

## Let's Make Learning A Priority!



Meet Shari Hoskins, the new Principal of Fairview PK-8 School. A former teacher with ten years experience as a Principal, she has worked in both urban and suburban school settings.

Mrs. Hoskins came to Dayton Public Schools from the Cincinnati Public Schools system where she was a school improvement consultant. She and her team worked with 16 schools and, within two years, 13 of those schools made great strides, achieving the state rating as a school of Continuous Improvement. She is extremely proud of that accomplishment and hopes to replicate this success at Fairview Neighborhood School Center.

Mrs. Hoskins is working with students, teachers, and families to make learning and student achievement the priority. She believes urban schools can prosper and be high achieving. She wants to attract Fairview neighborhood children back to Fairview School, and she believes the community will help make that happen. "A new school building is not enough to bring back the neighborhood children; we need to provide enough opportunities that this will be their school of choice and they will want to be part of us." Mrs. Hoskins envisions a school which is open to the community and filled with clubs, activities and meetings. "It will become the central hub to the Fairview community with opportunities for things to be going on all day long." Hoskins sees the active participation of area churches, neighborhood groups, the FROC Priority Board and the Phoenix Project as critical to this effort.

Fairview Neighborhood School is one of five Dayton Public Schools involved in an ambitious project led by the Dayton Foundation and the Fitz Center for Leadership in Community at the University of Dayton, to help schools regain their place as centers of communities. Each school has a non profit partner that employs a full time Neighborhood School Center Coordinator to serve as a broker between the school and community and to assist the principal in working to improve the academic success of all children who attend the school. The Fairview partner is Unified Health Solutions and the NSC Coordinator is Manicka Thomas.

The Fairview community has given Mrs. Hoskins an excellent reception. We look forward to her continued success.

## Spray Park Coming Soon!



Construction is underway for a new Spray Park at Fairview Pool. The Phoenix Project and the City of Dayton are making an addition to the Fairview Commons Campus. The Spray Park will be ready this coming summer for young and old alike to cool off, hard to imagine that right now! Also on the drawing boards is a new playground adjacent to the Spray Park. Look for a grand opening next spring of Fairview's latest amenity.

## Working Together for a Great Community

Jean and I have lived at our Ravenwood residence since 1991. But members of my family have lived in the area since the late 70's so we are familiar with the entire area. We both currently work at the Dayton Metro Library and love it. We're basically homebodies as Jean likes to garden and I like to tinker with our 106 year old home.



Jean had some prior involvement with the neighborhood association many years ago but she found it to be somewhat dysfunctional. Nothing like it is now! I serve as treasurer of FNA and Jean is our secretary. The meetings are monthly and only take a little more than an hour. It is amazing what you can accomplish in an hour when you have a genuinely dedicated group that focuses on our WHOLE neighborhood not just the areas where the members live. You have to look at it holistically.

We both really enjoy time spent on the Salem Avenue clean ups, attending meetings and talking with our Phoenix police officers. Most recently the new principal of Fairview pk-8, Mrs. Hoskins, began attending our meetings so we have a first hand account of what is going on with our school. We also spent time helping to guide the design of the new school. Let me tell you those were DEFINITELY some lively discussions but I think we have a much better school now than if there were no neighbor involvement.

The nice thing about our association is there are so many things you can get involved with if you like. If you like gardening, we have a beautiful garden next to the FROC building and you can get your hands dirty with Ms. Patterson, President of the Fairview Neighborhood Association or Mr. Jones, Chairperson of the FROC Priority Board and learn a lot as well as have some fun. They are (with a little help from the neighbors) really making the garden into something special. If

you like working with youth, Mr. Jones and Ms. Patterson also run a "youth leadership academy" each summer and are always looking for tutors. I also have to point out that the Fairview United Methodist Church has been a Godsend (no pun intended) in providing teaching space and parishioner tutors. It just shows how the community is pulling together.

Now as much as we have progressed in the last five years, we still have much to do. Drugs still plague our city and we are not immune to that. The housing market throughout the country has destabilized causing transitions in many Dayton neighborhoods, Fairview included. Our challenge is to build a civil community where all people are respected. These I believe are our most pressing concerns.

We all want to live in a safe, peaceful environment where we and our children can grow and flourish. I believe there is the potential to make this happen if more people would turn off the TV (just for an hour a month!) and go to a meeting, go to the garden, talk to a neighbor (going to meetings is a GREAT way to meet your neighbors!) and see what's happening in your community. Once you get a taste of Fairview I think you'll like it. Once we have more people on the ground floor watching for drugs/crime and then reporting it, we can get a handle on the situation and correct it. A good way to report concerns is to leave a message on the Phoenix hotline: 333-1333.

Now that is only half of the solution. You also have to communicate your findings so change can come about and the best way I've found to do that is to go to your neighborhood meetings. You may go there with a problem that is driving you crazy and you'll probably find some people there that have gone through the same situation and know how to deal with it. Working together we can make this a great community. I've seen this personally. Why don't you join us? We meet the fourth Monday of every Month at the FROC Priority Board site office at 6:30 p.m. Hope to see you soon!

By Rick Waselewski