

Couple brings art to Fairfield Corridor

BY CJ WOODRING

The city's Historic South Wayne Neighborhood is home to an eclectic mix of folks of all ages: Young families with children. Mid-lifers and empty nesters. Retirees and the self-employed. Gardeners, golfers and walkers, the latter often accompanied by a four-footed furry family member.

Regardless of their ages and where—or if—employed, moving to the neighborhood was a conscious choice most residents made. And most don't regret it, including Ben Roney who, along with partner Maggie Dye, owns Studio07 at 3414 Fairfield Ave., a mutual dream nurtured long before they met.

A Michigan native, Roney majored in scenic design at Lawrence University, where artistic training focused on drawing and



Owners Ben Roney and Maggie Dye welcome Fort Wayne residents and friends to Studio07 at 3414 Fairfield Ave. Photo by CJ Woodring

theatrical painting techniques, with an emphasis in art history and drafting. He has worked on theatrical productions from Wisconsin to Maine in the subsequent decades.

Roney moved to Fort Wayne in 2004 to accept a position with the FW Civic Theatre, and has called HSWN home since 2006. He is involved with local film, theatre, and dance troupes, the last being Fort Wayne Ballet, and currently is building "Songs For a New World," a collaboration between the Three Rivers Music Theatre and Fort Wayne Dance Collective.

Dye hails from North Webster. Though

her formal training at IPFW was in graphic design, photography and fine art, her passion for art began early: From the time she could hold a crayon, her parents have been a constant source of support and encouragement.

While renting a nearby apartment, Roney was drawn to the variety of late 19th- and early 20th-century home designs here. Ultimately, he found a three-bedroom Four-square with original oak casements, stairwell and gas lighting fixtures that had been converted to electric. The couple has lived

Continued on page 3

SWAP GRANT

Southwest Area Partnership (SWAP) is again doing the Home Improvement Program, a matching grant up to \$300 for any home improvement project that improves the overall street-side exterior of your home. Apply now as funds are limited. Find the application at rebrand.ly/swap-hip/.

HSWN hip hop artist releases new album

"The world traveler who landed in Fort Wayne, Indiana, and called it home with an incredible woman and their two sons. Rumor has it he teaches preschool at a nearby public school and finds joy in being with children when not working words or doing family stuff. Word is that his newest release, Legacy Materials, is by far his most personal work and was just released on the 25th of this fine month."

Stream the album, check out the lyrics, and support this local artist at sankofa.bandcamp.com.



Fort Wayne rocks as potential 'Top 10 Music City'

BY CJ WOODRING

Fort Wayne has carved a niche among Indiana cities since its 1794 establishment, acquiring designations including "Summit City," "Magnet Wire Capital of the World," "City of Churches," and "The City That Saved Itself." We've also been designated a "Tree City" and several times were cited as an "All-American City," most recently in 2021.

Thus, I was excited when I spotted a WANE-TV online article in January: Greater Fort Wayne, Inc., supported by Mayor Tom Henry and other city leaders, has joined forces in creating a 10-year economic development plan with goals that include recognition as a "Top 10 Music City" by the end of 2023. This will include "expanded festivals, music venues, training and education and music-industry innovation," according to the article.

While Fort Wayne's current musicians and performers most often are acknowledged, little has been mentioned, thus far, of the music history that led us here. And which we're partially recalling in several newsletters, noting both commercial endeavors and individual efforts and accomplishments.

FEEDBACK WANTED: HSWN Survey

Visit the link below to fill out our neighborhood survey on Google Forms:

rebrand.ly/hsw-n-survey

We continue to discuss options for a future home tour but not this year.



Illustration by HSWN resident Ben Swygart ; benjaminswygart.com

INITIAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO INDIANA'S MUSIC HISTORY

Moreso than any other art form, music unites people. Thus, while acknowledging music is a universal language that conveys happiness and joy, it is also a globally recognized anchor when times are bad: global chaos and war, community violence, the Great Depression, pandemics such as COVID-19. In these shared times of collective misery and woe, music offers hope and, to many, a reason for living. Individuals have been known to spend their last dime on a form of music: Nourishing one's soul is often more important than feeding one's belly.

No stranger to music in any form, or forum, the Hoosier State has been associated with music since at least the early 1900s, when Elkhart earned distinction as "Band Capital of the World." Although instruments were produced in various Hoosier cities at the beginning of the nineteenth century, more than 60 manufacturers were at one time based in the City with a Heart.

One of Fort Wayne's first, and perhaps most notable, foray into music lauded an instrument: the Packard piano. Isaac Packard and associates relocated to Fort Wayne from Chicago following the 1871 Great Chicago Fire. They established the Fort Wayne Organ Company the following year. In 1899 the name officially was changed to The Packard Company and, in 1915, to The Packard Piano Company.

Located on Fairfield Avenue, the company was a go-to for musicians in the mar-

ket for parlor pianos as well as orchestral organs that graced venues including the Embold Theater. The company went into receivership after the 1929 stock market crash. In 1937, the city of Fort Wayne acquired the property, tore down the buildings and created Packard Park in its place. (See packardorgan.com.)

In the interim, local General Electric employees, whose former campus currently is undergoing adaptive reuse as Electric Works, enjoyed making music, entertaining not only coworkers but city residents. According to author Clovis E. Linkous' 1994 book, "General Electric at Fort Wayne, Indiana: A 110-Year History," the Electro-Technic Club Band first entertained in February 1910 at an ETC roller skating party. The group later held Thursday noon luncheon concerts in McCulloch Park, formerly known as G.E. Park. In the spring of 1925, the Male Glee Club was organized, followed five years later by construction of a new bandstand in the park.

A 25-member Male Chorus was introduced in 1935 and performed that fall for the Parent-Teachers Organization at Nebraska School. The last group of GE music makers was a 36-piece band organized in 1937. Linkous suggests that World War II "probably disrupted the musical organizations" at the Fort Wayne plant.

More recently, in June 2009 the City renovated the 1930 bandstand on the four-acre green space, adding a musically-themed playground with fanciful instruments that make different sounds, allowing chil-

Continued on back page

Yard Waste Pickup thru 4/8

The City will conduct curbside collection of bagged lawn debris through Friday, April 8—if they are in paper yard bags and not placed in alleys. Call 311 for pickup.

Recycling update

Unfortunately due to Red River's bankruptcy, there is no set recycling pickup schedule which is very frustrating. You can still call 311 to report a miss of recycling or garbage pickup. You can also leave your cart out indefinitely while you wait for pickup. Another option to consider is taking recyclables to the drop-off trailer behind Southgate Plaza Kroger.

SPRING & SUMMER 2022

- **Saturday, Apr. 2** • 8 a.m. – 12 p.m.
Dumpster Day @ Indiana Ave. near Kinnaird Ave.
- **Saturday, April 16** • approx. 8 a.m. until it runs out!
Dirt Day @ corner of Indiana & Kinnaird
- **Saturday, April 30** • 8 a.m. - 12 p.m.
Great American Cleanup @ South Wayne Elementary
- **Monday, May 16** • 7 - 8 p.m.
HSWNA Board Meeting (all are welcome) @ Lifeway Church
- **Sunday, May 22** • 4 - 5 p.m.—Kite Day @ Lutheran Park
- **Saturday, June 4** • All day—Neighborhood Yard Sales
- **Saturday, July 4** • 11 a.m. - 12 p.m.
Bike Parade @ Lutheran Park (meet at Indiana & Kinnaird to decorate at 10:30 a.m.)
- **Monday, July 18** • 7 - 8 p.m.
HSWNA General Meeting (all welcome) @ Lifeway Church

Schedule subject to change. View more events & add them to your Google Calendar at historicsouthwayne.com. While you're there, sign up for our email list to get notified of event updates.

'Music City' continued from p.2

dren to create their own music. The City's Parks & Recreation Department, Broadway Corridor merchants, businesses, organizations and others celebrated the rededication during the first Broadway Family FunFest, which featured the Fort Wayne Area Community Band, formed about 40 years ago.

Watch for more of this series at historicsouthwayne.com/news/.

CJ Woodring has been affiliated with the 46807 district since growing up on W. Oakdale Drive. She graduated from South Side High School and reared her sons on Kinnaird Avenue, where she served as a former HSWNA newsletter editor. She has lived in — and loved — historic places and spaces for more than 30 years. She currently resides in her sixth historic home.

POETRY BY OMOWALÉ-KÉTU OLADUWA

Author's note: This first meditation begins we rize — celebrating the sojourn across lifez bridge, published Dec. 2021. The coupling and misspelling of some words is intentional, part of the license of poetic expression meant for the reader to look deeper into the lines, the phrases, themselves.

poetz notez

poetry duz more than inscribe blakkwordz on whitepaper / itz truly empowering—telling more than alluring storiez uv the beauty & the ugly we huemanz do to wunanother

poetry iz a mystic mythic innerpath
a treasured perspective buried in the deeepercave uv self
on a distant mountaintop or the distinct blakkinde behind the eyez

poetwordz be mantraz
encoding chakraz in the metasphere
revelationz in genomic imprinting portraiture

thru portalz to dimenzionz unimagined

poetwordz be lotus flowerz
rootdeep in mud—twinning strong
sprouting realityz sunsoul

the bloom uv poetwordz
be naked silencez expanse in the hall uv emptymind
the giverz ineffable hush / uni/versal singsong

the only way to deal with an unfree world is to become so absolutely free that your very existence is an act of rebellion.¹

¹Albert Camus, *Documenting My Liberation*, az quoted by Adrienne Maree Brown in her blog: adriennemareebrown.net

Omowalé-Kétu Oladuwa is the son of Carrie & John Taylor, Margaret Fisher and Tyrone Foster, and the cultural student of Chief James Hawthorne Béy and Dr. Margaret Burroughs. With degrees in theatre, and journalism, he worked 25 years in those two fields. Married 34 years and the father of five, he lives and writes from HSWN. To learn more and to purchase his books, contact icconthemove@gmail.com.

Thanks for your support!

Voluntary Dues: Resident: \$25/year • Business: \$50/year

Make checks payable to HSWNA, send to Richard May, 932 Kinnaird Ave.
or **PAY ONLINE** at historicsouthwayne.com

Benefits include a Dirt Wain composting service discount.
Learn more at historicsouthwayne.com/dirtwain

JOIN OUR EMAIL LIST!

And find out about last minute events like spring Dumpster Day ahead of time! historicsouthwayne.com/contact