

November 2014  
Edition



Dates To Remember:

Dec. 6, 2014

Membership Drive:  
Breakfast with Neighbors

Dec. 13, 2014

VIP Preview Party

Dec. 14, 2014

Holiday Home Tour

Mar. 25, 2015

Spring General Meeting



Volunteers Needed:

To assist with any of our  
upcoming events:

> 313.883.4360 ext 2  
bostonedison@gmail.com

*The Boston Edison Board  
of Directors wishes all of  
our residents a safe and  
happy holiday season!*



Presents:

*The 40th Annual Holiday Home Tour  
and VIP Preview Gala*

*A Detroit Holiday Tradition*

The Historic Boston-Edison Association announces its 40th Annual Holiday Home Tour and VIP Preview Gala which will feature five beautiful and historically significant homes that have been decorated for the holiday season.

The Holiday Home Tour is scheduled for Sunday, Dec. 14, 2014, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; the VIP Preview Gala is scheduled for Saturday, Dec. 13, 2014, from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. Only 150 tickets will be sold to the Preview Gala.

Visitors will have a chance to view the fine exterior and interior residential architecture of the early 1900s. The tour transports one back to the "Golden Age" of Detroit, when Boston Edison residents included such familiar names as Henry Ford I, James Couzens, Charles T. Fisher, and S.S. Kresge. The tour is a combination walking and bus tour (walking is minimal). Tours begin at the Sacred Heart Seminary, located at the corner of Linwood Avenue and Chicago Boulevard in Detroit. Buses leave every 20 minutes from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. Tours generally last about two hours. Following the tour, complimentary refreshments are served at the Seminary and guests receive a commemorative program with histories and photographs of the five homes.

Saturday's VIP Preview Gala will be a special celebration of Boston Edison's 40 years of Holiday Home Tours. This event will take place at the spectacular Edward Fisher mansion, one of five Fisher homes in Boston Edison, as well as a preview of four other beautiful homes dressed up for the holiday. There will be valet parking, complimentary gourmet delights, and live music from pianists Pamela Wise and Marvin Thompson, Jr. Guests can visit the homes via motor coach or on their own (maps provided). Attire is semi-formal.

*\*Residents, you can have a personalized holiday greeting published in the 40th Year Holiday Home Tour Program for only \$20 – a resident-only price! Contact Debbie Baldwin 313.980.0070 or dbaldwin@historicbostonedison.org for more information.*



Tickets for the Holiday Home Tour are \$30 and \$75 for the VIP Preview Gala.

**All tickets are by advance sale only.**

Remember, tickets sell out fast! Get yours online now at [www.historicbostonedison.org](http://www.historicbostonedison.org).

For more information, call (313) 883-4360, email [bostonedison@gmail.com](mailto:bostonedison@gmail.com) or view updates at [www.historicbostonedison.org](http://www.historicbostonedison.org).



## Our Friendly Cookie Monster Needs...COOKIES!

Boston Edison Neighbors: She needs cookies! The "Cookie Monster," Cleo Hamilton, needs cookies for the Sunday, Dec. 14, main Holiday Home Tour. Last year, neighbors brought coffee breads to slice or small cream puffs. Variety is always good. Please bring something that you would like to eat.

If you are not able to home-bake, feel free to drop money in Cleo's mail slot, and she will buy some at a good place. Otherwise, deliver cookies to 758 Longfellow, between 1 p.m. and 5 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 13, or to Sacred Heart Seminary any time after 9:30 a.m. on Sunday, Dec. 14. Cookie tins will not be returned, but you may deliver your cookies in a cardboard bottom, plastic-wrapped container.

Cleo will need helpers in the cookie room on Sunday. Volunteers will be needed all day for short shifts starting at 9:30 a. m. Wear comfortable shoes; cookie tray arranging, replenishing and tray-running can be great exercise! Teenagers are more than welcome to help.

If you can help with clean up, please contact Cleo at (313) 865-6306 and let her know if you are available later in the day. If you have questions, call or email her at [james.hamilton@wayne.edu](mailto:james.hamilton@wayne.edu).



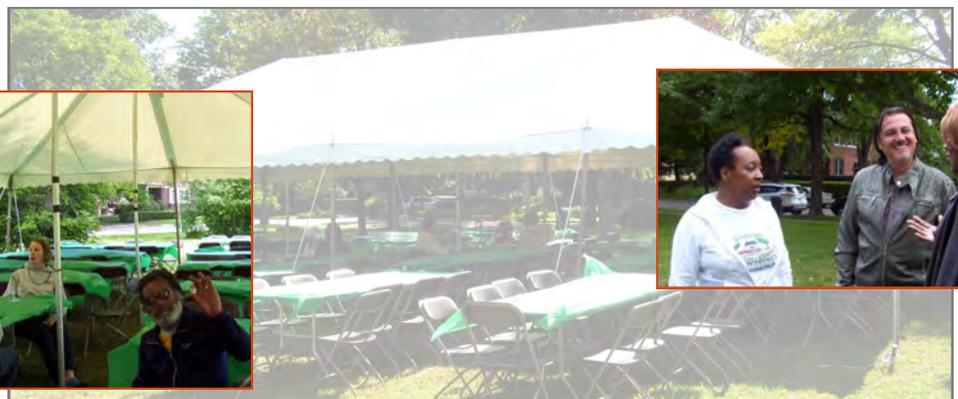
## Neighbors Brave the Rain for Successful Picnic in the Park

The forecast called for rain, and it came. But that did not dampen the day for the more than 50 fun-minded Boston Edison residents who brought the sunshine with them to the neighborhood's 2014 Picnic in the Park at Voigt Park.

Neighbors came with appetizers, salads, sides and desserts all determined not to be deterred by overcast skies. Even with a small number of attendees, there was a sense of unity: everyone intent on reaching, meeting and greeting old friends and making new ones while enjoying great food, raffles and membership drawings.

Yes, rainy skies affected the turnout, but you could not tell from the smiles of the faces of Boston Edison's youngest residents who enjoyed plenty of snacks, bubbles, crafts and activities, including a bounce house and face painting.

The Picnic Committee thanks board members, volunteers and neighbors who made sure the day was fun and unforgettable. Of course, fingers are crossed for blue skies and sunshine in 2015.



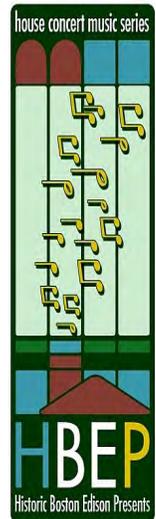
## “The Sounds of Music” Ends on a Classical Note

The 2014 “Sounds of Music” House Concert series ended on Oct. 4, with a beautiful classical music serenade from the New Verse Ensemble. Members of the ensemble included Robert Conway on piano, Sarah Cleveland on cello, John Madison on viola and Daniel Winnick on violin. All members of the group perform with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Michigan Opera Theatre Orchestra and the Ann Arbor Symphony. The program included Beethoven, Brahms, Schubert, and Purcell. The beautiful home of Alex and Gwendolyn Davis provided a wonderful setting for the evening’s sold-out performance. At intermission, guests enjoyed a fall-themed buffet which included baked chicken and salmon, a vegetable medley, red-skinned potatoes, salad, rolls, desserts including sweet potato pie, wine, pop and warm apple cider.

A big “thank you” goes to Music Director Michelle May for once again putting together a spectacular musical season. Special thanks also to Boston-Edison Association President Debbie Baldwin, house concert co-chair, and volunteers Joshua Flowers, Gaye Butler, Jaye Williams, Beverly Lochard, Gracie Brown and Darlene Hunt. Extra special thanks to homeowners Jerome and Yovonda Brown, Dr. Wanda Shurney and Alex and Gwendolyn Davis.

We are truly appreciative of our co-sponsor, **The Barthwell Group** (Dr. Akosua Barthwell-Evans, president) and our advertisers: Nicholas Schrock of **Allstate Insurance**, (248) 547-4010; Gaye Butler of **Robinson Realty & Management Group**, (248) 396-3608; Ann Demers of **C&N Party Rentals**, (248) 435-3580; Marty and Roman Kmiecik of **Roy’s Electric**, (313) 369-0400; David Steinberg, CPA of **Detroit Professional Tax Service, LLC**, (248) 563-0604 and Beverly Lochard of **State Farm Insurance**, (586) 296-1616.

We hope to see you next year for another great season of good music, delicious food and great company!



## HBEA Fall General Meeting Keeps Residents in the Know

Board members, guests and Boston Edison residents gathered on Oct. 22 for the Association’s annual fall meeting, which took place at the Sacred Heart Major Seminary.

The meeting, which gave members updates on neighborhood activities, also featured a slate of guests including Dekonti Mends Cole of the Detroit Land Bank Authority; the Hon. Mary Sheffield of the Detroit City Council; Officer Chunev of Detroit Police Department; Dana Harvey of the Public Lighting Authority of Detroit; and Michael H. Macklin, Applied Power and Controls, Inc.

Each committee chair reported on their activity and provided a PowerPoint presentation to offer residents a glance of neighborhood activities and initiatives.

More than 100 neighbors and residents enjoyed great food, raffles and membership drawings. Save the date for the Spring General Meeting which will take place on March 25, 2015.



### **B-E Trivia: THIS DETROITER TAUGHT US TO TUNE IN**

This former Boston Edison resident of 1961 Chicago Blvd. was born in 1914 and lived in the South before moving to Detroit. He earned a degree in dentistry from Meharry Medical College and while there he met and married Iris Bell of Detroit, daughter of Dr. Haley Bell. He moved to Detroit after WWII and went into practice with his father-in-law, later opening his own medical practice in Hamtramck.

In the early 50s, he and Dr. Bell opened a radio station. In 1956, the two men launched the nation’s first black-owned and operated radio station built from the ground up: WCHB AM (the call letters come from the two men’s initials: WCHB). **Who is he?** (Answer on Page 8)

## ANNOUNCEMENT

In 2007, the Board of Directors made a \$10,000 loan to Boston Edison Development, Inc. ("BEDI") to assist with the work BEDI was doing in saving abandoned houses in the Boston Edison Historic District. Long-time resident Robert E. Wilkins created a trust before his death. It was Mr. Wilkins' intention to secure the Association's loan to BEDI. The loan was repaid on October 28, having earned interest for the Association in the amount of \$1,267.

The Finance Committee will very soon be presenting the board with various investment options for consideration.

Questions from the community about this transaction should be directed to the Board President Debbie Baldwin, Vice President & Finance Committee Chair Dianne Bostic Robinson or Treasurer Mary Konopka.



## From the HBEA President

I would like to say that it has been a wonderful six months and that is due to the wonderful people who serve on our board and the great committee work each of them are doing. Dianne Bostic Robinson and I have started walking through the neighborhood to see what people think about their Board, and what they expect from us. I have enjoyed the conversations and what everyone has had to say – whether it was good, bad, or indifferent – as it has helped me to focus on areas that need improvement.

My mission and passion is to build a stronger community that serves the people with honor, integrity and respect. If you would like to have a conversation with me soon, please feel free to reach out. I would love to hear from you on how you feel we can move Boston Edison forward and make this a desirable address. Please email me at [dbaldwin@historicbostonedison.org](mailto:dbaldwin@historicbostonedison.org)

We have two new committees that have been added which are Finance and Membership. I would also like to thank our neighbors who have joined our committees: Sandra Davis and Sloan Herrick (PR), Larry Gaines, Mary Zatina and Sylvia Tatman-Buruss (Fund Development), Larry Gaines, Gregory Hicks and Seth Archambault (Finance), Risa Haynes and Jim Rodgers (Zoning), Deniera Davis (VIP Gala) and Abdul Golden for sharing ideas for our website. We're always looking for new members for each committee.

A few more updates...currently we are researching grants from Kresge Foundation, Ford Foundation, and Knights Cities (Knight Foundation). The City has agreed to install three bus shelters this year at Woodward and Boston Blvd., Chicago Blvd. and Edison. The Public Lighting Authority will start implementation of our new lights in early 2015. And finally, preparations for the VIP Preview Gala and Holiday Home Tour are underway and I hope that you will join me for the fun!

I thank you for the honor of being your president.

Debbie Baldwin

## New LED Lighting Heading to Boston Edison in 2015

*Nicole Spieles, Public Lighting Authority Board Member and Boston Edison resident  
Odis Jones, CEO, Public Lighting Authority*

Following conversations with the Public Lighting Authority (PLA), we are excited to share that the PLA has begun survey work in Boston Edison in preparation for new LED street lights. The survey work will be used to create the engineering design in preparation to the actual construction that is set to take place in the second quarter of 2015.

Considering that the street light poles in our neighborhood are in great condition, as they were replaced within the past decade, the PLA's plan is to reuse the existing poles and replace the old light with an LED light. The new light will be twice as bright as the high pressure sodium lights being replaced. The PLA

will replace any street lights that have been knocked down with similar poles that meet the required lighting standards and useful life requirements.

The streets that will keep the historically decorative styled poles are Boston Blvd., Chicago Blvd., Longfellow Street and Edison Street. Side streets (such as Second, Third, Hamilton, Woodrow Wilson, Rosa Parks, 14<sup>th</sup>, LaSalle, etc.) will be constructed using the standard wood poles used throughout the rest of the city.

The PLA will be providing updates and timetables along the way so we can be sure to share this with everyone when we receive them.

## MEMBERSHIP DRIVE! BREAKFAST WITH NEIGHBORS

### Calling all Boston Edison Residents!

We are hoping to tempt your tummy and collect \$40 for your HBEA membership dues over a delightful *FREE* breakfast from 9:30 to 11 a.m. on Saturday, December 6, 2014 at Blessed Sacrament Cathedral on Woodward.

This is an ideal time to support your neighborhood by becoming a member, renewing your membership, or increasing your membership status with an extra donation.

We will share information about how your dues money is spent and we welcome your feedback on how the association can better serve you.

All are welcome (including current members), so bring the household and an appetite for warm food and good company on Dec. 6. We look forward to meeting and serving you!

RSVP's are nice: please email [membership@historicbostonedison.org](mailto:membership@historicbostonedison.org).

## MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Did you know that our membership dues amount hasn't changed in over 10 years?

## WHAT OUR ZONING COMMITTEE DOES

The Zoning Committee meets monthly to respond to reports and complaints from residents in a number of areas. The committee works to preserve the quality, property values, and sense of community in Boston Edison.

### Property Maintenance

**Trash and junk** are the most frequent complaints: brush and trash in yards and garages, clutter and junk in yards and on porches, and overgrown grass and weeds. The committee investigates all complaints and asks owners to clean up problems. If a situation is not corrected, it is reported to the appropriate Detroit agency.

**"Junk cars"** are a multiyear concern of the committee. Unlicensed and inoperable vehicles parked in driveways and backyards create blight in the neighborhood, and they violate city ordinances. When the committee identifies "junk cars," it first asks owners to remove them. If they do not, the Zoning Committee reports them to Detroit Police.

**Nuisance complaints** to the committee mostly are excessive noise after 10 p.m.

### Zoning Ordinances

Historic violations are the most frequent zoning issues. In the Boston Edison Historic District, any exterior work on houses, garages, or landscapes must be pre-approved by the Detroit Historic District Commission. When approval is not obtained, the committee works closely with the HDC.

**R-1 zoning** in Boston Edison is strictly single-family residential. Houses being used for businesses, unlicensed group homes, churches, or rooming houses are infrequent problems, but the committee long has been aggressive about violations.

**Rental properties and vacant homes** are where some of the worst property maintenance problems arise. The committee pays special attention to these properties. It keeps a current list of vacant homes. If one is poorly maintained, or open and dangerous, the committee works to have problems corrected. If rental houses are poorly maintained, the committee will check with the City Building Department to see whether it has a certificate that occupancy is safe.

**Building codes** become an issue for the committee only when extensive violations cause problems, such as collapsing garages or trash and rodent problems.

### Help

The committee relies on information from neighbors about violations of ordinances. The committee policy is to keep reports confidential and to report back on what it finds and what it does. Contact Zoning at [zoning@historicbostonedison.org](mailto:zoning@historicbostonedison.org) or call (313) 883-4360 ext. 4, and leave a message.

## 'THE ZONE' ZONING COMMITTEE

### LIGHTS ON FOR SAFETY!



The police say that lights are a great way to discourage crime.

Start Tonight!

## International Heritage Honors Longtime Boston Edison Resident



*Submitted by: Dennis Archambault, Boston Edison resident*

The International Heritage Foundation recently honored R.J. King, editor and co-founder of *DBusiness* magazine and longtime resident of Boston Edison by inducting him into the Heritage Hall of Fame.

The recognition, made at the Nov. 6 Heritage Hall of Fame Dinner, honors exceptional leaders from various ethnic backgrounds who have made outstanding contributions to the American way of life, who have demonstrated their commitment to multiculturalism, and who have generously supported ethnic and cultural traditions.

Honorees are displayed in the Heritage Hall of Fame Gallery at Cobo Center.

"R. J. King is a respected editor and philanthropist," noted Anthony Ruggiero, chairman of the International Heritage Foundation. "Like many successful businessmen, R.J. makes time to give back to his community through the many organizations that he is involved with. The Detroit Metro community is the home for many individuals that come from all over the world, building a multicultural city. R.J. understands the importance and the value of his own heritage and that of so many of the immigrants in the community who are striving to achieve the American way of life. He remains a mentor and role model for all of us who believe in the hope of America. Through his writing, R.J. shares this with his readers."

Author of the book *Passport to the Corner Office*, King worked as a Detroit News business writer for 16 years. He is a member of the board of directors of Beyond Basics, Asian Pacific American Chamber of Commerce, Detroit Athletic Club Executives Club, Detroit Aircraft Corp., and the Brother Rice Business Alliance. He also serves on the Parade Company Board of Trustees.

*Dbusiness*, launched in 2006, garnered 10 editorial gold and silver medals from the Alliance of Area Business Publications (2010-11), including being named the top business magazine among 70 regional business publications in the United States, Canada, Puerto Rico, and Australia, which collectively reach more than 1.2 million professionals.

R.J. King lives on West Boston Boulevard.

### BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE

#### TIME TO SPRUCE UP SO YOU DON'T HAVE TO PAY UP

As we get ready for winter, it is a good time to make sure all leaves are removed from front yards and curbs. Not only because it looks nice, but because the City is on the attack against blight. Other things that fall on the blight radar include:

- Porches without stairs
- Porches being held up with temporary poles or hydraulic jacks
- Boards on any window visible to the street.
- Vacant homes
- Garbage cans or recycle containers left out overnight after trash pickup.

**Those violations can be costly with fines from the city starting at \$200.**

## Homes Sales in Boston Edison are Stabilizing & Increasing

Looking back 12 months ago, according to the Multiple List Service, non-distressed home prices in Boston Edison varied from approximately \$50,000 to \$170,000 at the higher end. The majority of homes were selling for around \$100,000.

### Neighborhood Awareness

Boston Edison has always been known for its homes and craftsmanship, famous homeowners, and historic designation. Fast forward to 2014. In the last year the market has experienced an increased homebuyer interest. A few campaigns have contributed to high buyer interest, including:

- employer incentives from Henry Ford Health, Wayne State University, Detroit Medical Center and others which have been extended to Boston Edison
- public relations and marketing campaigns released by the Detroit Land Bank for home auctions
- proximity to the M-1 Rail

Those considerations combined with low inventory (fewer sellers) have led to higher selling prices.

### Homes Currently On the Market\*

Based on size and condition of the home, newer listings in Boston Edison range from \$100,000 to \$375,000

- 1169 Boston Blvd - \$375,000
- 51 Edison - \$339,000
- 671 Edison - \$298,500
- 1991 Boston Blvd. - \$250,000
- 2051 Chicago Blvd. - \$219,900
- 1955 Edison - \$199,900
- 2455 Chicago - \$99,000

(\*nondistressed homes that are habitable)

We often tell sellers that the market is changing and sale prices are increasing. We advise prospective homebuyers that this is a good time to buy, especially as current interest rates continue to make these beautiful homes affordable.

*Contributed by: Gaye Butler, Managing Broker, Robinson Realty & Management Group*

### Old House Know How

Taking care of old houses is not like taking care of new houses.

The Boston Edison website has links to information that is helpful for maintaining and restoring historic houses.

[www.historicbostonedison.org/diy.shtml](http://www.historicbostonedison.org/diy.shtml)

## WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOUR ALARM GOES OFF?

### You should know...

Police only respond to house alarms if someone verifies that there is an intruder and it is not a false alarm.

### If you are not home, you can do this by:

- ⇒ Having a neighbor verify your alarm
- ⇒ Having DSS verify your alarm (for subscribers only)
- ⇒ Having an enhanced alarm system that sends the proper signals

### BE proactive. Learn more.

[www.historicbostonedison.org/security/security12.shtml](http://www.historicbostonedison.org/security/security12.shtml)

**SECURITY  
COMMITTEE**

### Historic District Commission

HDC must pre-approve exterior work as historically appropriate. [www.historicbostonedison.org/pres5.shtml](http://www.historicbostonedison.org/pres5.shtml)

HDC staff can advise on appropriateness and help with pre-approval. *Contact them early* when planning.

Jennifer Ross | (313) 224-8907 | [Rossj@detroitmi.gov](mailto:Rossj@detroitmi.gov); Crystal Wilson | (313) 224-6543 | [WilsonCR@detroitmi.gov](mailto:WilsonCR@detroitmi.gov)

Ask HBEA for help: [zoning@historicbostonedison.org](mailto:zoning@historicbostonedison.org) or (313) 883-4360 ext 4.

HISTORIC BOSTON-EDISON ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 02100, Detroit, MI 48202

Website: [www.historicbostonedison.org](http://www.historicbostonedison.org) | Email: [bostonedison@gmail.com](mailto:bostonedison@gmail.com) | Hotline: 313.883.4360

Trivia Answer: Wendell F. Cox

## B-E Connected!

Are you receiving [Boston Edison Emails](#) for neighborhood events?

If not, email us your information and we will add you right away!

Email: [bostonedison@gmail.com](mailto:bostonedison@gmail.com)

Care to share on the [BE Discussion Google Group?](#) (For HBEA Dues-Paying Members)

Email: [discussion-boston-edison@googlegroups.com](mailto:discussion-boston-edison@googlegroups.com) to join

Or contact us at [bostonedison@gmail.com](mailto:bostonedison@gmail.com) and we will add you.

Want real-time [Security Alerts?](#) (A Security Google Group for DSS Subscribers)  
Contact the Security Committee for information about joining Dusing Security and  
Surveillance. (313) 883-4360 Security \*Mailbox 3



Historic Boston-Edison Detroit



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