

## **Prepared remarks to the Marquette Neighborhood Association 2012 Membership Meeting by MNA Board President Scott Thornton**

Neighbors and Friends

Welcome to the Marquette Neighborhood Association annual membership meeting. It is good to see so many new faces and old friends. Another busy year has gone by. And many of you know that this is also my last year on the board so it is not a year that I had hoped would go by so quickly.

However, after 4 years as president of the board it is time for me to step aside. I could not be more proud to have served on the board, and thank you for the privilege. We have accomplished a lot.

Our membership numbers have increased, we secured our 501(c)(3) tax exempt status, we have launched a major arts initiative in the neighborhood and survived and improved the reconstruction of Willy Street.

I have met so many wonderful people through MNA and the current board is no exception. There are things that I will miss from our monthly board and committee meetings.

Carl – For his sage advice.

Cheryl – For her dedication to watching the financial details and getting reports to the IRS.

Michael – MJ, for his birds-eye perspective of neighborhood and city issues.

Corey – For his infectious enthusiasm and support of the business community.

Tom – For cutting to the chase and keeping things real.

John – For his passion for trees and keeping the Willy Street corridor shaded.

Julie – For keeping all of us on track, especially me.

Mike – For his steady focus and evenhanded approach.

Todd – For his energy and guidance especially with the Preservation and Development committee.

Bill – For his passion for the arts and vitality of the neighborhood.

Anne – For pushing green and sustainable methods and getting the city to seriously look at alternatives to the status quo. Who else could come up with Bio-Loon?

However you decide to vote tonight, please recognize the efforts and dedication of these amazing people.

The MNA committees could use more help and I encourage you all to get involved when you can. I had a request from Anne Walker, who would really like more women on the traffic committee. I've started a binder for her. Please consider adding yourself to this binder of MNA Women into Traffic.

Our neighborhood truly is the jewel of the Near East Side. And as the neighborhood continues to evolve and grow we must look out for what is important to us: Marquette/O'Keefe schools, the Wil-Mar Neighborhood Center, city parks and public spaces, our historic districts, our local businesses, the Yahara River and Lake Monona.

While I may no longer be on the board, I will continue to look for ways to promote the health of our neighborhood and protect the quality of life that we enjoy here.

Again, thank you for coming. I hope that you enjoy tonight's program.