



Volume 7 Summer 2003

Community Action Against Asthma

Working to reduce asthma in children in Detroit

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CAAA EVENTS

Community and Family Forums:

CAAA held two forums for the families in the program and a forum for members of the community to present the findings from the last five years of research. At the family forum, participants broke up into small groups to discuss what they had heard and had a chance to decide what these findings meant to them. In addition, the community organizers, Ninfa Cancel and Ron Stewart, were introduced and anyone who was interested in volunteering to work with them was able to sign up. At the community forum those in attendance voted on their top three priority issues to work on for the southwest and east sides. For the southwest side, the top priority issues most often mentioned were air quality, illegal dumping, traffic, factories, contaminated sites, and health issues. For eastside the top issues were abandoned homes, illegal dumping, lead poisoning, poor housing, health issues, and quality of life.

Thank you to everyone who attended the forums and to the community forum co-sponsors: Detroit City Council Member Alberta Tinsley Talabi, Bridgewater Interiors, Intelligent Medical Objects, Juno's Merchandising, Inc., The Myron P. Leven Foundation, and Credit Union One.

Community Clean-up Days:

As a part of the Motor City Makeover initiative, CAAA's community organizers Ninfa Cancel and Ron Stewart organized neighborhood clean-up days. Community members who volunteered helped make neighborhoods in Detroit more beautiful. In addition to picking up litter, the community members also collected gas tanks and old tires and the staff from the Department of Public Works came by to pick up these items.

The first southwest side clean up was held in John Kronk between Central and Lonyo. The second cleanup was co-sponsored by Detroit Hispanic Development Corporation and was located on their grounds, at 1211 Trumbull. The organizations that supported these southwest cleanups were Detroit Hispanic Development Corporation, Charter One Bank, UAW Local 22, Subway, Detroit Neighborhood City Hall, Southwest Environmental Vision, Prologo's Hispanic Bookstore, Trumbull Market, Credit Union One, National Dry Goods, and Shelly's Restaurant and Lounge.

The first clean up for the eastside was held at a community park on Algonquin and Goethe. Contributing organizations were the City of Detroit, DTE Energy, the Michigan Prince Hall Masons, and the Riverbend Community Association. The second eastside clean up was co-sponsored by the Warren Conner Development Coalition and was held on East Warren between McClellan and St. James. The organizations that contributed were Rebuilding Communities and the Community Policing Coalition. Thanks so much to the community members and organizations that helped in this effort!

Community Partners

Zachary Rowe
Friends of Parkside

As a Program Manager at Friends of Parkside, Zachary Rowe takes care of day-to-day operations and makes sure the organization is running smoothly. This includes many different types of work, from planning programs and activities to representing Friends of Parkside through public relations. Zachary began as a volunteer and has worked as a staff member for five years. He has represented the organization serving on the CAAA Steering Committee since the beginning of the project.

Zachary considers his role at Friends of Parkside to, “link residents of Parkside with the broader community.” Parkside used to be a closed community, and now it is easier for information and services to flow through the area. He says that the most helpful part of the partnership between Friends of Parkside and CAAA is, “increasing our knowledge of asthma and other childhood illnesses and creating and maintaining a university and community partnership.”

Zachary has worked on many different projects. His favorite is the Parkside Talent Show, which is in its fourth year running and is part of the Halloween Carnival. The talent show features a variety of performances, such as rapping, poetry, and dance. Zachary especially likes this program because, “it highlights the potential that young people have and leaves me with a sense of awe.”

Zachary says that what he likes best about his community are the people. “There is never a dull moment,” he says, and he is always amazed by the capacity of people. Zachary operates his own computer business and in his spare time he enjoys reading and watching Star Trek. Thanks to Zachary Rowe and Friends of Parkside for being a great community partner!

RAGWEED SEASON TIPS



Ragweed pollen season lasts from August to November, with a peak in Mid-September in many areas of the country. In addition, pollen counts are highest between 5 – 10 AM and on dry, hot and windy days. For those who are allergic to ragweed pollen and have asthma, this can be a difficult time of year. However, there are certain things you can do to cut down on your exposure to ragweed pollen.

- Avoid the outdoors between 5 – 10 AM. Save outside activities for late afternoon or after a heavy rain, when pollen counts are lower.
- Keep windows in your home and car closed to lower exposure to pollen. To keep cool, if possible, use air conditioners and avoid using window and attic fans.
- Be aware that pollen can also be transported indoors on people and pets.
- Dry your clothes in an automatic dryer rather than hanging them outside. Otherwise pollen can collect on clothing and be carried indoors.

Who's Who at CAAA?



Ninfa Cancel



Ninfa Cancel has been with CAAA as a community organizer for southwest Detroit for one year. She is responsible for collaborating with the community to coordinate events and initiatives related to raising asthma awareness and to address related environmental concerns. Doing community organizing work is important to Ninfa not only because of the issues, but also because she is a member of the community in which she works. She has been involved in the community for many years including serving as a liaison to southwest Detroit for the City Council, working for the state representative for her district, and working on such issues as immigration, voter registration, political advocacy, and the automotive industry.

Ninfa's background in community-based work made her just the right person for the community organizing position with CAAA. She says that what drew her to this job was, "the fact that my daughter has asthma, and that in this job I am not stuck in an office. I have the flexibility to reach out and collaborate with people in the community directly."

Born and raised in southwest Detroit, Ninfa has grown to appreciate the diversity that can be found there. She says that she, "likes the exposure to all cultures, not just one culture." In the future, Ninfa would like to work on such things as changing the zoning in her area, getting the Hispanic community more involved, and informing people of development that is planned for their community and the power they have in these sorts of decisions.

On the lighter side of things, Ninfa enjoys spending time with her 11-year-old daughter, going to Belle Isle, bike riding, and meditating. Ninfa Cancel is definitely a great asset to her community and to CAAA!

CAAA UPDATE

CAAA is going through a time of transition. The program has reached the fifth and final year, and is just ending the final visits with Wave 2 families. The faculty, staff, and Steering Committee members of CAAA have just submitted a proposal to renew the grant from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the National Institute for Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS), which could extend the program for another five years. The decision will be made this fall. If CAAA does not receive this funding, other sources of money to run the program will need to be found.

When funding is received, CAAA can begin a whole new phase of the program, and new families with children between the ages of 6 and 10 years old who have asthma can participate. Families who have gone through the program before will not be able to participate again, but, if they know of any other family with an asthmatic child who lives in the same area, they can call the CAAA toll free number for more information: 1-877-640-4064. Families can stay involved with the community organizing issues by calling Ron Stewart at: 313-571-2800 extension 1158 if they live on the eastside and Ninfa Cancel at: 313-967-4880 if they live on the southwest side. Thank you so much to the families who have participated over the last five years!

Summer Celebration BBQ



Raffle!



To celebrate the season and all the outdoor fun that comes with it we will be holding a summer raffle! The winner will receive either uncooked chicken or steak (winner's choice) to grill a delicious BBQ dinner for 8. To participate, just mail the address label of this newsletter to the address below no later than August 20th. Due to the time constraint, if you want to be included, please send in your address label right away! The winner will be drawn from a hat and will be notified by phone and/or mail.

Community Action Against Asthma – Summer BBQ Raffle
1420 Washington Heights, SPH II,
Room M5146
Ann Arbor, MI 48109-2029

SUMMER FUN Word Search!

D I R S T V B Q A N I D E H J
R F P E N B A R B E Q U E I F
T O U T D O O R S S R O A J I
E U Q I Z L A T R U N I V R R
T R E R S W I M M I N G S T E
G T T O M M T O P O D N W G W
Q H A Y D I S T I H E I Y Y O
B O G R E A J T C U M L Y D R
I F I S V T A H N M F O U V K
P J R T A C H O I F X G L B S
K U E N A D A G C L E C A W F
S L L V C I T F O R N I A J E
H Y I S T M F L O W E R S M K
M H O M V E T W S O W N W G M

Find the following summer related words:

sunny outdoors swimming
Fourth of July vacation picnic
flowers barbeque fireworks

Community Action Against Asthma

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1-877-640-4064 (toll free)