**East Side Neighborhoods Day events with Friends of Detroit City Airport, Community United for Progress, Farwell Community Garden, Detroit Public Library**

**By Laydell Harper**

**Special For ARISE Detroit!**

More than 60 registered events of all kinds, ranging from health fairs to beautification and book fairs, were held on the east side of Detroit for the 16th annual ARISE Detroit! Neighborhoods Day on Aug. 6, 2022.

Here’s a behind the scenes look at three of them.

**The Friends of Detroit City Airport**

This is a 31year old nonprofit community organization that held its Neighborhoods Day event at Detroit City Airport.

. Executive Director, Beverly Kindle-Walkerwas the coordinator of this lively clean-up crew at the airport, located on Conner near Gratiot. The clean-up group was approximately 10 people both young and old. The young people used some of the time to have fun while working. They were all given miniature airplanes and when the airplanes were thrown in the air a certain way, the plane would take flight and turn as if actually flying and landing. This was a big hit with the young people both girls and boys between the ages of 8 and 12.

The kids threw airplanes and continued to chase them all the while continuing their assigned duties. Evidence of their work was huge, oversized plastic bags of debris mostly weeds to give the grounds a clean, manicured appearance, Kevin Williams of Warren, Michigan and James Hines made sure all of the weeds were gone as

Kindle-Walker, a retired Civil Air Patrol 1st Lt., wanted to be sure to mention her passion, Women in Aviation – Detroit Chapter. Kindle-Walker wants to get more girls involved in aviation. She made a special effort to highlight the up-coming Girls in Aviation Day Event Saturday, Sept. 24, 2022 from 9am – 1 pm. And The Friends of Detroit City Airport Life-size bronze monument in tribute to the Red Tails, also known as the Tuskegee Airmen at city airport, also known as Coleman A. Young Airport.

**“**I am so proud to invite young girls to join us and become active in Women in Aviation-Detroit Chapter,” she said.

**Binder Street Block Club/Farwell Community Garden**

 Driving east on East Eight Mile Road. it’s easy to spot the sprawling Farwell Community Garden. Eloise Moore, a former schoolteacher, oversees this massive, lush looking garden located on East Mile Road between Fenelon and Sunset streets.

On Neighborhoods Day, the work of Moore and others on the Farwell Garden was on full display.

 Moore said she believes in sharing the fruits of their labor with the community. “Anyone that would like to enjoy the vegetables is welcome,” she said.

 In fact, she encourages folks to come to the garden. The Farwell Community Garden is like a meeting space for people that live in the community; some from close by right in the neighborhood others from the suburban side of Eight Mile. They bring their fold-up chairs and come prepared to visit with neighbors, and of course pick fresh vegetables. Cleotha Williams is the Master Gardener that takes care of this over-sized vegetable garden. The garden is loaded with several kinds of healthy-looking vegetables that are also healthy for you; horse radish, greens, tomatoes and squash, all fresh from the garden and free to neighbors.

**Community United for Progress (CUP).** “This is our 15th year with Neighborhoods Day,” said Shirley Burch, founder of
CUP and a Detroit Police Commissioner. “We provide information to the community that will create a healthy environment and is created through education ad health and safety.”

The event was held at Dad Butler park, located behind the Belmont Shopping Center, at Eight Mile and Dequindre, n northeast Detroit.

“Neighborhoods Day is our opportunity to share hope with people,” Burch said. inued, “To let them know businesses still care, that’s why we are united with Belmont Shopping Center and Imperial Market because if you’re united, you can only progress.”

“We’re also letting people know that we have plans to renovate the blighted areas”, Burch said. “I’m trying to motivate people. Back in the 50’s this neighborhood was known as a very prominent area; Conant Gardens and Sojourner Truth.”

Neighborhoods Day was also a time to learn a little history about the neighborhood,” Burch said. “We were the first to provide a (police) Mini Station with three different law enforcement agencies: Detroit Police, Michigan State Troopers and the Wayne County Sheriff’s office. They all utilized the Mini Station at Belmont, (shopping center.”

“We have many venders that we partner with McDonalds, the Senior Medical Center and the newly under construction Bio-Life Plasma,” Burch said. “ They all like the exposure that they get from Neighborhoods Day.”

**Detroit Public Library Main Branch**

 Neighborhoods Day was a great day to visit the Main Branch of the Detroit Public Library on Woodward in midtown Detroit. It was a day to not only meet some book and learn about new books, but also to enjoy the unexpected, exercise and Neighborhood Day visitors had an opportunity to meet S.R. Taylor, the author of the book entitled “Round.” The book teaches children how to love themselves despite their physical appearance, heavy, short or whatever they look like. It was a great lesson for young people to learn on a Saturday morning.

The day was well structured and moved along smoothly so participants could get the most out of this 16th annual Neighborhood’s Day event. From 11am-12 pm Family Yoga was the center of attention and more than 20 people, young and old, participated.

From 1pm-2 pm there was a Zumba dance party designed to keep visitors happy, energized and ready for the next dance moves which were called “Hustle for Health.

From time to time during the course of the day there was a free book give-away to Neighborhood’s Day visitors.

 Kalana Gates, assistant manager for the library said, “We are very involved because of the pandemic we wanted to reach out to the community, and Neighborhood’s Day was perfect. We wanted to give back to the community.”

And wrapping up the day was “Junk Food and Friends” free ice cream for everyone.

 “Neighborhoods Day” brought back a sense of community and togetherness to Detroit Public Library by way of ARISE Detroit,” Gates said. “It made me feel normal again.”