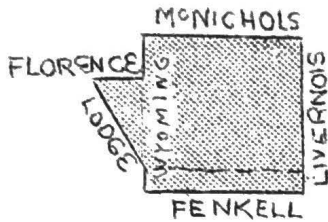


the FITZGERALD NEWS

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THE FITZGERALD COMMUNITY COUNCIL
7434 W. MCNICHOLS DETROIT 21 863-1656

Important Community Council Meeting

Did the Police Mistreat Fitzgerald Teenagers?

Friday, February 2, 1968
St. Timothy's Episcopal Church

Eight o'Clock P.M.
Wyoming at Pilgrim

Hear tape recordings of the young people's own stories of what actually happened to them in the neighborhood. Decide if they were treated fairly. Should police be able to take innocent minors to the station, then release them without an apology? What rights does an individual have in his home or on the street when confronted by authority?

To answer these questions and many more that will be raised, officials from the following organizations will be present:

AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION

COMMISSION ON COMMUNITY RELATIONS

DETROIT POLICE DEPARTMENT

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE

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BE SURE TO ATTEND

REFRESHMENTS WILL BE SERVED

THE POLICE-COMMUNITY DILEMMA

In the last few weeks there have been a number of incidents which have caused concern, fear and hostility to develop in that area which is referred to as "Police-Community Relations". This is particularly ironic because the new Inspector in our precinct, Mr. Werner, is very concerned with having good community relations and has shown some initiative in this area. Some of the problems may require action on a level higher than that of Inspector Werner.

What has happened is that our young people have been stopped in the street, in cars and in their meeting place, questioned, sometimes patted down, sometimes taken to the station and sometimes required to bring a parent with them to the station. They have not been arrested or booked, but have been released without apology. In some cases the officers were discourteous and made racist remarks.

Through the offices of the Community Council a meeting was arranged where some of the young people, some concerned adults and some officials got together to discuss the problem. At this meeting we learned that many of the incidents involved police officers from the Tactical Mobile Units (TMU) or the Precinct Support Units, neither of which are responsible to the Precinct Inspector. It was agreed that any photographs taken of juveniles would be surrendered upon request. Written notes stating that the person picked up was picked up by mistake were to be issued to those who requested them. However this has not been forthcoming because this would require a change in Police Dept policy and must be cleared on a higher level. We are told they are working on this matter.

The FCC feels that there are a number of questions which must be discussed throughout the community because, the way these issues are resolved will effect the lives of us all.

1. How can the police fulfill their function of apprehending those who have committed crimes without violation the rights and dignity of innocent citizens of all ages?

2. How can the police officers who are sick with the disease of racism or sadism be removed from public-contact positions until they are cured?

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CRISIS IN THE SCHOOLS

Ethel Garrett, Fitzgerald PTA President, has been leading a battle against the School Board to keep Fitzgerald's class size at a level where all children can learn. With her 1006 PTA members (the state's largest PTA) 100% behind her, she has been responsible for lowering class size from 40 to 35, by pressuring the School Board until they bussed children living on the four streets east of Livernois to uncrowded quality schools in Northwest Detroit. Two years ago when Mr. Mackie Johnson was PTA President, the School Board rented space at St. Timothy's Church to house about 170 kindergarten and primary students. These past actions of the School Board were the direct results of strong pressure and complaints of the PTA and greatly raised the morale of our teachers who also want quality education for the youngsters.

Since many families with school-age children have moved into the area since fall, the class size is again growing. In spite of the fact that 110 6A's will be graduating this month, Mrs. Garrett felt that Fitzgerald School must receive further relief. Instead, word came that the 6A's, who should go to a Jr. High School, will stay at Fitzgerald!

Irate telegrams were sent to the School Board, and a group of PTA members met with the District Supervisor to protest this plan. The scheduled PTA program for last Tuesday was cancelled and the School Board was invited to defend their decision. The auditorium was packed and the panel of School Board members, who had no solutions to offer, learned what it is to be up against firey Fitzgerald.

Everyone had a chance to speak and they did. After this show of united action and concern if the Board does not act in our favor, Mrs. Garrett will call upon you to support her in her next move. The following evening the Fitzgerald Community Council Board voted to support the PTA in any action it might take.

MERCHANTS' AWARD

Merchants in the area again want to award Fitzgerald students for outstanding citizenship grades. After the last report card 172 students picked up their awards at 10 different stores. Certificates will be given after the Jan 31 report card telling where to pick up the awards.

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THE FCC GROWS!

Booths were set up for the FCC Membership Drive on Dec. 2 at the Puritan Community Market, Dannys Market, R & C Discount and the Hardware Mart. Many neighbors who were not familiar with the work of the FCC became aware of its past activities and future plans. The Council's membership increased by 170 families that day! We hope that these new members will join us at our meetings so that we can hear their hopes and desires for the area and then all work together to make this the kind of neighborhood we want for our selves and our children.

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Your Newsletter came to you through the mail. The FCC, with the help of the Fitzgerald Neighborhood Improvements Office, mailed it to members and other interested residents. It is hoped that those of you who are not already members will join the Community Council at the Feb. 2nd meeting or mail your dues to the FCC Office, 7434 W. Mc Nichols. Yearly family dues are \$1, \$3 or \$10, what ever you wish to pay. Please include your name, address and phone number when you join.

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IMPROVEMENTS CONTINUE

Have you noticed the new street lights on your block? These have been installed as part of the Fitzgerald Neighborhood Improvements Program. Our Fitzgerald area was fortunate in receiving a Federal grant of 2.1 million dollars to be used to renovate the area. Through this program low interest loans or in some cases, grants are available for homeowners to bring their homes up to code standards. Side walks and curbs have been repaired, streets have been resurfaced, commercial alleys have been paved and now our new street lights are being put in. The residential alleys can be paved on most blocks at a great saving to the homeowner. Now is the time to sign a petition to have your alley paved, then work can start as soon as the weather warms. If you have questions about this program call their office, 862-2080.

POLICE (con't from p.2)

3. How can the youth of the community regain confidence in the integrity of the police?

We will discuss these and other related issues at our February 2nd meeting. Please plan to be there.