

Grant Park Neighborhood Association

P.O. Box 13102, Portland, OR 97213

Fall 2018

Traffic and Construction Updates

by Ken Peterson

The Summer GPNA newsletter focused on land use and traffic issues, largely centered on the intersection of 33rd and Broadway. Hoped for further progress on those issues during the summer months unfortunately did not occur. Here are some brief updates:

- The Aircraft Factory (formerly Gordon's Fireplace Shop) project remains in the "early assistance" stage of plan review by the Portland Bureau of Development Services (BDS) with no final plans submitted for city approval. It appears the city will require construction of new sidewalks matching the footprint and width of the nearby Grant Park Village development. That may affect on street parking options and traffic lanes. The new owners continue to seek major retail tenants while arranging financing.
- The new owner of the former Jacksons convenience store also seeks tenants and formal new building plans are on hold.
- Commencement of the Broadway-Weidler Corridor plan will be delayed while the Central City in Motion Plan progresses in order to prevent potential conflicts. Changes at 33rd and Broadway will likely not occur any time soon as a result. Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT) describes that plan as follows:
- "Central City in Motion is Portland's plan for strategic investments in our streets to create a smart, 21st century transportation system in the Central City. Our goal is to make the entire street system work better, providing more predictable travel times for businesses and residents."
- No further concrete information is available concerning the site of the closed Burger King restaurant on Broadway near 37th Avenue. New burger chain Super Deluxe may be considering the location for future expansion. According to Portland Monthly, Super Deluxe owner Micah Camden stated, "I'm already looking at other spots. I'm on Broadway on 36th, and there's a Burger King closing. It's just sitting empty with no plans. So ... yeah."
- Grant High school renovation remains on schedule. To help raise funds for the auditorium Fletcher Mural Restoration Project, the Alumni Association has arranged to have tours of the high school during the remodel. Small group (10 maximum) tours begin at 3pm and are "generally" scheduled for the last Thursday of the month through 2018. A donation of \$20.00 will secure your place. Make reservations by emailing grantalumni@aol.com or use <https://www.grantalumni.org/directory--contacts.html>. The site is not handicap accessible and sturdy closed-toe shoes are required. Pictured at right is Jamie Hurd, PPS Project Manager, with the newly added central staircase, auditorium in the background.



2018 MEETINGS:

April 10 (Annual Meeting),
June 5 (Board),
September 18 (General), &
November 13 (Board)
Grant Park Church
2728 NE 34th Ave

(corner of 34th and Knott Streets)

To check the meeting schedule
and agenda, or to suggest an
agenda topic, please go to:

grantpark-na.org/thehood/meetings.html

GPNA MEETINGS

Our annual meeting, when elections are held is in April. Regularly scheduled meetings for the remainder of 2018 will be determined at the annual meeting. Special or emergency meetings, when needed, may be scheduled at any time. Meetings are open. Grant Park Neighborhood Association is open to ALL persons living or working within its boundaries. If you need special accommodations, please contact a Board member.

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Letters to the Editor and Articles

The article in the Summer issue concerning 33rd and Broadway prompted some readers to submit email comments. As a result, the GPNA board developed a policy for submission of both letters to the editor and articles for publication, set forth below:

Grant Park Neighborhood Association (GPNA) welcomes letters to the editor and original articles for publication from those residing or working within neighborhood boundaries. Letters concerning prior published articles must be submitted within 30 days of newsletter distribution. Letters or articles that include profanity, libelous statements, personal attacks against individuals or specific organizations, or that are unreasonably long, will be rejected. Articles should be original or with attribution stated, and should address topics of local interest. Letters and articles submitted anonymously will be evaluated on a case by case basis for publication, but the editor must be able to verify the identity of the writer to ensure authenticity. Letters or articles that support or oppose individual candidates for public office cannot be published, but those concerning ballot measures will be considered.

Letters to the Editor

Editor:

I'm a Grant Park resident and recently read your article "What To Do About 33rd & Broadway". I thought the article was very informative and timely as the traffic patterns in Grant Park have been problematic for some time and are only getting worse.

I'd like to alert you to another big traffic problem in the neighborhood. I live on NE 37th & Hancock and the use of 37th as an on-ramp onto I84 causes a lot of problems. There are over 2,500 cars that travel down 37th daily! Lots of these cars come off of the four way stop at 37th & Hancock and "gun it" to try to beat the light at Broadway leading to the onramp onto I84. These cars have almost hit many children on the street. Furthermore, the cars back up multiple blocks during rush hour at the Broadway light causing difficult parking and driving conditions on the street. This has been an issue for years but is becoming even more of an issue with the Grant Park Village development because many people now have switched their pattern of driving from 33rd onto 37th. And with the increased use of in car navigation, the 37th route is often recommended for cars driving in the neighborhood (Lyft, Uber, and others). A couple of years ago, our street contacted the city to request installation of a right turn only median at Broadway and 37th. PBOT was willing to consider it, did the traffic count above, but then pulled out and said there were higher priorities elsewhere. Now with the proliferation of in car navigation, I would venture to guess that traffic has increased over 50% from the count taken two years ago. Our street was never meant to be a thoroughfare or on ramp. When Hollywood's streets were reconfigured after Fred Meyer left the Rite Aid location, the commercial street of 39th was the street that was

meant for this traffic. However, poor planning resulted in people using 37th.

This is a real issue for many people in the neighborhood and I worry that someone is going to get hurt soon. Many of my neighbors are starting to take matters into their own hands by putting out barriers, instigating arguments with passersby, etc. I would like you to consider publicizing this issue along with your correct acknowledgment of the 33rd & Broadway issue and if you are able to get the city's attention, please consider helping us find a solution to the issue at 37th in conjunction with the resolution for the 33rd.

Jake Raiton

Editor:

As a professional in the planning field I have led efforts to deal with traffic issues in other jurisdictions. I have some ideas to improve the intersection at 33rd and Broadway, and other related intersections nearby:

1. To prevent the bottleneck in the right turn lane for SB cars on 33rd, pedestrian and bike traffic crossing Broadway should be encouraged to shift west to 32nd Ave and east to 37th Ave (or to a new crosswalk at 35th -- similar to that at 26th, which could benefit the businesses nearby and be an access point for the Sullivan's Gulch trail). The WB bus stop

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on Broadway just past 33rd should be located further west, and new on-street parking in the vicinity of the intersection should be disallowed.

2. A new dedicated left turn lane should be created on WB Broadway at 33rd, at the expense of on-street parking if necessary. This would alleviate the need to track through neighborhoods to get on I-84 west-bound from the east.
3. 33rd should be widened and lanes added between Schuyler and Hancock to provide more capacity for queuing (SB traffic) and merging (NB traffic). The NB bus stop at Jacksons Shell station should also be moved up to Hancock where there is pedestrian crossing. This should prevent cars that are turning left from Broadway onto NB 33rd from backing up into the intersection and blocking traffic when the light changes.
4. The SB right turn lane on 33rd could be made 'Right Turn Only' at Broadway. In this case, traffic continuing through the intersection—including to the freeway onramp—would use the center lane exclusively. SB traffic on 33rd south of Broadway (i.e. over the freeway) could then be restricted to a single lane, allowing northbound lanes (also bike lane and sidewalk) there to be widened and improving safety in both directions.
5. One or two additional north-south access points should be made along Broadway west of 33rd to help alleviate the burden on 33rd. Specifically, 32nd Ave and 28th Ave could be re-connected between Broadway and Knott, with mini-roundabouts like on 24th to keep traffic slow (and eliminate stop signs). Re-connecting 28th would be especially useful as it provides access to Fred Meyer and connects through to Sandy. It could be expected that some through traffic would also use these alternate access points, leading to additional turns from Knott onto NB 33rd. Knott (west of 33rd) is wide enough to permit a dedicated left turn lane so that other traffic can move through (this is my preferred access point to SB 33rd, and it's a headache as traffic is so disorganized).
6. Finally, something should be done to reduce congestion on NB 33rd due to cars turning left (west) into the neighborhoods. SB traffic on 33rd is often continuous—especially at rush hour—presenting too few gaps for safe turns. As a result, cars behind those turning left can get backed up far enough to affect the intersection at US Grant and perhaps further south. What we need are more frequent and longer gaps, which can be created by modifying the traffic signals at Knott so that SB cars travel closer together and in bunches while maintaining the same travel volume.

In a related matter, I'd like to see an increase in required setbacks for new buildings on the north side of Broadway, to improve sight distance and remove any 'tunnel' effect on drivers.

Terry Anthony

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Homeless in Grant Park?

Here in the prosperous, well-tended, and tidy Grant Park neighborhood it is easy to think that the proliferation of people without housing happens elsewhere. With few exceptions, our neighborhood often appears outwardly to be an oasis, largely untouched by the livability issues other neighborhoods throughout Portland face. In this newsletter, two Grant Park residents offer very personal, poignant stories about people close to them who became homeless, albeit by different paths and for different reasons.

Homegrown Homeless

I watched him grow up in our Grant Park neighborhood, as I had earlier watched his father before him. His dad attended Grant High School in the 1970's when we first moved in. Within ten years I realized that a little boy had been born to this young man and his partner. I wasn't sure where they lived during this period but they were often around. By the time he was ready to start school, Johnnie (not his real name) appeared to be spending much of his waking hours in the house owned by his middle-aged grandparents, just a couple of doors down from us. I wasn't sure if he always stayed overnight.

He had an engaging smile, an enthusiastic nature and typical childhood curiosity. During their elementary school years he, his little sister, and three other neighbor kids from another household used to gather around our kitchen table to bake cookies. The youngsters enjoyed the cookies warm from the oven and a plateful always went home to both families.

My favorite image of Johnnie is at age eight wearing his Cub Scout uniform of blue and gold, raking giant leaves beneath our red maple, grinning at the camera, knowing he was doing a good job.

Johnnie loved that maple tree, especially to climb. Its lowest limb was nearly six feet off the ground and a child had to swing his body weight upward to sit astride it. Johnnie was one of the more skilled neighborhood kids, others still needing an adult's boost up. These grade school climbers always rang our doorbell for climbing permission, the same as they did when wanting to use their sleds or bikes on our sloping driveway.

Eventually I came to understand that Johnnie was attending school a bit farther away from Fernwood so that he could be in a special class for help with reading and math. At this point in time he and his sister would say, "I'll ask my grandma," when they needed permission for something special. Both children did seem to live there with their grandparents; right where their dad had resided when we first joined the neighborhood. So, with his grandmother's blessing, I began inviting Johnnie to accompany me to the Hollywood Library where we enjoyed interpreting cartoons in the New Yorker

and searching for easy "chapter books" on any topic he fancied. Our walks to and from the library were part of the pleasure.

Johnnie acquired a very well-used bike and learned to ride. Some parts were loose and they squeaked when he pedaled. My husband had Johnnie bring his bike into our garage where they tightened it up and oiled the chain. A couple of years later the same oil can was used for Johnnie's skate board and we had the opportunity to reinforce the safety precautions for riding down our driveway and into the street.

The years went by. Johnnie's grandfather died of a heart condition that not even his wife knew he had. It was a shock to the family and all of us neighbors. Although Johnnie occasionally stayed with his mom someplace else in Portland, apparently neither she nor his dad had been able to establish a home for themselves and their two children.

Because of the sounds we could hear escalating from their backyard barbecues on warm Saturday nights, we knew that alcohol had a big role in the family activities. Johnnie continued to stay with his grandmother much of the time. But high school was becoming a problem for him: in spotty attendance, ongoing struggles with academics and being outside of the mainstream of social life with classmates. My own interpretation of this phase of Johnnie's life was that the stigma of needing special education support, coupled with not knowing that he solidly belonged with either of his parents or with his now-widowed grandmother, placed him in an irreparable situation where he could not flourish.

By his late teens, when his age mates would have already graduated, Johnnie tried living with friends or even his aunt. His father became seriously impaired with alcoholism. As Johnnie continued to move here and there, after each relocation he would come by our house and tell me about trying to earn money by cleaning rain gutters or doing other odd jobs. He talked about his day-to-day life. He was embarrassed to have me know that he was smoking. Only once did he travel out-

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side Portland — a bus trip to Nevada. He worried that he had gotten a young woman pregnant and he didn't know if he would ever see her again. Once he drove by in a car, very slowly, waving sheepishly, but hoping we would see him. It was the only time I ever witnessed him behind a steering wheel.

Eventually Johnnie's grandmother became gravely ill, having never truly recovered from the shock of her husband's death years before. Johnny asked me to come to the hospital and see her, which I did. Within days she, too, passed away. We neighbors gathered in her house one last time to pay our respects. Her grown children and four grandchildren found places to live on Portland's eastside, but away from the Grant Park Neighborhood they had all called home. The family residence was sold.

His sister married and had children, bringing them back to our street sometimes for Halloween trick-or-treating. His uncle established himself as a painting contractor and therefore provided work for Johnnie's dad, when the fellow was sober enough to handle equipment. But marriage and working for a living eluded Johnnie. I do not know if substance abuse was at play in his experience, but it is quite possible. Methamphetamine and crack cocaine use were rampant in Portland at that time.

Without his grandparents or their home to shelter him, Johnnie seemed to become more and more at loose ends. He collected recyclables to redeem at QFC. He rode the bus to get around town. He became quite thin. His sagging pants and over-size jacket seemed to envelope him as he walked from the bus stop with an exaggerated loping strut. He was nearly always alone.

This year, during a warm summer day, Johnnie came back to the neighborhood and rang our doorbell once again. His mouth was in bad need of dental work, making him appear much older than his late thirties. Holding a job or buying a car had eluded him still. He had used TriMet to reach the Grant Park Neighborhood that afternoon. The swaggering walk was now a tentative gait.

Asked where he stays, Johnnie admitted he is now homeless. It was hard to hear him say that word, "homeless". But, he smiled — that same old smile, just a little more tired and a few less teeth, "There's a Jewish church in NW Portland that lets me sleep there. So I'm okay."

What's next for Johnnie? I look around at all the homeless individuals and I wonder. Some grew up right here.

One Musketeer Down

We were like the Three Musketeers, almost always together throughout high school. We played soccer, basketball, and baseball. Our families lived in Grant Park and Laurelhurst, and we had the kind of economic security and intact, two-parent households that usually help kids thrive. As I think back to those years, what I remember most is all the laughter we shared. We were very different personalities, one a little shy, one meticulous and detail-oriented, and one a constant source of entertainment. We were best friends. Like the fabled musketeers, we spent our share of time making minor mischief, resulting in time spent in the principal's office and doing detention.

As high school progressed, there were the usual teenage parties, some of which involved a little clandestine alcohol consumption, mostly beer. But as I think back now, having a beer or two was never quite enough for Scott (not his real name), the one who entertained us and made us laugh. He would somehow end up having a lot more than everyone else, and getting him home safely and sneaking him back into his house became a frequent challenge.

Scott was athletic, popular, and academically successful. We all graduated together, and got ready to move on to the next phase of life. We took somewhat different paths, becoming geographically separated due to differing college choices. Two of us attended four year schools, and Scott decided on a community college instead.

As it happened, I was back home in Grant Park for the first school dance at Scott's college, and volunteered to go with him and be the designated driver. Predictably, Scott became visibly drunk as the evening progressed. He asked a new classmate to dance with him, she turned him down, and he abruptly left.

I learned from other friends that soon after, Scott dropped out of college and got a job delivering whole-sale produce. That lasted for a while, and then he became unemployed. Despite efforts by his family and friends to intervene, Scott slowly deteriorated in terms of behavior and social interactions. Based upon what I heard, I wondered if he had simply become an alcoholic, but the problem was more complicated. He was diagnosed with a serious mental disorder that could have been treated medically. But Scott didn't like the "numb" feeling it made him have, and resisted taking prescription medication. Instead, his drug of choice was beer. Lots and lots of beer.

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One Musketeer Down, continued

I graduated from college, married, and started a family. I was able to move into the family home I had grown up in, and Scott knew its location from time spent visiting in high school. About a decade ago, he began visiting at random times of day or night, pushing the shopping cart that held his possessions. These random encounters were almost always bittersweet. I was glad to see my old best friend, but greatly distressed by the life he was leading. Scott never wanted to talk about the present, but instead would tell, and re-tell stories from our high school years. His speech was sometimes theatrical, even a little incoherent, and he invented new names for my family members and me. In some ways, he reminded me a little of Captain Jack Sparrow of Pirates of the Caribbean fame. He even had fanciful outfits, the sources of which were hard to imagine. Sometimes Scott would call late at night, needing someone to talk to, and again the old stories would come out. High school may well have been the last truly happy years of his life.

I tried to offer financial assistance, but Scott always had money that he gleaned from collecting bottles and cans, and refused help. From time to time we would even find small surprise gifts he would leave at our house.

Scott came to the ten year reunion of our high school class, was well dressed and obviously glad to be there. But he arrived intoxicated, and quickly got worse as the event progressed. Finally, he was escorted out and asked not to return, ironically by one of the other “musketeers,” who had organized the event.

Five years ago, Scott was found dead in a local park. Although exact cause of death was unknown, it appears his heart simply gave out.

So what does Scott’s story tell us? Even those from intact families with more than adequate economic resources, and with caring family and friends supporting them, can end up without housing due to uncontrollable substance abuse, mental illness, or a combination of both.

Donating Bottles and Cans for Beverly Cleary Schools?

For several years now, customers could bring redemption value bottles and cans to QFC and donate the proceeds to the local schools. QFC originally set up the program to function only between 4 and 8 p.m. on Saturdays. That proved to be a challenging time window for parents with children participating in local sports or other weekend activities. In response to parent requests, Roger Dowell, QFC manager, decided that bottle and can returns for Beverly Cleary can be dropped off anytime the store is open. If you wish to donate yours to the local schools, make sure to advise the clerk who assists you inside the store so the proceeds are properly routed. Customer donations to Beverly Cleary have raised several thousand dollars during the life of the program, and the money is used to provide supplies and equipment that would otherwise not be available to staff and students.

JEAN JOHNSON, PHD

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*Larry and Mary Gayton, 2018
Grant Park Residents*

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Native Portlander, Jean is a retired historian turned realtor. Expect no-nonsense integrity & sharp negotiation skills.

Grant Park Donation Builds Community

A \$500 donation from the Grant Park Neighborhood Association in 2017 subsidized a year-long full-service membership for a Grant Park resident in NE Village PDX, a local nonprofit that helps seniors live independently at home for as long as possible. Operating on volunteer energy, membership dues and donations, NE Village PDX provides practical support such as rides for those who can no longer drive, as well as an array of group activities to help those over 55 stay engaged in the community.

Subsidies help seniors with low and modest incomes afford the cost of membership. "Joining NE Village has given me tremendous opportunities to grow and learn, meet new people, and volunteer to serve in the community," says the first recipient of Grant Park's philanthropy, who chose to remain anonymous for this story.

It's a two-way street. Not only has NE Village given her access to stimulating activities and more than 25 rides to medical appointments and other destinations, membership makes it possible for her to give back to the community. She has gotten rides to hospice volunteer training and hospice informational workshops. She also volunteered to teach a cooking class to other Village members in September.

NE Village opened its doors in November 2016 and currently has 130 members, who can choose from neighborhood walks, discussion groups, happy hours, lunch and dinner outings, theater and music performances, informational presentations, and special interest groups

such as a support group for people with low vision. Members with limited mobility can ask Village volunteers to visit them at home or accompany them on short walks.

NE Village PDX and the member subsidized by Grant Park Neighborhood Association are grateful for the funds that made it possible for her to share in this bounty. "Village membership has really enriched my life," she asserts.

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Beverly Cleary School Had a Fun Run in Fall 2018!

The Fun Run is the major PTA fundraising event of the school year, giving the Beverly Cleary School community an opportunity to join together, support the school, and have fun. This event took place during the school day on Thursday, Sept 27, which allowed all students to participate. In the weeks before the Fun Run, students received pledge sheets and sought pledges (\$/lap or a flat donation) from friends, family and neighbors.

On the morning of the Fun Run, teachers accompanied students to Grant track to run together. Volunteers made sure everything ran smoothly and tracked the number of laps each student ran. The Fun Run featured an awesome DJ, fun prizes, and a festive and supportive atmosphere for all members of the community.

It was wonderful to see our community come together around this event. We really couldn't have done it

without the support of Beverly Cleary parents, teachers, administrators, and community members. Whether you sponsored a student, bought a t-shirt, volunteered at the event, came out to cheer, donated materials, loaned us equipment, or simply encouraged your student to participate, you helped make the Fun Run a success. THANK YOU!

The money raised from the run will be used this year for arts, technology, family support and equity, as well as other classroom materials and supplies for teachers and staff. Fun Run dollars have a big impact on our school at every grade level.

The fundraising leg of the run is not over! If you are a neighbor of a Beverly Cleary School student, from kindergarten to grade eight, please consider supporting our neighborhood school by sponsoring your neighbor's run.

Grant Park NET Responds to a “Real” Emergency

by Peter Maxfield

Grant Park NET Team Lead

The Grant Park Neighborhood Emergency Team (NET) took part in a simulation training exercise, called Scenario Village, at the Portland Police Training Facility, on September 22. A NET is a group of people trained by the Portland Bureau of Emergency Management (PBEM) and Portland Fire and Rescue to provide emergency disaster assistance within a specific neighborhood. Trained NET members save lives and property until professional responders can arrive. The half-day session, hosted by PBEM, brought together over 24 active NET members from the Portland area to practice their skills.

Inside the facility, a multi-building town is set up much like a Hollywood set. Several volunteers assist the coordinators in making the scenarios as real as possible, faking injuries, distress, and other conditions that would be expected from an event such as an earthquake, downed power line, or storm. Coordinators even apply make-up, called “moulage,” to heighten the realism and make injuries look authentic.

The NET members work together to do the greatest good for the greatest number of people. This means coordinating a plan of action, establishing sub teams and roles, conducting searches, assisting those in need, and working with professional first responders. Assessment of buildings, patient triage & care, “cribbing” (raising heavy objects with leverage), and radio communication are just a few examples of the skills exercised.

Our team shined throughout the day, as reiterated by the coordinators at the end of the exercises. While we will always have more to learn, we handled some tough challenges including a staged unexpected gas leak. We came away with many new ideas and the satisfaction of knowing we will be ready if a real event should occur.

If becoming a NET volunteer interests you, we welcome more members! Certification takes about 30 hours of classroom time, plus a half-day field exercise. There are several opportunities to take the training throughout the year. Please see our team page at <http://bit.ly/Grant-ParkNET> for contact and meeting information.

Holiday Baking Consortium Flourishes

by Laurene Mullen

Not everyone loves to bake. But most everyone loves to eat freshly baked goods. Four contiguous households in the Dolph Park section of Grant Park (all of which feature enthusiastic bakers) have combined in recent years to create and provide holiday desserts for all the families involved. The result is a little less work for everyone, a fun neighborhood connection, and a lot of good things to eat.

Before Thanksgiving, there is a meeting to decide upon pies. After some negotiation (“I made pumpkin last year, this year I want to make something more interesting” or “You should definitely make the chocolate bourbon pecan again, it was so good.”), each family makes four of the same kind of pie, and then on Thanksgiving morning there is an exchange that results in four different kinds of pie for each household. There is usually a pumpkin variation, something with apples or another fruit, a pecan, and a wild card. On occasion a cheesecake has even appeared.

For Christmas (or a belated Hanukkah) there are cookies. Lots of cookies. Sometimes too many cookies. There is an annual discussion about the virtues of limiting the number of cookies baked and the quantity of each. Somehow it never sounds like quite enough, so even though each baker commits to one kind and a reasonable quantity, there are always many more. On the appointed exchange day, one family hosts a cookie tasting party, usually on a rotating basis, attended not only by the bakers but many enthusiastic related consumers. Despite the resulting sugar daze, everyone heads home with an evenly distributed assortment of enough cookies for Christmas and many days before and after. In recent years, the cookie combine has included offerings from a Laurelhurst offshoot of one of the households, as well as a downtown Portland condo dweller. No matter; neighborhood boundaries are inconsequential when it comes to holiday cookies.

In days gone by, community based baking at the village bake house was a way for families to connect with one another. Even though each family may now use its own oven, that neighborly connection can still exist today. If you like to bake, maybe you have a neighbor or three who does as well. Consider forming your own holiday baking consortium. Increasing your waistline is the only possible downside. But, there is always the New Year’s resolution right around the corner.