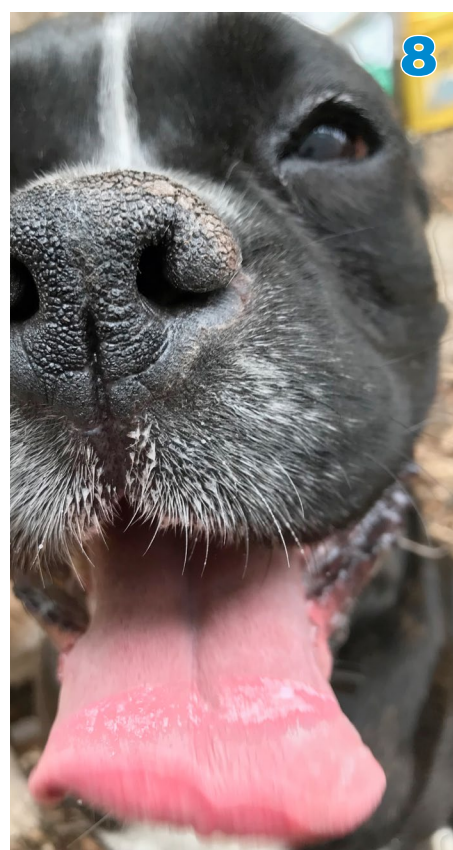
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Have an article or neighborhood event you'd like to include in the *Highlighter*? Contact us at highlighter@whna.net

The *Highlighter* is available online at whna.net

The deadline to submit articles and ads for the Spring 2020 *Highlighter* is Wednesday, February 26.

IN THIS ISSUE



FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Neighbors,

I have a confession. Despite my best intentions, this entry was submitted late because I am a procrastinator. The deadline for articles was the day before I finally wrote it. Why didn't I get this done on time? I opted to be at Tusk for their one-year anniversary the same day I finally turned it in. I was at McBob's for the November meet-up with several of you the night before. (We missed the rest of you... We kept hoping you would come! We know it's hard in winter... it's dark early... it was snowing... But it was warm and dry at McBob's!) The night before that, I was out in the neighborhood with the Finance Committee. Despite all of this, there is a lot I missed. Maybe you were elsewhere instead and that's why we didn't see you... the soft opening of Neighborhood Draft or the Holiday Wine Tasting at Charles E. Fromage... or any of the other establishments in and around our great neighborhood that we always talk about. If so, good for you. Thanks for representing! If not, we hope to catch you next time. I guess what I am trying to say is that there is a lot to be excited about in Washington Heights and a lot to help us stay off the couch despite the early arrival of Jack Frost. There are even more WHNA committees and events with which you can be involved. But is there more we should do? I want there to be something for everyone in the Washington Heights neighborhood. We already have a lot of great neighborhood events, but should there be smaller, less formal gatherings around specific interests or activities? Personally, I have always wanted to join a book club, but have feared I am too slow a reader. This month, I visited the Washington Park Library, got a new library card and took out a book. I am considering this practice for future book club involvement. Can I finish a book before it is due by adjusting my reading habits so that I am not just reading for the 10 minutes before my eyes close each night? (I am doing well so far so stay tuned if you have any interest in joining a new book club in the neighborhood!) What about a game night? I enjoy board games, but my husband? Not so much. I would love to get together with neighbors to play some games, if you're in. What about a WHNA team in recreational leagues at Wick or elsewhere... would you play? Or a Washington Heights bike ride? Look for opportunities in the near future to share your ideas, volunteer to help make it happen if you're excited about something and/or vote for your interests.



There are always so many neighborhood heroes so please allow me to acknowledge a few. Thanks to Heidi Steeno and her steadfast team of planners and volunteers for another great Spooktacular. Thanks also to all area 5 neighbors that did not let rain get in the way of decorating and handing out candy. Thanks must also go to all the kids and their caregivers that dressed up and still came out despite the inclement weather. We can thank Sabrina Eder for thinking up and executing the monthly WHNA meet-ups as well as Bittercube, Tusk and McBob's for hosting the first ones. I know more are in the works so please look for more information and join us! Lastly, I am grateful to Tom and Ann for letting us get to know them better by submitting a Board bio for these last two publications. As always, I could go on...

I wish all of you a safe and happy holiday season! "May your days be merry and bright..."

Look forward to seeing you around.

—Beth Lappen

Upcoming Events

JANUARY

Mulchfest

Saturday, January 11th

1:00 to 4:00 PM

Washington Park - 41st St. Parking Lot

Bring your Christmas tree to Washington Park for recycling.

Winterfest

Saturday, January 25th

10:00 AM to 2:00 PM

Washington Park Urban Ecology Center

Celebrate winter, friends, and family at Washington Park! If we're lucky enough to get the weather we want, we'll go sledding and ice skating on the Washington Park lagoon. If the snow's a no-show, you can enjoy guided nature walks. Regardless of the weather you can do arts and crafts and eat a slice of homemade pie.

APRIL

Easter Egg Hunt

Saturday, April 4th

Washington Park

Watch whna.net or the WHNA Facebook and Nextdoor pages for more information!

Have an event you'd like to include in the next *Highlighter*?
Contact highlighter@whna.net

GOING BEYOND COEXISTENCE

Interfaith Conference of Greater Milwaukee

BY CHERRIE HANSON



A tiny storefront on Vliet Street has been the launchpad for a mighty non-profit organization known as the Interfaith Conference of Greater Milwaukee. While you might not have noticed its modest presence, or were clear about its mission, it has been historically significant to our greater Milwaukee community. And as it prepares to celebrate a monumental 50th anniversary next year under a bold, new executive director, dynamic plans are being developed to reach even more people in Southeastern Wisconsin with the message that religious, cultural, and racial diversity is something to protect and value beyond mere coexistence.

In 1970, nine Christian denominations and the Jewish community came together to form the Interfaith Conference. Today, there are 20 different Christian and non-Christian member judicatories, organizations that oversee a total of more than 500 congregations. They include mainline Protestants, Roman Catholics, Jews,

Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, Latter-day Saints, Moravians, Pentecostals, Sikhs, Unitarian Universalists, and others.

Members of the Interfaith Conference's board of directors meet monthly. Their mission is threefold: dialogue to build relationships; do programming to counter hate and foster understanding, tolerance, and friendship; and work

INTERFAITH CONFERENCE OF GREATER MILWAUKEE

together on social issues to create a better society for everyone.

The Interfaith Conference, at its core is a humanitarian organization whose motto is, "To uphold the dignity of every person." One of the flagship programs, Amazing Faith Dinner Dialogues, assembles people of diverse faiths and philosophies – non-religious, spiritual, and the open-minded to share a meal together and speak about their personal, lived experiences. Participants are asked to listen without interrupting. A trained moderator ensures an emotionally safe environment. Dinner Dialogues are held in interesting places and spaces in six counties, from private homes and colleges, to a Sufi School to a pontoon boat. One of the many benefits for dinner goers is the valuable opportunity to meet someone from a different belief system.





In July, after a decade of selfless service, Executive Director Tom Heinen welcomed a new Executive Director, Pardeep Singh Kaleka. You may know Pardeep from the tragic shooting at the Sikh Temple in 2012, his Serve 2 Unite mission to foster genuine community connection, or his recently published book, *Gift of Our Wounds*, which he co-authored with former white power activist Arno Michaelis.

I recently joined the staff of the Interfaith Conference to produce their 50th Anniversary Concert that will celebrate the diverse faiths and philosophies of its members. My inspiration came from the Global Union concert series that Alverno College used to sponsor, so it seemed fitting to pick Alverno's Pittman Theater for our location. The date will be Sunday, September 13th, 2020. Consider this your invitation to get to know us as we establish a new music tradition. Stay tuned to our website and Facebook page for further updates. *

To learn more about Interfaith Conference, visit www.interfaithconference.org or its Facebook pages: **Interfaith Conference of Greater Milwaukee**, **Amazing Faiths Dinner Dialogues**, and **Interfaith Earth Network**.

CHECK-UP ON THE COURT

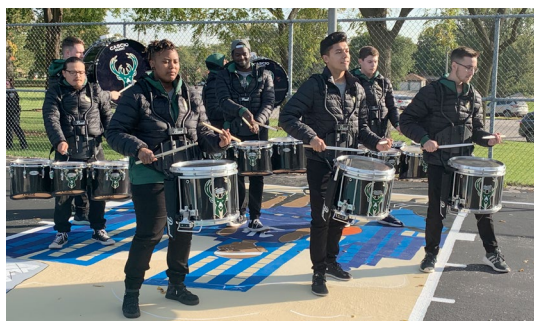
BY SUE GILLMAN

On October 18th the community came together at Washington Park to celebrate the newly refurbished Bucks-branded basketball courts and the new Froedtert and Medical College of Wisconsin Community Care-A-Van.

Bango (the Bucks mascot), the Rim Rockers, Hoop Troop, Bucks Beats, and DJ Shawna took part in the festivities – including Bango getting a blood-pressure check from the Community Care-A-Van.

Additional health-care partners also set up resource tables for the event, as well as Milwaukee Police Department's Ice Cream Van.

The Milwaukee Bucks and Froedtert & MCW are committed to community betterment. The Bucks support renovations that revitalize areas one neighborhood at a time, and the Community Care-A-Van increases the number of people who can participate in chronic-disease programs and services. *



From the Green Committee

BY CAROL JUSTIN

Help Wanted

The WHNA Green Committee is looking for new volunteers. Great benefits and work environment—camaraderie, creativity, fun and great food and drinks at every meeting.

No experience required, but applicants must have a genuine concern about saving our planet. Full or part time positions available. Limited time? You can simply volunteer for a single event such as Bloom and Groom, trash pickup, tree recycling. Or decide to be a full time Greenie. The compensation is worth it either way.

Questions or applications? Contact Carol Justin at cmjmil@sbcglobal.net or 414-258-3904.

Tree Recycling is Coming!

Say yes to mulching and no to landfills! Christmas tree recycling will take place on **Saturday, January 11th** from 1–4pm at the Washington Park 41st Street parking lot. More details will be posted on Nextdoor in the coming weeks.

MEET YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

Neighbors Paul Spencer and Caroline Rubitsky

BY LYRA O'BRIEN



Four imposing gothic griffins are regally perched outside a stately brick Colonial on Washington Boulevard. To the homeowners, musician Paul Spencer and jazz club owner Caroline Rubitsky, the mythical creatures are a whimsical addition to their home, however that sentiment isn't shared by all.

"It was during Spooktacular, so the house was decorated with lights and we had a fog machine. Kids were coming up saying 'it's the witch's house, it's the witch's house'. Some of them were crying on the sidewalk, and didn't want to come up the stairs to get the candy," said Spencer.

The house first cast a spell on Rubitsky back in 1991. Unfamiliar with the area and intrigued by the architecture, she decided to drive down Washington Boulevard.

"Every house in this neighborhood has some feature in it that's just awesome, unique and special," stated Rubitsky.

The home they bought was built in 1921, and Rubitsky has records stating it was built for a single woman.

"You can see very feminine touches. It's a combination of a British Colonial and an Arts and Crafts home, especially if you look at the entry way and see how it was built," said Rubitsky.

Some of those feminine touches include the lavender stained glass windows on the second floor. It's those windows that Rubitsky said made her first fall in love with the home. Within its nearly 3,700 square

feet there are; tall ceilings, decorative crown moulding, large windows and stunning hardwood floors. The grand staircase was stripped of white paint and brought back spindle-by-spindle to its original splendor.

Many of the rooms have been re-configured, like the servant's quarters being turned into bedrooms, and a sleeping porch transformed into a sunroom. While the upstairs ballroom may not be used for dancing anymore, it definitely welcomes some new foot traffic.

"It had been empty for so long and unheated, so the plaster was cracking. What we did is repair the plaster, painted, and had the floors sanded. We added new light fixtures that look like they are original to the home. They have that art deco style and are incredible," said Rubitsky.

The couple said it's important to leave behind a beautiful space for the next generation to appreciate and enjoy. In the almost 30 years they've lived here,



the changes they stress have not been renovations, but instead, are restorations to their home.

Q. *How has the neighborhood changed?*

Rubitsky: It was quieter back then and a lot of large trees. I feel like when we first moved here the neighborhood could have gone either way, but the people who came here, fixed it. They uplifted it, restored it, and brought it back to the level it should have been.

Q. *What is your favorite room in the house?*

Spencer: One of my favorite rooms is the ballroom and sometimes it will be a whole year before I get in there. The bedroom and the kitchen are really where we spend our time. Also the drum practice room in the basement. I also teach and give drum lessons there.

Q. *What work have you done to the home?*

Rubitsky: We got a new roof last year, and we've done lot of painting both inside and out. All the light fixtures have been replaced. I learned how to do the electrical work, so I made and installed some new light fixtures for the home.

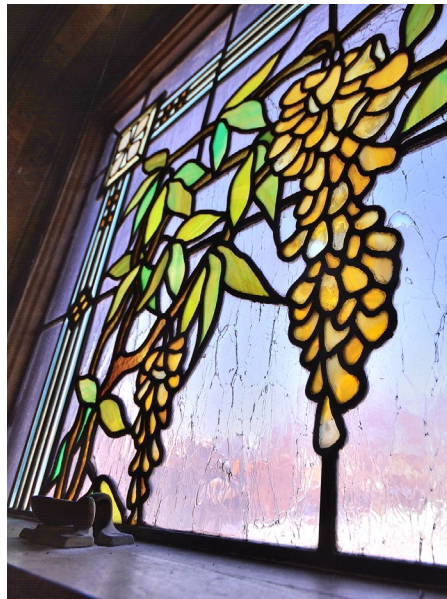
Q. *Tell me about your neighbors.*

Rubitsky: We've had a lot of friends up the block who's children have grown, so they've moved away. Now there are a whole new group of people and it evolves. We are looking forward to rebuilding that camaraderie with them now.

Q. *What do you love best about living in Washington Heights?*

Spencer: It's the perfect blend of urban landscape and nature. I like sitting on the front porch, just looking at the grass and the Boulevard and watching the cars go by. It's very peaceful.

If you are interested in featuring your home in the Highlighter, please contact Lyra O'Brien at lobrien@firstweber.com or (414) 861-0387. ❄️



BY LAURA BURKE

Why is your dog lifting his feet on winter days, is it salt or cold?

Our dogs have something special that enables them to live in colder climates: tough feet. They are surprisingly delicate and may require a little upkeep.

Dogs are domesticated wolves, but wolves are still champions when it comes to paw protection. Each toe is surrounded by stiff, bristly hairs that aid in both insulation and traction. Wolves also have special blood vessels that keep footpads just above the freezing point, preventing buildup of ice and snow. At night, wolves curl up with their tails around their noses and feet, retaining warm air exhaled by the lungs and recycling it as a foot-warmer.

Our domestic dogs, however, have very little hair on their feet. For the short periods of time most dogs spend outside on the coldest days of winter, they must rely on the adaptations they still retain from their ancestors – fatty pads and tough skin. Most of a dog's foot consists of pads made from fat and tissue that both shield the foot bones from shock and keep out the cold. Different dogs are adapted to different climatic conditions. However, all dogs need time to acclimate to cold in the fall – for their coats to thicken while their footpads toughen and no dog is able to withstand the coldest weather of the year. Uncomfortable cold can cause painful cracking of footpads; your dog will let you know if he's at this stage if he shows signs like lifting his feet, whining, and stopping. When the dog's normal body temperature (101.5°F to 102.5°F) is lowered by cold, he will shiver to increase muscle activity. He also withdraws some of his circulation from his extremities to his internal organs. But instead of completely cutting off blood supply to his extremities, the dog has another neat adaptation up his dog-coat sleeve: a heat exchanger.



Veins carrying cold blood back from a dog's feet to its heart run right next to arteries carrying warm, oxygenated blood to the feet. Thus, feet are supplied with oxygen and nutrients in cooler blood than the rest of the body uses, and the body is able to return lukewarm (rather than chilled) blood to the core. The feet can handle operating at lower temperatures because their fat is compositionally different from the rest of the body's fat: it has a higher melting point and a lower freezing point (thus, dogs are said to have "cold feet"). The same principle works in reverse in the hot summer months. (My friend Barry says he uses aloe vera to soothe paws in the summer) and keeps the body from overheating. Despite all these adaptations, though, dogs can still get frostbite.

If it's too cold for you, it's probably too cold for your dog. Salt used to de-ice roads and sidewalks can exacerbate the situation by causing pain, swelling,

and drying of the footpads. Dogs, unlike wolves, dogs can get ice balls between their toes, which are painful and should be carefully thawed and removed. Try to keep your dog off the salty sidewalk (think grass or snow) whenever possible.

Ice and Snow Build-Up in Dog Paws

If you have a long-haired dog, especially a sporting breed that also has webbed paws, you may find yourself picking and breaking ice and snow build-up from between your dog's paw pads. The snow attaches to the dog's long hair, melts from the body heat, and forms ice balls that grow larger, stretching your dog's toes apart and causing cracking, bleeding, and hair-pulling. This is painful and distressing for the dog, who may then try to remove them by licking them, which then causes even more ice to build up. Keep the hair around his toes trimmed, along with his nails, and check for signs of pain or ice and snow buildup.

If your pup's paw pads are looking cracked and dry, a slathering of paw wax can get them back in shape. You can try, paw wax, such as Musher's Secret, (other things listed online to try) Bag Balm, baby oil or Crisco, on his feet before walks. After walks on salty roads or sidewalks, do him a favor by washing or even a wet towel wiped on the paws and belly can help do the trick. Wearing booties can help also.

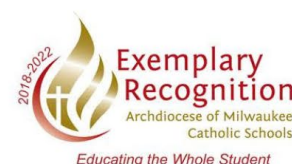


Laura Burke, Washington Heights Pet Sitter: Mariah969@yahoo.com ❄️

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MEET THE WHNA BOARD

Tom Rutenbeck, WHNA Senior Liaison



My wife Carol and I moved to Washington Heights 38 years ago, in 1981. Our modest home on 59th Street was Grandma and Grandpa's house as I grew up nearby, in Wauwatosa. The house has been in the family since 1927. I can remember coming here as a small boy to be baby sat, and for family events. As a teenager I came to dig and plant Grandpa's gigantic tulip beds, or to drive them somewhere. When Grandpa and Grandma were still living here, almost all of the neighbors were elderly. By the time that Carol and I moved in, there were two other households on the block with young children. Now there are 4, with many more on the next block down the street. At last summer's combined 59th St. block party, there were enough children to justify a bounce house rental. We welcome and embrace the neighborhood renewal that is taking place.

When we moved in on 59th Street, our oldest daughter, Melody, was a baby. Our younger daughter, Holly, was born 3½ years later. I think that we were

good parents and gave them a happy and nurturing childhood. They were both students at St. Sebastian and Pius. Once they were old enough to travel, we started going on two driving vacation trips each year, once at Spring Break and the other in the summer. Each time we loaded up the minivan with stuff to keep everyone comfy, and games to keep everyone amused, and plenty of Weird Al tunes to make us all laugh. We all have great memories to share. By the time we were done, we had gone to all 48 continental states, and all of the provinces of Canada as a family. Our daughters both went on to UW-Milwaukee where they both graduated with professional degrees. We are overjoyed that both of our young women were able to find suitable employment, become homeowners, start families and give us 4 beautiful grandchildren without moving far away. Not surprisingly, they are also both avid travelers with their young families.

Carol retired 10 years ago from the Northwestern Mutual home office. I retired 9 years ago, from the Postal Service where I was a senior Facilities

and Equipment Manager. During the month that I retired, we learned that I was diagnosed with cancer of the liver. Without treatment, the prognosis for that condition is death. We were unbelievably fortunate that the diagnosis came as early as it did, while it was still treatable. We were also unbelievably fortunate to be able to get the treatment I needed at nearby Froedtert Medical Center. Ultimately, I was given the "Gift of Life" through a liver transplant 8 years ago.

It is only fitting and proper that I express my gratitude for my good fortunes. I have renewed my dedication to lifelong learning, and volunteer activism. My service to WHNA is one of the ways that I can do so. Having the neighborhood association is just one of the things that makes living in Washington Heights special.

Our affordability, central location, and low crime also make our neighborhood great. The fact that young families can choose to move in is a great sign of our stability. During our working years, Carol and I both commuted downtown, and found it to be a very low stress alternative. We also appreciate our safe neighborhood, as it has had an outstanding 38 year track record. ❄



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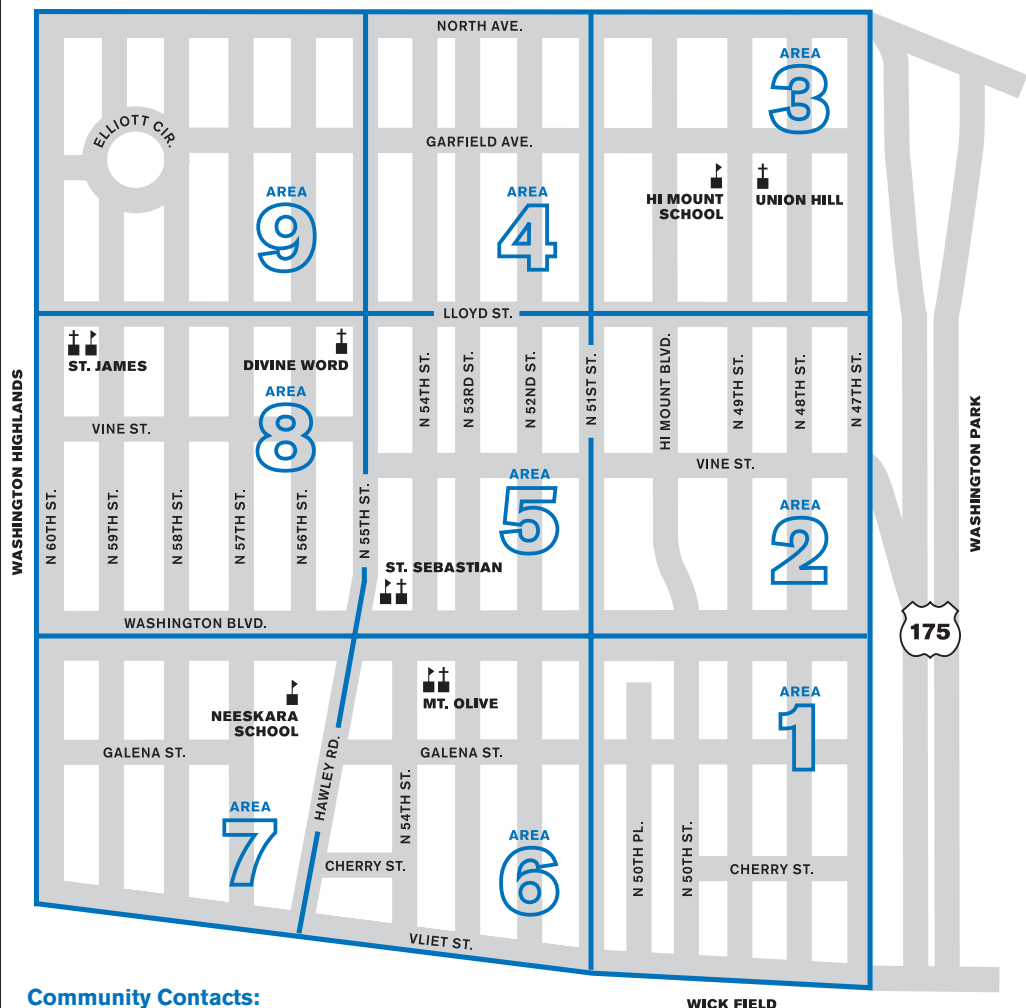
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Crime Prevention	935.7733
Graffiti Hotline	286.8715
Block Watch	588.5619
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