

## JULY 4<sup>TH</sup> PARADE—continued

trate the melting pot that is not only our country, but our neighborhood. This tradition grew with the event until the 1980s, when neighbors began to get up early to festoon the Oval Park with flags. Every year, more flags have been added until it hard to get them all up before its time for the parade. Still, however we add more and it's a game each year to try to spot the new ones.

### *A New Route*

At first, the kids marched along the sidewalk on Club, but before too many years passed, the sidewalk just couldn't hold the crowd. Tom Walker talked the police into closing the street for the parade and providing an escort for the marchers. The kids loved the thrill of marching down the middle of the wide boulevard which was usually off-limits. The Walkers had one rule: the parade was for pedestrians. No cars, go carts, or minibikes were allowed. Only the policeman could ride his motorcycle up at the front. In time, however, the Fire Department wanted into the act and the neighborhood was delighted to let them bring a shiny pumper truck to join the motorcycle at the head of the march. Eventually, there were so many marchers that the parade route simply wasn't long enough to accommodate them all. Tom and his new helper, Phil Lehman, organized a new route which still took everyone down the center of Club, but then turned them back to Oval Park on Alabama and Woodrow. This has been the unaltered parade route since the 1970s.

### *Mr. Holmes's Ideal Sundry Lemonade*

In the early years, the walkers and the other parents bought bottled soft drinks for the marchers. This was back in the day when there were literally dozens of different flavored soft drinks. You remember, there were Nehi, Trueade, Royal Crown, Cheerwine, Sundrop, and a bunch of others in addition to Cokes and Pepsis. The parents traded off who would be responsible for the drinks each year and if it was your turn, you had to ice the bottles down the night before so they would be ready the next day. When the number of participants grew from twenty to over a hundred, this system became impractical. At this point the folks at the Coca Cola plant on Hillsborough road stepped in and supplied cold cokes for a few years. Soon, however, the event outgrew even this supply system. Then, in the late 1980s, the neighborhood association approached Bill Holmes about supplying his famous, secret-recipe lemonade for the event. Bill was a neighbor who for many years ran the Ideal Sundry on Hillsborough Road. Altho' he had retired form the sundry business, he never retired his lemonade. It seemed like a natural fit and to this day, Bill's lovely, slushy lemonade has been an essential part of a real Watts-Hillandale Fourth of July.

### *New Additions to Ancient Traditions*

In more recent years, our wonderful neighborhood event has been enhanced by newer traditions. While we still sing patriotic songs, we are blessed to be led by neighbor Dave Dodson and his choral group, "The OK Chorale." Their version of the "Star Spangled Banner, sung from atop an Oval Park picnic table, is a show stopper. During the last few years, the neighborhood association has added to the fun by trooping out a new neighborhood t-shirt design. And now, when the parade is over, kids in the neighborhood beg the guys on the fire truck to provide a giant spray of water to run through and frolic in.

So come, be a part of this glorious tradition. What began with 12 kids 57 years ago is now an event involving hundreds and hundreds. Every one is invited and everyone is welcome!

The parade starts at 10:00 a.m.

## FOCUS—continued

your flag and he'll make sure you're properly equipped. If you don't have the flag you want to carry, let Tom know and he'll find one for you. We may already have it in our collection. If we don't, we'll try to get it. So call Tom, 286-3730, and show your colors!

Also, we need drummers! Play in the high school marching band? We need you. Play in the garage when your spouse is visiting her (or his) parents? Strap on your drum and join the line. If any of you drumming neighbors out there can supply our marchers with a lively cadence, we'll be grateful. Show up a little early, say 9:40 a.m., to meet your fellow drummers and work out a plan.

## NCSSM Negotiations—continued

install a public address system. A public address system could be very damaging to large parts of the neighborhood. While the last plans neighbors saw indicated that the stadium would be designed to prevent parking on and access from neighborhood streets, this might not be true of the new plans. It is not clear whether any significant buffering for sight and sound would be provided. Even though it is far down on their list of priorities, neighbors also don't want the stadium to be monstrously ugly to look at. If the school genuinely wants to engage in a good-faith effort to address the problems the stadium poses, it will not prejudge the solutions to those problems by proceeding with construction before those problems are solved.

It is in the interests not only of the neighbors but also of the school's students that the school be surrounded by a healthy, vital and safe neighborhood.