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LNI a Strong Presence at Regional Forum

*Creating Tomorrow Today: A Forum on the Future of Northwest Indiana***By Mitch Barloga LNI 24 (an excerpt)**

On the blustery and snowy morning of December 6, 2008, people from across Northwest Indiana participated in *Creating Tomorrow Today: A Forum on the Future of Northwest Indiana* - the kick-off public participation event of a two year planning process that will culminate in the adoption of Northwest Indiana's first three-county Comprehensive Regional Plan (CRP).

NIRPC successfully recruited varied participants to represent the geographic, racial and income diversity of the Northwest Indiana region. An estimated 40 LNI alumni and participants were present.

Held at the Radisson Hotel in Merrillville, participants spent the morning talking about places in the region they value and why, regional opportunities and challenges, and their collective and individual visions for the future. In the afternoon, participants were asked to narrow their focus and to identify regional planning priorities within five planning areas: transportation, economic development, environment, land use and social equity.

Over 50 tables of up to 10 participants each engaged in small group dialogue, sharing and hearing each other's perspectives and opinions. Then with the support of the "theme team" rapidly reading and synthesizing ideas from the tables, participants identified room-wide themes and collective priorities. They were aided by keypad polling equipment, regional maps and a participant guide, which described important issues within NIRPC's planning domains as well as related quality of life topics. The overall process flowed with the assistance of more than 80 table facilitators, computer technicians, theme team members, data analysts, greeters, volunteers and staff.



Participants identified room-wide themes and collective priorities.

The overarching theme of the day was the need for meaningful public participation.

LNI's Executive Director Keith Kirkpatrick has always said there are three simple steps to becoming a leader:

- ***Show up***
- ***Weigh In***
- ***Contribute***

The nearly 600 people who attended the Forum on the Future did just that as they displayed great eagerness to plan for the region's future.

For a complete report of the findings from this landmark event, please contact NIRPC at nirpc@nirpc.org. You may also receive direct notice of all events/meetings by contacting NIRPC to be added to the Comprehensive Regional Plan 2040 mailing list.

Are we an Accessible Community of Open & Viable Neighborhoods?

Alumnus Jerry Davich, LNI 24, shadows Sharron Liggins, LNI 22 to explore the answer.

Counting the 'invisible' an excerpt from January 30, 2009 Jerry Davich, LNI 24, Post-Tribune metro columnist

At first sight, Gerald Parker appears to be the poster child for homelessness in Northwest Indiana. The 55-year-old disabled Gary man walks the streets during the day and sleeps inside an abandoned garage at night.

His mangled left hand clutches an old cane. His right hand clutches a bottle wrapped in a brown paper bag. Simply put, he is a walking, talking stereotype, as well as a convenient excuse for us not only to overlook him, but also the issue of homelessness. Yet Parker is merely the tip of the iceberg to this region's often invisible homeless population, which is swelling in our sinking economy, officials say.

On Thursday I took part in an annual "point in time" snapshot survey of the homeless, peeking into abandoned buildings, parked vehicles and public venues. Sharron Liggins, hustled across 5th Avenue toward a homeless man slowly making his way with an old cane down the busy Gary street.

"Hello there, how are you?" Liggins yelled, wrapping a scarf around her neck against the bitter wind. The sockless man stopped to reply, somewhat surprised at

the attention, and removed a beat-up glove to shake Liggins' hand. Liggins asked about his well-being, and if he has a place to call home.

The disabled man, 55-year-old Gerald Parker, said he lives "here and there" on the west side of the city, lately in an abandoned garage. He's been homeless for at least two years, he's been shot five times, and his left hand is mangled from an arthritic gunshot wound. He pulled off his glove to show Liggins, director of the Continuum of Care Network of Northwest Indiana, and also Annissa Spencer, from the LHDI Foundation.

"I'm going to help you find a place to stay," Spencer told Parker after giving him a phone number to call (554-0027) at Wonder Working Word Church in Gary. "I'm not just saying I'm going to help you. I'm being real with you. Now give me a hug."

The two women joined dozens of other region officials and volunteers Thursday to conduct an annual "point in time" count of the area's homeless population. The count is required by the federal government -- at both the street level and shelter level -- to capture a "snapshot" picture of what homelessness looks like in our communities. And to put a collective face on a faceless population of people.

The idea behind conducting the count in late January -- the dead of winter -- assumes that more of the homeless population will be forced into shelters and more visible living accommodations.

One problem with this population of people is that hard numbers are needed to request funding, but it's tough to quantify an often invisible figure. Let's face it, most of us would prefer that this population remains invisible. It's easier on our eyes, our wallets and our conscience.

But it's not so invisible if you look for it --

After exiting one abandoned store, Liggins said, "We know there is a huge need. This count is to help show there's a need."

State officials anticipate higher numbers of homeless residents this year compared to previous years, strictly because of our poor economy and specifically higher utility bills.



Photo caption: Sharron Liggins, LNI 22 (left) and Annissa Spencer provide Gerald Parker with some information to help find assistance after stopping him on Fifth Avenue in Gary on Thursday. (Michael McArdle/Post-Tribune)

"Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring, those ripples build a current that can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance."

— Robert F. Kennedy

Have you heard...



Andrew Kyres, LNI 18, has been appointed to the Executive Board for the Crown Point Chamber of Commerce and will chair its Business Development Committee.

Craig Harrell, LNI 25, was elected to the board of directors of Alzheimer's Services of Northern Indiana. Based in South Bend, Alzheimer's Services serves families in 14 counties in northern Indiana through service, support, education and research. Craig joins **Jill Keilman, LNI 25** who has served ASNI as a board member since 2007.

Christine Livingston, LNI 24, was appointed to the Chesterton Stormwater Board effective January 1.

Hadiyah Williams, LNI 25, has had a recent title change from Customer Relations Supervisor to Labor Operations Analyst.

Howard Fink, LNI 22, formerly Merrillville's Community Development director, was named town administrator effective Dec. 1, 2008.

Jim Jessup, LNI 22, would like to share new contact information for Leadership LaPorte County.

P.O. Box 1813, LaPorte, IN 46352. (219)325-8223.

Email jim@leadershiplaportecounty.com.

www.leadershiplaportecounty.com

Joshua Lybolt, LNI 25, was recently recognized as one of 12 recipients of the Governor's Award for Tomorrow's Leaders. He is currently regional director of the Northwest Indiana Small Business Development Center.



Jon Leetz, LNI 23, was recently promoted to president at North Coast Distributing in Valparaiso. He serves boards of the Porter County Foundation and the Valparaiso Parks Foundation.

Paul Myers, LNI 22, was recently hired by the Michels Corporation of Wisconsin to serve as a Health and Safety Coordinator under their Pipeline Division.

Julie Jones, LNI 17, in January 2009, joined the Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service as 4-H Youth Development Educator for Lake County.

Kathy DeGuilio-Fox, LNI 11, and LNI board member was recently promoted to Director of the Purdue Technology Center of NW Indiana. She also became a member of the Board of Governors of the Society of Innovators.



Attorney Karen Pulliam, Leadership Calumet 1983, LNI 2, was elected president of the Gary National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).

Mary Gruba, LNI 23, was recently promoted to Contract Administrator at Saint Margaret Mercy in Hammond, Indiana.

Michelle Golden, LNI 18, was inducted into the Society of Innovators in October 2008 for her work related to Books, Brushes & Bands for Education, A Children's Organization for the Literary, Visual & Musical Arts, www.bbb4e.org.

Renae Tomczak, LNI 18, launched a new company called Glad2BHome, LLC, a greeting service connecting new homeowners to local businesses and service providers.

Sarah E. Polman, LNI 6, her company, IN Architects & Planners, joined forces with Cambridge Companies of Griffith last year and are now IN-Cambridge Architects.

Theresa Valade, LNI 19, is CEO of Success Trek, one of 19 small businesses that were recently honored with Indiana's first Economic Development through Entrepreneurship (EDGE) Awards.

Michael Brickner, LNI 20, with the Valparaiso Police Department, was inducted into the Society of Innovators in October 2008.

Let us know what you're up to.

We want to help you stay connected to your LNI friends and associates.

Welcome words from a long-time LNI alum Bob Kelley

Words especially poignant as another class graduates

"I was a graduate of the second class of Leadership Northwest Indiana. At that time it was called Leadership Calumet. On January 1, I retired from Niagara LaSalle Corporation as Vice President of Human Resources with 42+ years of service.

Thinking back, as many do after retirement, I can't emphasize enough how important the Leadership Northwest Indiana Program was in developing my career. The program provided awareness and opportunities in the community that were not available elsewhere. More companies in Northwest Indiana should utilize this resource for developing their key employees. Thank you, and I wish the program the utmost success."



LNI 24 Graduation marks the beginning...

**"Wisdom is knowing what to do next;
skill is knowing how to do it; and virtue is doing it."**

Class reps Roxann Brown and David Baker shared memories and a look to the future



David Baker

Advertising Sales

Gloria Balerini

Executive Director

ALSE Clemente Center

Mitch Barloga

Non-motorized Transport.

Greenways Planner,

NIRPC

Tina Bengs

Attorney, Hoepfner,

Wagner & Evans

Roxann Brown

Academic Coordinator,

Calumet College

Jennie Burgess

Parks Administrator

City of Crown Point

Donna Catalano

Special Projects Director,

South Shore Arts

Chris Cioroianu

Golf Course Super.,

Lake County Parks

Carla Cohen

Senior Acct. Executive

Braman Agency

Lisa Daugherty

Advertising Director

The Times

Jerry Davich

Columnist

Post-Tribune

Martin Denkhoff

Accounting Manager

Purdue Univ. Calumet

Elizabeth Depew

Director

Purdue North Central

Kameli Dogruyol

Office Mgr. N-ovations

Teresa Eineman

Superintendent

Crown Point Schools

Shaunna Finley

K12 Charter School Mgmt

Jennifer Fredericks

Trust Officer

JP Morgan

Julie Johnson

Certification Manager

Nat'l Rec. & Park Assoc.

Jeff Leetz

VP North Coast Distrib.

Shannan Lefever

GIS Analyst, NIRPC

Christine Livingston

Water Prog. Director

Save the Dunes

Heather Maple

Fin. Analyst

St. Margaret Mercy

Nick Meyer

Communication Manager

NIPSCO

Patricia Ramirez

Dev. Officer

Porter County

Community Foundation

Marcos Rodriquez

Appren.Enrollmnt Mgr

Ivy Tech Comm. College

Krystle Simmons

Special.Events

LCCVB

Tina Stephens

Administration

Judy Terek

Campaign Manager

United Way

Jillian Wilcox

Planning & Fin. Analyst

Horseshoe Hammond

Marge Wilke

Marketing Consultant

Wilke Consulting

April Wolford

Asst. VP, Bank Manager

Harris Bank

Gwendolyn Woodard

Consultant



WE ARE NWI!



↑ This is nice,...
But this says LNI 24 so much better. →

Michael Griffin awarded LNI Outstanding Presenter

Graduation is a time when Leadership Northwest Indiana takes the opportunity to honor those who continuously give unselfishly to the LNI program. Michael Griffin is one who exemplifies that ideal. Twice a year Michael gives our participants an entire day to share his passion for government and the true meaning of servant leadership. He also serves on the LNI board of directors. Previous recipients include Tarik El-Naggar and Professor Mark Reshkin.

A special thank you to all the LNI presenters.

We could not offer the quality programming we do without you.



Welcome LNI 26

Day 1: We thought this was going to be a quiet group.

Day 2: Proved us completely wrong

Come have coffee with us at the beginning of any session and get to know this dynamic group of community leaders. Schedules are online.



Kristy Armstrong

Director
Boys and Girls Club of NWI

Frank Bradtke

Assistant Chief Nursing Officer
Porter Hospital

Jarrett Bryant Bridgeman

Detective Sergeant
City of Gary Police Department

Robert Bursua

Partner
Creative Backup

Dr. Gerald R. Chabot

Superintendent
Lake Central School Corp.

Lisa D'Amico

Vice President
Boys and Girls Clubs of NWI

Reggie Dotson

Public Relations Coordinator
Ameristar Casino

Carlyle B. Edwards

Lead Consultant
Sarian Associates

Becky Fox

Marketing Director
Porter County Convention
& Visitor Commission

David Gutowsky

Procurement Coordinator
NIRPC

Linda Hazen

Regional Sales Director
Opportunity Enterprises, Inc.

Ryan Hicks

Transportation Planner
NIRPC

Kelly Horn

RN Unit Director
Porter Hospital

Aaron Ingram

Appraiser
Valuation Services

Nathan Kleefisch

Director of Operations
Tri-Creek School Corporation

Sergio Mendoza

Planner
IDNR

Jake Messing

Director
Southlake Center for Mental Health

Jeremy Miller

Regional Manager/V.P.
Centier Bank

A. J. Monroe

Planner
Short Elliott Hendrickson

Shandra Niswander

Development Coordinator
Shirley Heinze Land Trust

Dawn Pelc

Development Director
America's Second Harvest

Cecile Petro

Redevelopment Director
Town of Highland

Jeff Precourt

Advertising Sales Manager
The Times

Maggie Reister-Walters

Financial Advisor
WestPoint Financial Group LLC

Susan Richardson

South Division Marketing Manager
Post-Tribune

Darrell Riddell

Assistant Professor
Ivy Tech Community College

Kurt Sangster

Manager
NIPSCO

Ron Sazone

N-ovations
Plaques, Printing & Promotions

Linda Segovia

Assistant Classified Manager
The Times

Sherri Shabaz

Executive Assistant
Regional Development Authority

Amy Snyder

Facilities Project Assistant
Purdue North Central

Willie D. Steele

Manager
NIPSCO

Bridget VanHolland-Williams

Owner
Divine Vision

Lee Watson

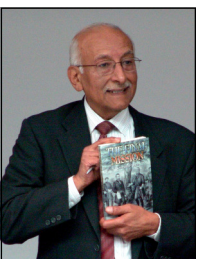
President
Logic Advance

Mike Weaver

Director of Inpatient Care
Porter-Starke Services



Check out George Miga's New Book



Long-time and much beloved LNI presenter, **George Miga**, demonstrates yet another of his many talents with his recently published book.

"The Final Mission-Grant & Lee"

The heart of the story revolves around a mission to be carried out by a young colonel John Spencer on behalf of President Ulysses S. Grant in late 1870.

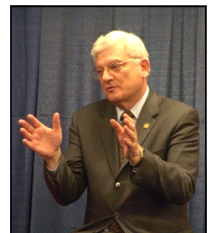
Reviewer, **Bill Vargo, LNI 19**, tells us the story itself is spellbinding in its historical intricacies and fascinating in the timelessness of the human connections dating back over 130 years. True to his leadership development background we also get a feel for the leadership skills of these military giants.

Annual Legislative Trip offers insight to more than process

LNI participants were treated to an impressive array of Northwest Indiana State Representatives and Senators who not only spoke candidly to the group about the legislative process, but presented something even more engaging, a united front.

Rep. Ed Soliday hit a bulls-eye when he said, "You can accomplish anything if you don't care who gets the credit."

"In NWI when push comes to shove we fragment," Soliday added. "We've got to start pulling on the same end of the rope."



State Representative Ed Soliday, was among many from NWI who welcomed LNI to Indianapolis in Feb.



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***Save the date for
LNI 25's Graduation
Friday, June 5, 2009***

***Come and make up a
missed session!***

For current class schedules
visit our website at
www.leadershipnwi.org

As always we encourage your feedback so we
can continue to improve and make this newsletter
and our website the valuable LNI resources
we are sure they can be.

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