

# The Greendale Original

*The newsletter of the Greendale Originals Neighborhood Association*

An organization of residents of Greendale Original Homes  
for the purpose of education, representation, service, promotion, and preservation  
of our historic neighborhood.

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## March 2006

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### Mold and Radon Speaker at next meeting

The March 1st meeting will be a presentation on mold, radon and other indoor environmental issues. This presentation will be followed by a question and answer session. Our guest speaker will be Walt Smith from the Division of Public Health.

According to the US Environmental Protection Agency, molds produce substances that can cause allergic reactions. Indoor Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States and the leading cause among nonsmokers.

This program is presented as a Community Service and everyone is welcome to attend.

### Perhaps there is a connection

*by Joe Russ*

On Thanksgiving evening I took a quick walk around the Village Center to work off at least some of Thanksgiving dinner. Since the temperature was just above 10 degrees, it would be a real quick walk. As I approached Ferch's I noticed a board laying on the sidewalk. Seemed odd. Once I got to the board and picked it up I noticed it was half the head of a deer and elf from one of the decorations the Bird House Workshop had created years ago.

Then I crossed Broad St. and as I did a car pulled up near the clock by the library and the driver got out. He walked over to the bench that was by the small trees there, and did not sound happy. The bench, which was a memorial to his late wife, had been flattened. In looking around, we discovered another of the decorations nearby that the Bird House Workshop had created was also damaged.

This senseless vandalism was not something I wanted to see to start the holiday season.

About a half-hour later I saw two squad cars in the area. I went and talked to one of the officers and he said there had been trouble with kids along Broad St. I couldn't help but wonder where they would get such disrespect for the Village to do such damage.

On January 10 I walked up to the flattened Youth Memorial Building and had a feeling of *deja vu*. As I looked over the pile of wood that remained, I was reminded of that bench and broken displays and my thoughts of what type of person would be so disrespectful to a memorial. This time the answer was easy - it was the School Board.

If the School Board is so disrespectful to a memorial built by volunteers, with donated money and materials, how can we expect the youth they are entrusted to educate to view other memorials any differently?

### A word from the President

*by Bob Thierfelder, President*

Part of our mission is to educate. Education implies many things. One form of education is providing information to help you to live a safer and healthier life. In the past we had speakers from the health department and the fire department. In the future I welcome any suggestions and will do my best to get an appropriate speaker.

In April of 2004, Nancy Van Zile, from the Greendale Health Department spoke at the monthly meeting of GONA. Concern was raised about the musty smell of the original crawl spaces. She suggested we contact an expert on environmental issues. The Health Department provided me with the information to contact Walt Smith.

Walt works out of the Division of Public Health in Madison. When contacted, he knew nothing about Greendale Originals. I provided him with pictures and articles about the construction of our homes. I've had several interesting phone conversations with Walt. He is concerned with the amount of attention mold and radon are getting. There are people out there, trying to get you to spend a lot of money to solve a problem that may not be a problem. Walt's purpose is to protect both your health and your pocket book.

Until I started preparing for this meeting, I knew little about mold and nothing about radon. I looked up radon and mold on the Internet. When we take steps to make our houses energy efficient, we increase the chances of having indoor environmental health problems. This is similar to the increased risk of carbon monoxide poisoning that was explained to us by Fire Chief Fedder.

This meeting is part of GONA's purpose to serve our community. I invite everyone, (including non-members) to attend.

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### Newsletter Update

*by Joe Russ*

Since we have long-term commitments to some advertisers, I have decided to keep the newsletter going until we find a new editor, hopefully later this year. In the meantime, if you are interested in editing the newsletter, please contact the editor.

### Next meeting

**Wednesday, March 1, 2006 at 7:30 p.m.**

Greendale Library Community Room (Enter through the Health Department doors and then go downstairs.)

**Visit [www.originalgreendale.org](http://www.originalgreendale.org) for more information.**

## An Interesting Place to Visit...

by Joe Russ

A few weeks ago I headed to a place that's interesting, but not somewhere I care to spend a whole lot of time. Yup, my Original's crawl space. Unless you have dug it out to be a basement, that trap door in your closet leads to a dark, dusty place. But, nonetheless, a place you should check out once or twice a year. I usually head down there to check on sewer drain pipes, and dryer vents. This time I went to see what condition the large cold air return pipe was in. I had heard stories of some rusting through and wanted to see if mine suffered a similar problem.

Before you descend to the bowels of your Original, some things to take along. Flashlights are OK, but I would recommend a larger trouble or spot light powered by an extension cord. The cord can also help guide you back to the surface (just kidding, it's not that bad). Since it is dusty, wear clothes you don't mind

getting very dirty as chances are you will be crawling (that's why it's called a crawl space). Gloves and a cap will help keep the spider webs at bay, and a mask can help if you are going to spend time down there making a lot of dust.



In inspecting my cold air return, I found it to be in good shape. The only holes I found (see photo above) appeared to be done when it was installed - at each bend to the first floor there was a corner of sheet metal bent down (like a triangle). Since I couldn't easily bend it back up, I suspect that was done to allow any condensation to drip out the bottom. I also discovered there was a sliding door on the pipe to allow for access for cleaning. It would probably take a fair amount of WD40 and elbow grease to get it to move, though.

In a bit of archeology, I also saw where the original utility lines came into the building, and while many lines went through the wall, one was brought in under the footing.

As for critters, since it was pretty dry down there, aside from a little dampness on the floor in one corner, I didn't see much aside from a live centipede and lots of dead spiders.

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### GONA Officers and Directors

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greendaleoriginals@yahoo.com

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**Board Member:** Al Emmons - 423-1133

**Board Member:** Ginny Emmons - 423-1133

**Editor:** Joe Russ - (262)679-1139 jruss@execpc.com

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