Past, Present, & Future
By Tara Henry, 1300 block of E. Washington

What comes to your mind when you think of the words, past, present, and future?

I love the concept of this triptych; of three linear states experienced by one being, and how everyone's chronology is completely different.

What I think of when I say those three words is actually the static component of this concept: the permanence of objects that remain stationary through the wide-swinging dynamic of the past, the present, and the future.

For me, this is our old gingko tree.

I have a photo of this house in 1903, the little ginkgo on the northeast corner of the home as spindly as a skinny boy, planted well away from the corner of the newly-built house. A screened-in porch was later added to that corner, and now not even an inch stands between the porch and that humongous tree. The two have been paired like newlyweds in an arranged marriage for the past 100 years, withstanding wind and rain, growing closer and closer together.

One of my favorite mornings of the entire year is when this Great Gingko does its single-day drop of all its leaves, when the weather takes its first strong downward dip. With one grand shiver, the tree completely bares its branches and covers the screen porch with its blanket of fan-shaped love. It's a little gift that I always forget is on the way, and I delight in walking through this carpet of bright leaves, so deep that even my heels can't break through to make their presence known. The tree has shrugged its glory for decades, through all of my years here, and will do it for many more.

There will be a day when the next owner of this house will have to decide if they want to carve a notch out of the Great Gingko to keep it from pushing the house over, or carve a notch out of the house to keep it from pushing the tree over. I'm thankful I won't be the one to have to make that decision. I'm thankful that I've gotten to share a bit of past and present with the Great Gingko, and that its future lies beyond me.

FGNA Contact Info:
Facebook: www.facebook.com/FoundersGrove
FGNA's address: 1219 E. Washington St. Bloomington, IL 61701

FGNA Gear
Available at neighborhood events!!
Magnets and stickers: $2 each
Recyclable shopping bags: $3, $2 for $5
T Shirts:
Men's long sleeve T $17
Men's/Women's short sleeve T $15
Koozies: $2 each

FGNA Goals:
• To celebrate and preserve our neighborhood's unique character and history.
• To promote communication and a sense of community between neighbors.
• To give our neighborhood a voice in city decision-making.
• To keep neighbors informed about city projects that may affect them.
• To keep the neighborhood safe and traffic under control.
• To help our neighborhood schools and businesses thrive.
• To share expert information about topics of interest, such as gardening and home restoration.
Prez on the Edge
By Amanda Hill, Mercer

When we moved to Bloomington in 2008, I remember coming down from my small home town in northern Illinois for a weekend visit to check out housing. Bunker and I had just gotten married and we had a job opportunity in the Bloomington area. My husband, a Bloomington native, grew up on Grove Street just outside of Founders’ Grove to the west. So, we naturally began driving around the area in search of what could be our new home. I noticed the Founders’ Grove neighborhood sign as we entered and drove down nearly every picture perfect street. My eyes were delighted at the array of architecture and I was thrilled with every house, from the quaint bungalows to the elegant Victorians. It was architectural heaven. I told my husband we were going to live in Founders’ Grove one day. We stumbled upon several homes for sale and even visited a few open houses, but we weren’t entirely sure where life was taking us and we weren’t ready to buy. I was pretty bummed when we had to settle on renting a house outside of the neighborhood.

In late 2010 I stumbled upon a “for rent” advertisement for a house on State Street, on the west edge of Founders’ Grove. I didn’t have to beg my husband too much because it was a lovely house in our dream neighborhood. Before I knew it, we were moving. We started getting the FGNA newsletters and were so excited to be a part of this neighborhood with all of the fun events. If I’m being honest, it took us a while to start attending events, but once we did we were hooked.

Life was moving along and it seemed Bloomington would be our home for the foreseeable future. We were looking forward to our next chapter in life, to buy our first home, and start a family. Our goal was to be in Founders’ Grove, but at the time there weren’t many options on the market that met our needs. We fell in love with our home on Mercer Avenue and decided to go for it. I really wasn’t sure if we were going to be in Founders’ Grove since our house was located on the east side of Mercer. I guess I’ve always really liked living on the edge. I eagerly waited for the tell-tale sign of FGNA residency to show up on our doorstep—The quarterly FGNA newsletter!! I think every neighbor heard me shriek with delight and jump for joy the day it was delivered, “We’re in! We’re in! We’re in!”

Well, that is my story of how I got here. I hope it gives a sense of how excited I am to be a part of this special neighborhood. I love the opportunity to serve my neighbors and continue all of the amazing things that this neighborhood has done, as well as bring some fresh new ideas. It is such a privilege to serve on this board with wonderful people who are not just my neighbors, but also friends. They all devote their spare time to make this neighborhood the special place that we all love and call home.

I am looking forward to seeing you at an FGNA event soon!
Amanda

Neighborly Pet Care
A friendly reminder to please leash and clean up after your pet. Your neighbors appreciate it and so does your furry friend.

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2020-2022 FGNA Board Members

President: Amanda Hill
309-706-4907
Ahill8407@gmail.com

Vice President: Rochelle Gridley
309-838-2597
rochellegridley@gmail.com

Secretary: Sonya Embry
sonyajeremy@yahoo.com

Treasurer/Webmaster:
Neil Gridley
nmgridley@ilstu.edu

Social Chair: Todd Trainor
tnt98@comcast.net

Block Captain Coordinator:
Matt Lollar
lollarmatt@hotmail.com

Newsletter Editor:
Sandra Underwood
sandra.underwood@frontier.com

Social Media: Rhonda Massie
romassie@hotmail.com

Historian: Rochelle Gridley
rochellegridley@gmail.com

E-List Manager: Bob Dawson
Bob@Dawson1.com

Member at Large: Matt Lollar
lollarmatt@hotmail.com

Member at Large: Todd Vincent
jtvincent@att.net

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LUXE BOUTIQUE
(309) 408-3278 luxeboutique1.com
We'll get to read about Bloomington's past when we catch Rochelle's article about The Castle theatre on page 5, and we have read about our present neighborhood president's heart-felt joy for her new role and the possibilities yet ahead on page 2. Just curious about what our future could look like from the eyes of today's youth.

By the modern wonders of texting, I caught up with Lane (8th grade), Taylor, and Ella (both 6th grade) Moody. At present, Lane enjoys his friends in the neighborhood and loves that he lives in the heart of Illinois. Taylor is grateful for really nice neighborhood friends and Ella likes the Pizza in The Grove.

Every wonder what activities would be planned if our FGNA board was in Jr. High? Me too! Try this on for size: baking night, video game gathering, Nerf war, and garbage pick up more frequently than just to celebrate Earth Day.

When asked about where each envisioned living in the future, Lane would like to continue to live in or somewhere near the heart of Illinois, Taylor would like to live close by friends and family and perhaps stay in Illinois, and Ella would like to remain in Illinois because there are so many fun parks, things to do, and places to go shopping.

I'd say the future looks promising. With our community of great neighbors, we do more than just create memories together through social gatherings and times of service; we model the importance of connecting as a neighborhood and being there for each other. That powerful message feeds forward to next generations. It's getting noticed by your children and they want this for their future, too. Keep it up FGNA!

FGNA—The Good Life: The Swansons of East Taylor Street

Meet Ted, Ashley, and Gigi Swanson!

Ashley has grown up in Founders' Grove since 5th grade. She's attended all District 87 schools, while Ted was raised in Streator, IL. The two of them met while working at State Farm, Ted continues to work at State Farm while Ashley is now a stay at home mother with Gigi. Their daughter Gigi (Georgia), age 4, was born on Thanksgiving! Other family members include 2 very friendly dogs, Charlie & Bernie.

Their Taylor Street is their first home, and they've lived there for 9 years. Ted and Ashley chose the home because of close proximity to family, as well as appreciating the unique character of homes and landscaping in an older well-maintained neighborhood. They value the feeling of raising a family in a safe and friendly neighborhood.

Favorite family FGNA events include Pizza in The Grove and the 4th of July parade and brunch.

Fun Family Fact:

Gigi's grandfather is the 4th of July drummer who leads the parade!
Social News
By Todd Trainor, 1200 block of E. Grove

HAPPY 2020!!

Hopefully this edition finds everyone still in the new year spirit as well as keeping with those new year resolutions, if not... oh well - there's next year!!

I want to personally thank previous President, Matt Lollar, and Vice President, Tara Henry, for their guidance and hours of volunteering over the past 4 years. We all appreciate everything you have done for our community. You will notice a few new faces/names on the incoming board, and also some familiar ones, but with new titles. Please give them a warm welcome the next time you see them.

Our new President is ready to go with some great new ideas of her own, as well as loving what we've been doing successfully in the past. We met recently to discuss the year-end events and what's in store in the coming months. You will see mostly our traditional events with the addition of some different ones. For example, we are really excited this year to offer a new twist to our 2nd Friday night happy hours during the warmer months. Welcome FGNA Fri YaY@7, starting in May through September. FGNA Fri YaY@7 happy hours will start at 7:00 pm. This gives neighbors the opportunity to possibly host as well as attend the social gatherings after winding down from a busy week. All the fun remains for FGNA Fri YaY@7: BYOB, bring a dish to share (great way to try out a new appetizer recipe??), and the ever popular 50/50 raffle!

Then there's Adult Game Night at 8 Bit on February 29. Enjoy Leap-Year's Day with classic games. The games are free, and the beer is cold. But wait... there's more! Welcome back FGNA Beautification Award!! This is such a wonderful way to acknowledge your neighbors by nominating those who demonstrate great curb appeal and pride of ownership. We can't wait to find out who you pick!

Oh...one more thing!! We are going to have a "Man Cave/She Shed" progressive tour! Plans are for the event to be in July. Please let me know if you would like to be one of the stops on this tour! We need to have destinations to visit, and you could be one of them!

With warmer temps in sight for the near future, please stay warm, healthy and ready for spring events. Check out the listing of the upcoming events on page 6 in the Clip-N-Save, as well as fgna.org, Facebook, and in the monthly tidbits email. If you ever want to get involved with an event, please contact any board members to discuss. We'd love to have your energy!

Until next time, Todd
The Castle Theatre
By Rochelle Gridley, 1200 block of Washington

Hopefully you've had the chance to enjoy The Castle Theatre for a music concert or other event. If so, you might have wondered about the history of the beautiful building and its original use. Was it a movie theatre? Was it for live acts? When Charles U Williams built the Castle Theatre (with architect A T Simmons) and his five-story car garage in 1916, the theatre was only intended to be a movie theatre. The older theatres in Bloomington presented vaudeville shows in the teens and twenties, but the Castle was to have motion pictures alone. As an auditorium it could be used for conventions or accommodate other types of gatherings, including the automobile shows that Williams hosted for several years. Without dressing rooms, however; it would be impossible to accommodate the vaudeville shows which commonly had at least five acts.

The theatre screened "Triangle Plays" movies exclusively. Triangle was a production company that included D W Griffiths as one of its directors and a limited roster of actors who were contracted to Triangle. This meant that the actors who worked for Triangle Plays were repeatedly appearing on the screen at the Castle. The first movie shown there starred Dustin Farnum. Trivia note: Film star Dustin Hoffman has claimed that he was named after Dustin Farnum. Douglas Fairbanks was also a star with Triangle Plays. Every billing included a drama and a comedy. But could the movies really compete with the excitement of live entertainment? It seems that such limited fare would be a handicap when vaudeville was so varied. When Willard Mack was starring in "The Conqueror" at the Castle, the Chatterton had the Folly Burlesquers one weekend. The Burlesquers would have included comedians, dancers, acrobats and singers! Given the choice, which would you go see?

The Castle Theatre had a pipe organ for musical performances before each screening. One advertisement stated that Triangle provided special music for each movie -- so you weren't relying on the creativity of a local musician to vary the music you heard!

The interior of the entire building was remarkable. Designed by architect A T Simmons (who also built the first home (for himself in the Cedar Crest addition in Normal), the theatre was decorated in colors of grey and coral with Circassian walnut decorations (the lovely ladies near the light fixtures perhaps?). The balconies held 260 seats and the main floor 840. Built with 12 emergency exits, Williams claimed that the theatre could be emptied in 30 seconds in an emergency. A sprinkler system was installed in the five floors of automobile storage and the building was as fire proof as modern construction practices could make it. An elevator that carried automobiles up to the showrooms and garage on the upper floors still exists today!

Thank you to Martha Everman & Toni Wilder for spending hours in 2019 pruning, weeding, and beautifying the Founders' Grove community garden at the corner of Washington & Towanda Ave. You are so appreciated!!

FGNA Beautification Award

Nominate your neighbor or a home on any block within Founders' Grove which sparks your attention with great curb appeal and pride of ownership! The FGNA board will select one winner at the end of summer, then present them with an award.

Send all nominations to FGNABloomington.org with "beautification" in the subject line.

Neighbor-to-Neighbor Classifieds
Local services available in your own backyard!!

Casper or Josie Trainor, 309-828-8863
"Casper the Friendly Pet Sitter" in Founders' Grove—reliable, responsible & reasonable.

Sam Clark, 309-825-9442
Summer Mowing Services - Experienced BHS junior providing neighborhood mowing/yard services.
Text or call for more information.

Seeking or wanting to offer a service? Neighbor-to-Neighbor Classifieds is a free one-time service available to you! Contact: sandra.underwood@frontier.com
INTRODUCING
FGNA FriYayAD7

Starting in May through September, the 2nd Friday happy hours will start at 7:00 pm until...well whenever the fun stops!

The 7pm start time is intended to give some additional time to wind down from the week before joining in the fun at a happy hour. Extra daylight, extra time, right? All the fun Remains: visiting with neighbors, BYOB, bring a dish to share, and the 50/50!

Wanna host? Contact Todd @ tnt98@comcast.net or (309) 828-8863.

Blast from the Past

Founders’ Grove Neighborhood Association officially began on July 18, 2001, with a meeting at the Bloomington Public Library. Seventy people were in attendance at the inaugural meeting! One important item on the agenda was choosing a neighborhood name. The names discussed at that meeting and voted on October 3 were:

Woodland Grove – Founders’ Grove – Prairie Oaks – Oak Grove

Seventy people were present at the second meeting, as well, and Founders’ Grove became our name by a vote of more than 25% of the people present. By the time the next newsletter was distributed for the Winter quarter of 2001, we had our lovely logo, which was created by Charlotte Schaefer. Six committees had been formed for: Social events, History and home beautification, Alleys, Neighborhood watch, Traffic control and Newsletters. It was an exciting beginning to an organization that helps to make Founders’ Grove a great place to live.

Clip-N-Save Calendar

- February -
  Fri. Feb. 14: Happy Hour: Be My Valentine; 5:30 p.m. Host: Elizabeth Rust, 1901 E. Taylor St.
  Thurs. Feb. 20: Mystery Lover’s Book Club; 7:00 p.m. Host: Jen Johnson, 1413 E. Grove St.
  Tues. Feb. 25: Washington Street Book Club; 7:00 p.m. 1219 E. Washington St. rochellegridley@gmail.com
  Sat. Feb 29: Adult Game Night: 7:00 p.m. 8 Bit Arcade Bar, 236 E. Front St.

- March -
  Thurs. Mar. 5: FGNA Member Meeting; 7:00 p.m. Centennial Christian Church Guest Speaker: Bill Inks, AB Hatchery, Topic: Preparing for Spring.
  Fri. Mar. 13: Happy Hour; 5:30 p.m. Hosts: Neil & Rochelle Gridley, 1219 E. Washington St. Bring candy for Easter Egg Hunt. We will be stuffing plastic eggs.
  Thurs. Mar. 19: Mystery Lover’s Book Club; 7:00 p.m. Host: Jen Johnson, 1413 E. Grove St.

E-Mail Updates: Get on our E-LIST by contacting Bob Dawson, Bob@dawsonl.com or sign up at any happy hour for breaking news, upcoming events, and announcements (FGNA never shares email addresses).