Save the Date

DECEMBER

Sunday 8
Holiday Open House
5pm–8pm

Thursday 12
Tour de Lights

Saturday 14
Jingle Bell Run

JANUARY

Saturday 11
Board Retreat

Monday 13
Potluck • 6:30pm

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Holiday Open House by Lisa Hollis
Sunday December 8 • 5pm–8pm

It’s that time of year again, neighbors; the Holiday Open House is nearly upon us! Every December several residents of the ‘hood generously open their homes/yards for neighbors to come by and socialize. I had the pleasure of hosting last year and had a fantastic experience, I met a lot of new people and visited with neighbors I already knew. Typically hosts serve drinks and snacks during the open house. Examples of what people have done in the past include hot cocoa and a bonfire to roast marshmallows, wine and cheese platters, beer and chips, a signature cocktail with hors d’oeuvres, and desserts with a variety of beverages. I am excited to see what this year’s hosts have planned! This is a great way to meet and socialize with your neighbors; I hope to see you out on Sunday, December 8th! An enormous thank you to our hosts this year! Volunteerism makes this neighborhood so wonderful. Events like the holiday open house and porch hop would not be possible without the continued support of the residents of Fourth & Gill.

Hosts for Holiday Open House

Kay Newton
1006 Luttrell

Katy Hawley
1022 Eleanor

Scott Schimmel & Lisa Sorensen
933 Luttrell

Candy Finley-Brooks
800 Luttrell (entrance on Lovenia)
co-hosted by artists Amy Hand, Jodie Masterman, and Shauna Stevens.

There will be an art exhibit prior to the open house that is free to the public.

Help Host the 2014 Home Tour!

We need committee members to plan and implement this coming year’s home tour. In 2013, the committee consisted of Melissa Caldwell-Weddig, Judith Neff, Gil Negendank, Arin Streeter, and Mary June Thompson. They were inexperienced and, therefore, set a goal of carrying on the tradition of neighborhood home tours. They could not have made it to home tour day without rousing behind-the-scenes support of former home tour committee members: John Conley, Tim Parker, Sara Martin, Melynda Whetsel, and many more. The day of the home tour saw help from dozens more neighbors.

…CONTINUED ON PAGE 2
How do you see the coffee culture growing in Knoxville
and what immediate challenges do you view facing
and overcoming? One of the challenges we’ve faced is calming any intimidation factor at the novel products we offer (Aeropress, for instance, could be construed as a mattress company or massage tool). Intimidation quells adventure, and adventure is a very special part of the coffee experience. Part of pushing the coffee culture forward in this great city is providing a safe place for folks to try new things, and we try to foster a safe place with smiles, explanations, and genuine love for people. It works.

What is your signature drink? As the days get colder, will your menu vary or feature seasonal items? K Brew focuses on brewing a perfect cup of black coffee—constantly striving to source better beans, water, and brewing techniques to do so. That intense focus will never change, but we also like to branch out and explore how coffee plays with other gourmet foods (like our baked-in-house biscotti). So, as the seasons change and K Brew grows, you can expect delicious, innovative drinks from the creative brains of our expert baristas. Our recent Smoked Cinnamon & Pomegranate Espresso Shooter was a prime example of that.

2014 Home Tour continued…

The 2013 Home Tour Committee succeeded thanks to its optimistic hard work and the perennial, but still incredible, help of many. The committee recognized the immeasurable value of the human resources gained from having a tour every year. It is easier to carry forward from the year before than to start fresh each year. These members cannot be the committee again this year, but each has promised to advise, be available, and encourage the 2014 committee.

Interview with K Brew’s
Pierce & Michael LaMacchia

What is your background in coffee? What gave you and your partners the inspiration to open a coffee shop at this location? Coffee has always been a big part of my brother’s and my life. Taking a sip of delicious, handcrafted coffee says to us “I’m home,” no matter where we might be. Being entrepreneurial fellows, and after a coffee tour of the West Coast in 2008, we knew it was only a matter of time before we opened our own shop.

The stars aligned for us to do just that in 2013 and, after we caught a glance of this location, the rest was history. This location is amazingly great. The local people are absolutely beautiful folks who understand the positive implications of local businesses but still won’t patronize a business based on its local merits alone. What that means is the best of both worlds for us; our neighbors pressure us to brew a fantastic cup of Joe and then reward us with their visit. How great! We couldn’t be more excited to be a part of this great community, and we welcome suggestions on how we can better serve you and plug in to what’s going on.
Neighborhood Topic Meeting: November 11

Based on comments from neighbors, the Fourth & Gill Neighborhood Board held a topic meeting to hear neighbors’ opinions of the awarded plan for Historic Knoxville High School. That award went to Family Pride/Southeastern Housing, which plans an apartment complex for low-income seniors. Approximately 32 neighbors attended the meeting as well as an estimated 15–20 people from outside the neighborhood. We had the generous help of the Knoxville Design Center and The League of Women Voters. They were invaluable with the complexities of this issue and the strong feelings of neighbors. David Watson, Knoxville Design Center, gave an overview of the process for Knox County’s RFP process and its subsequent award to Family Pride/Southeastern Housing. Lisa Carroll, League of Women Voters, facilitated the meeting. Neighbors commented for more than 90 minutes. There were strong opinions stated for and against the awarded plan.

Those against objected to the use of the building exclusively for low-income seniors. They cited the document from the Knoxville Design Center that stated the neighborhood’s preference for mixed use for Historic Knoxville High. These neighbors spoke of the need for vigorous development of the surrounding area, which they thought would be best supported by mixed use. Some objected to the use of tax funds for the development. Some objected to age segregated housing.

Neighbors pleased with the award commented on the legal process used by the county. They contended that the RFP process was transparent and was followed. Some said the money offered by Family Pride/Southeastern Housing was a fair advantage over the second place proposal by Dewhirst Properties, which offered no money. Some neighbors spoke of the potential advantage of having seniors living in the building. There were also comments about the tax support the plan received and some thought it was equivalent to tax advantages developers all over the city gain.

On Monday the 18th, Knox County Commission voted 9 to 2 in favor of awarding the property of Historic Knoxville High School to Family Pride Corp. and the Southeastern Housing Foundation. If you would like more information, it can be found in the links Cari Gervin has posted in her Metro Pulse columns.
“It is to unite the whole community. Here always will be found, embodied in study hall, lecture room, laboratories, work shop, and classroom the common faith and hope of all people.” Knoxville’s Superintendent of Schools Seymour Mynders echoed the progressive idealism of 1910. Free public schools were not a new development, of course, but the idea that they were actually “for” everyone, that everyone should be able to attend, and be expected to attend, was not fully embraced everywhere. Indeed, in 1910, less than three-quarters of American children attended school at all. Ever eager to forge forward into modernity, Knoxville looked at its mishmash of inconsistent and overcrowded schools. This new Knoxville High School, said Mynders, with perhaps just a hint of bias, proved the fruition of Knoxvillians’ hopes and aspirations. It was an imposing public edifice in a city where the largest structures were warehouses, jobbing houses, and a complex array of factories and industry conspiring to cover Knoxville in the fine layer of black soot it became known for. “The building in its construction and plan is in accord with the best educational ideals of the age,” said Supt. Mynders, “the true expression of the common hope and faith of a free citizenship. It is the voice of the people in material form.”

Booming city population led to building expansions in 1921 and 1931, and an additional gymnasium was even built across the street. By 1939, enrollment was up to 2,230, making Knoxville High School the fifth largest high school in the South. Interviewed in 2005, Evelyn Lusk Swingle, Class of ’39, described it as “the greatest school ever made, wonderful, just wonderful.” Others were not so enamored. In a letter to the school board, Paul L. Palmer of the Southern Association of High Schools and Colleges wrote, “Knoxville people should send up their prayers for a good, healthy fire at Knoxville High School at some deep time of the night when no one is abroad.” He condemned the building for overcrowding, judging that it could effectively accommodate no more than 1,800 students, declared that individual attention could not be given to students at the capacity it held, and in the early age of automobile-oriented suburban development, deplored it for its overbuilt and constrained campus. With experts predicting that the population of Knoxville would be 600,000 by 1965, something had to be done, and the model of a single central city high school could not be sustained.

By 1948, Young and Rule high schools had been completed. With plans in the works for East, Fulton, West, and Austin to be completed by 1952, it was decided that Knoxville High School would be closed at the end of the 1950–51 school year. Its final bell rang at 3:30 p.m. on May 31st, 1951. It survived only 41 years as a high school before entering the next 62 of its often red-headed-stepchild existence. But still, progress—the building may once have been symbolic of the principles and ideals it embodied, but in the service of educational improvement? Superintendent Mynders would probably approve.

1909 was not the first time “progress” set its sights upon that same piece of property. In the early 1870s, when the Staub, Van Gilder, and Henderson Addition was laid out on an enormous tract north old downtown Knoxville, and north of the tracks of the East Tennessee, Virginia and Georgia Railroad, North Knoxville was still farmland. Scattered country estates existed on Broadway (then Tazewell Road); some on Washington Pike were listed in early city directories simply as “beyond toll gate.” In an era when cities were discrete entities with easily defined edges that changed abruptly into countryside, and when the distinction between the residential district of downtown Knoxville and the bustle of its commercial core might be a matter of a few steps, living in North Knoxville was for those whom one might describe as, in the words of one local paper, “overfond of living in the suburbs.” It meant, by a distance scale almost comical today, being deprived of the conveniences, amenities, and activities of the city.
Into this landscape was introduced, some time before 1876, the magnificent home of Captain Joseph Jaques. Induced by the developers by the offer of an entire city block at a bargain price, extending from Fifth to Fourth avenues and Central to Lamar streets, Joseph Jaques set about building what was almost certainly the largest and most costly home north of the railroad. The house faced the city, and perhaps not incidentally, the railroad tracks—Joseph Jaques was Vice President of the ETV&G Rail Road Co. His friends opined that he would soon tire of the location, finding it too inconvenient. But the spot offered to Joseph Jaques by the developers was chosen particularly for its prominent location—on Central Avenue running north out of the city and just four blocks from Broad, it was intended to stimulate interest in the development of the surrounding neighborhood. The Jaques residence was so striking, with its four-story central tower and enormous greenhouse, surrounded by lawns and beautiful shrubbery, it became a place to point out with pride to out-of-town visitors. Fashion and wealth were moving north, it said emphatically. That Jaques was elected Mayor of Knoxville in 1878 didn’t hurt in establishing the credibility of the address either. Within 15 years, every surrounding block was crowded with a dozen or so smaller houses, and the sheer extravagance of this big house on an entire block, surrounded by the city, was jawdropping.

Joseph Jaques died June 19, 1885. The Knoxville Daily Chronicle, with a somewhat more direct manner than we’re accustomed to today, wrote, “Captain Joseph Jaques, now lying in state at his residence on Fifth Avenue, died yesterday morning after a continued illness of some years. It was thought for a long while that he would then soon die, but a change for the better took place and for some months past his friends and neighbors rejoiced in hopes of his final restoration to health. But in this they were doomed to disappointment. He is dead.” His wife Jane continued to live in the house until her death in 1897, when it was occupied by their daughter Susie and her husband John Yates Johnston. It was the Johnstons’ home when the house ended up in the sights of the special committee of City Aldermen set up to find a site for a new city-wide Knoxville High School.

Seven sites had been considered and evaluated. The Johnstons’ property was valued as the most expensive, but was, despite this, determined to be the most desirable for the purposes of location and public convenience, and it was the most centrally located. It was recommended that the site be secured as soon as $150,000 in bonds could be sold by the city. Of this, $50,000 was allocated to the purchase of the lot, not including the house itself, which would be wrecked separately. “Time will never blot from the memory of the pioneer citizens interested in the expansion and improvement of North Knoxville of the great and lasting service that the presence of the magnificent Jaques residence exerted on the section and how it seemed to invite scores of other people to build homes in North Knoxville,” wrote the Knoxville Sentinel.

Now back to 1951 and the suddenly empty, enormous school building. The Knoxville School Board moved its offices in, but the building was far too large for its purposes. The remainder of the building was used for storage. Rooms where James Agee and Patricia Neal once attended classes were relegated to holding surplus supplies. Part of the vocational wing at the rear of the building, having no other particular purpose, was converted into Knoxville Fire Station No. 3.

The night of December 12, 1978, a fire started somewhere around the area of the old auditorium on the Fourth Avenue side of the building (ironically requiring the evacuation of Fire Station No. 3). To some degree of surprise, the fire was contained within an hour, though a good portion of this three-story wing was destroyed. Questions immediately arose about whether the whole building should be razed—space in the new City-County Building that had been planned for the School Board would be available when it was completed the next year, and the city was carrying less than $200,000 in insurance coverage on Knoxville High School. Various options were considered; eventually, the upper stories of this wing were removed, but the building was otherwise repaired.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Committee or Officership</th>
<th>Most Recently</th>
<th>Chairperson/Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Codes</td>
<td>Monitored and coordinated multiple city codes issues. Kept an eye on the ‘hood; coordinated with liaison Officer Lee.</td>
<td>Dan Sanders <a href="mailto:4th.gill.codes@gmail.com">4th.gill.codes@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>Alive at all hours! Posted notice of potlucks, topic meeting, Halloween Party. Reporters and photographers covered Halloween Party and Fall Cleanup; produced this newsletter.</td>
<td>Bess Connally <a href="mailto:efconnally@gmail.com">efconnally@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance &amp; Development</td>
<td>Continued development of computer records of finances. Developed exciting work on a new fundraiser – Artoberfest 2014.</td>
<td>Laurie Meschke <a href="mailto:LLMeschke@tennessee.edu">LLMeschke@tennessee.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood Center</td>
<td>Continued improvement of interior and exterior. Transformation of indoor swimming hole to a beautifully tiled kitchen.</td>
<td>Bill Murrah <a href="mailto:billmurrah@gmail.com">billmurrah@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parks &amp; Beautification</td>
<td>Beds weeded and maintained. Cleanup coordinated. Planted and mulched beds along Gill with multiple specimens.</td>
<td>Tim Parker <a href="mailto:tparker1025@gmail.com">tparker1025@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>Hosted a wildly successful Halloween Party at Kay Newton’s house. Hosted potlucks. Found a couple of Holiday Open House Hosts.</td>
<td>Lisa Hollis <a href="mailto:lisahollis25@yahoo.com">lisahollis25@yahoo.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welcome</td>
<td>Spirit is willing; flesh is absent.</td>
<td>Your Name <a href="mailto:yourname@email.net">yourname@email.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>Herded hundreds of cats. Won friends. Coordinated possible Home Tour 2014.</td>
<td>Judith Neff <a href="mailto:merlin2@comcast.net">merlin2@comcast.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President</td>
<td>Would have herded cats, if we’d had some.</td>
<td>Your Name <a href="mailto:yourname@email.net">yourname@email.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>Fearlessly captured in writing every precious word of the intrepid board during long board meetings and posted notes within days.</td>
<td>Liz Upchurch <a href="mailto:lizupchurch1@gmail.com">lizupchurch1@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Continued working with the nice folks at Home Federal; kept three bank accounts up to date; reimbursed neighbors for their expenses.</td>
<td>Robert Rogers <a href="mailto:robertwrogers@gmail.com">robertwrogers@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Knoxville High School continued…

Still, by 1986, when Knox County took over the city school system, the Knoxville High School property was transferred from the City to the County for the nominal sum of $1,000. It was painfully obvious that any combination of teachers’ credit union, adult education, and night alternative school did not add up to enough uses to equal a fully utilized building. It had 72 rooms with 586 windows—and 500 light bulbs to be changed. During cold weather, it used seven tons of coal per day. Neither, it seemed, was there ever a large enough pool of money to maintain the building. At least once, money that was allocated toward building maintenance was diverted to teacher raises. There was no long-term commitment to keeping this white elephant of a building from eventually falling in on itself. By 2000, County Commissioner John Schmid said, “We’re slowly demolishing this building by keeping it in the school system…” In an area that is rising upward for its redevelopment potential — it’s a beautiful building that a quality developer could turn into a first-rate project.” Yet, it took another decade for the idea of the county surplusing the property to be discussed as an actual possibility, during which, despite some repairs, the building continued in its overall deterioration. Indeed, when evaluating sites for locating the new STEM Academy funded by federal “Race to the Top” dollars, Knox County’s own study ruled out Old Knoxville High School for being too big and in poor enough condition that it could not be renovated within the required timeframe. So what is its future? Once an amenity for its growing city and certainly its neighborhood, its fate now lies in the hands of a county government that is often viewed by inner city neighborhoods as generally indifferent. Once an investment by this city equivalent of $6 to $8 million, its fate now lies in the hands of a county government that nominally paid only $1,000 for it. Once the site of an enormous house built with the specific purpose of spurring development and investment in the surrounding neighborhood, it has sat for years, hulking and underutilized, sucking the life out of a corner chosen for that school building specifically because of its central location. It’s at a turning point, and whether it can once again regain its spirit as an imposing, vibrant building remains to be seen. If any of the hope and idealism that created it can be squeezed from its walls, maybe it can one day again, and soon, become a place pointed out to visitors with pride.

Four New Zipcars in Knoxville by Sara Martin

One reason we love living in Fourth and Gill is that it’s a walkable neighborhood close to downtown. Living here makes it possible for us to be a one-car family, which is great. If you’re in the same boat, you’ll be glad to hear that Knoxville just made it easier to drive less (or at least own fewer cars) by inviting Zipcar to town.

Zipcar is a “car-sharing” service. You sign up at www.zipcar.com/knoxville, then you can reserve cars online or from an app on your mobile device. The price is around $8.50 an hour, which includes gas, insurance, and 180 free miles. There are four cars in Knoxville: two on the Gay Street Viaduct and two on campus. They also have an international network with 23 cities in North America, so you can use Zipcar while visiting Washington DC, Chicago, and New York.

Even better, Zipcar has neighborhood connections! My employer, the Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization helped Zipcar get started here and has paid for free, annual membership fees for anyone who signs up this year (normally $85 for the $25 application fee and $60 annual fee.). And, one of Zipcar’s two local employees lives on Eleanor Street.

So give it a try! Right now, Zipcar provides Honda Civics and Ford Focuses and is keeping close watch on when to add more cars in Knoxville.

Questions? More Zipcar information here: www.zipcar.com/knoxville • 1-866-4ZIPCAR • gmcginnis@zipcar.com