



npna

normal park neighborhood association

normalpark.org

Newsletter, Vol. XVI, No. 1, Winter 2005

General Meeting Information

Where: Senior Citizen Center Rec Park
Date: Wednesday, January 26, 2005
Time: 7:30 – 9:00 p.m.
Speakers: Joe Guillan, Principal of Chapelle Elementary School
Program: Chapelle Elementary and Our Neighborhood

NPNA GENERAL MEETING

The NPNA General Meeting is at 7:30 pm on Wednesday, January 26, 2005, at the Senior Center in Recreation Park.

Please plan to join us for what we guarantee will be an interesting evening with Joe Guillan, Principal of Chapelle Elementary School, exploring both what Chapelle is all about - its history, mission and goals - and what we as a neighborhood can do to strengthen our ties with Chapelle in the future.

As many of you may know, it wasn't long ago that there was a fence dividing Chapelle's playground and the "new" play structure in Recreation Park. It was due to the NPNA that the fence was taken down and the park area improved with new play equipment, paint on the pavilion, benches, a brick walkway, a walking path around the entire green space, and most recently the establishment of the NPNA Community Garden near the Senior Center.

The NPNA board of directors is interested in continuing this kind of cooperation and engage the community in a dialogue about ways to work together with our area schools, both for the benefit of our children and to further enhance the sense of community we all treasure. Our conversation with Mr. Guillan and Chapelle is our first step in that direction.

I look forward to seeing you all on the 26th!

Lisa Wozniak, NPNA President

REMEMBER THE MAIL CARRIERS

As we enter the peak snowfall time of winter our mail carriers would like to remind you to shovel the snow from your steps and walk. Unshoveld snow can turn to ice and be hazardous.

Special thanks to those neighbors with snow blowers who clean their whole block. If anyone needs help shoveling snow or could assist please contact Lisa Wozniak 483-5013 or Joe Capuano 483-6091.

Thank you!



NEWS FROM COUNCILPERSONS JOHN GAWLAS & BILL NICKELS

With continued cuts in state shared revenues from Lansing announced in early December, sufficient money to operate city government continues to be the most serious problem facing Ypsilanti. More cuts in city services will likely result from this recent loss of state money. It is in this context that the Council accepted the Blue Ribbon Finance Committee's recommendation to study an income tax. This would be an analysis of potential revenues and concurrent reduction in the millage rate including the financial impact on various classes of taxpayers (homeowners, renters, senior citizens, businesses, non-resident workers). It is estimated that such a study would provide a final report by April 2005.

One of City Council's goals is to pursue "strategies for improving the physical condition of neighborhoods and increasing the rate of home ownership". Council is considering zoning ordinance revisions that will down zone Cross Street east of Oakwood and the area immediately east of Normal Park. The existing zoning effectively provides incentive for high-density income producing property over owner occupied residences. If that incentive is not erased then the "playing field" will always be tilted in favor of those who simply want to make money in the neighborhood versus those who want to live in it and enjoy its qualities as a residential district. It is expected that down zoning will in the long run encourage owner occupied housing and reduce the problems in these areas.

A review of the confusing array of parking restrictions enacted to deal with EMU commuter parking has led to a more holistic proposal to address this issue. Our Police Department is requesting the neighborhood associations bordering EMU to examine commuter parking on their residential streets. The proposed strategy is to uniformly use "parking by residential permit only" as a method of controlling commuter parking on residential streets. The Police Department asked that neighborhood associations report the streets where residential permit parking is desired to their neighborhood COPAC representative.

The Standard/BP gas station at the corner of Owendale and Washtenaw recently purchased the residential lot to the south of the service station with the intent to use the lot for business purposes. The City of Ypsilanti won a Temporary Restraining Order preventing this use which would be very detrimental to that residential neighborhood. Further legal actions by the City will follow.

HALLOWEEN PARADE



A beautiful fall day found over 60 children along with parents and friends parading through Normal Park in their costumed finest.

The parade made its way from West Middle School along Grant to Oakwood and ended at the Senior Center where refreshments were waiting.

The array of costumes was dizzying. From dinosaurs and vampires, to Robin Hood and even a monster truck. Prizes were given to the best costumes in a variety of categories, tallest (The Newsboy), widest (Smiley Face), best themed (The Cat in the Hat with Thing 1 and Thing 2), youngest (two week old Pumpkin), most historic (Lady Liberty) etc.

Special thanks goes to **Rebecca Dunkle** for setting up the Senior Center and providing music and to **Andrea Weber** for supplying cider and donuts.

Thank you to everyone for coming out and participating in the parade or watching. You made it a success. See you next year.



WINTER WALKING

Normal Park residents can enjoy walking outdoors in the crisp, clear air of winter by following a few tips adapted from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration:

- Dress in layers and wear boots with non-skid soles. Wear a bright scarf or hat or reflective gear so drivers can see you.
- Walk on sidewalks where possible. If sidewalks are covered with snow and ice and you must walk in the street, walk against the flow of traffic and close to the curb.
- When walking with children, dress them in bright or reflective clothing. Keep children in front of you and as close to the curb as possible if walking in the street.

With weather-appropriate footwear and warm clothing, there are many trails and walkways in Washtenaw County that are safe year-round. Ypsilanti's Rolling Hills County Park and Dexter's Hudson Mills Metro Park maintain their trails through the winter; both charge a small entry fee. Ann Arbor's Gallup Park has free maintained trails. The EMU campus and downtown Ypsilanti also keep sidewalks clear (and offer a place to stop for a warm drink!).

If you prefer a warmer walking location, Briarwood Mall is open to the public starting at 7:00 a.m. with no fee for walking. The Meri Lou Murray Recreation Facility has an indoor track that is open to the public for a fee. For a more extensive list of walking resources, visit the Washtenaw County Health Improvement Plan website: <http://hip.ewashtenaw.org>.

YOGA IN NORMAL PARK BEGINS AGAIN

After a very successful first session, yoga is beginning again this month. The new, 8-week session began on Thursday, January 6. Like the last session, there are beginner and intermediate classes. Both classes are taught by Karen Beeri. Unlike last time, the classes will be held at Chapelle Elementary School on Wallace, just south of Congress. Classes are every Thursday through February 24. The beginners' class begins at 6:00 and the intermediate class begins at 7:30. Mats and blocks are available for those who don't have their own.

Everyone is encouraged to attend, even if you've never done yoga. You do not have to sign up for the entire series; you can come for as many or as few classes as you like. You can pay in advance or pay each night at the door. Since you'll be reading this newsletter a few days after the session has begun, we'll only charge \$10 per class if you pay for at least four classes at once. If you pay for an individual class, it's regularly \$12 at the door.

Yoga is a great way to fight the "winter blahs." It will get your blood flowing, improve your mood (even if you're already in a good mood!), increase both your strength and flexibility, and enhance your overall health. Our classes are designed to be inclusive. No matter how athletic you are or are not, our yoga program will help you. It's a great part of a healthy lifestyle. Best of all, you can walk to the class!

If you have questions, contact Patrick McLean at 485-5852 or pmclean818@earthlink.net. You can mail payment to Patrick at 1010 Pearl Street, Ypsilanti, 48197. Make checks payable to NPNA and write the word "yoga" on the memo line along with the class you want to take "beginner" or "intermediate".

Come join us!

CHAD PRATT PAINT



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NIGHT OF LIGHTS



On Saturday, December 4th, Normal Park kicked off its first annual Night of Lights. Over 2000 glowing luminaries lined sidewalks and yards throughout Normal Park and into the adjacent Woods Road neighborhood. Seven households and The Little Red hosted 'cider stops' - places to warm up with a beverage and chat with neighbors. We were also lucky to have the Ypsilanti High School Chamber Singers join us! The group caroled throughout the neighborhood, stopping wherever they spotted neighbors gathering near luminaries.

Throughout the evening, neighbors navigated the streets using a map (compliments of Rebecca Dunkle) that highlighted where luminaries and cider stops were located. People gathered at the cider stops (whether indoors or out) to meet new neighbors, catch up with old friends, and have hot drinks while enjoying the glow from the luminaries and songs from the carolers.

Tamonie Coleman, a freelance writer for the Ann Arbor News, covered the event. She wrote a great article that was published in the Ypsilanti Community News section on December 13th. There is a link to the article on the NPNA website normalpark.org.

Many thanks to **Heather Benoit**, **Rebecca Dunkle** and **Christine Obeid** for all of their efforts towards this spectacular evening, to the Ypsilanti High School Chamber Singers for their beautiful songs that made the evening complete, and to the hosts of the cider stops for generously providing the unique 'stars' on our map of luminaries!

Thank you also to everyone who lit their luminaries and to those who came out to enjoy the evening. It was a truly wonderful way to kick off the winter and stay connected to our neighbors.

We are already looking forward to next year's Night of Lights!



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COMMUNITY GARDENING IN NORMAL PARK

Although the growing season has ended, work hasn't stopped at the Recreation Park Community Garden (RPCG). In November, a group of hardy gardeners turned out to build a more permanent compost bin system. Volunteers helped with delivery of pallets, raking, building, and moving the huge pile of compost that had accumulated in the existing small round plastic bin. Compost from the garden will be rotated through the three new attached bins over the next three years.

A changing of the guard also occurred at RPCG last fall, with Normal Park resident and life-long gardener **Lisa Bashert** taking over as garden coordinator. **Jenna Bacolor**, former RPCG coordinator, is moving to West Middle School, the newest community garden spot in Normal Park. She will remain connected to RPCG.

"Think of Jenna and me as a team," says Lisa. "We hope that the West Middle School Community Garden and RPCG will be like two peas in the Ypsi pod."

Plans for the new school and community garden at West Middle School are still taking shape. The staff at West Middle School is working with Amanda Edmonds at Growing Hope to create a sustainable garden that could include both vegetables and native plants. Also through Growing Hope, West Middle School is acquiring a greenhouse that will be located in one of the interior courtyards of the school. The greenhouse and garden will create opportunities for enhanced hands-on learning at West, as well as provide another way to connect with the Normal Park neighborhood. If you are interesting in being part of the WMS garden, please contact Jenna Bacolor at (734) 483-1647 or bacolorj@ewashtenaw.org.

Other Normal Park gardening news

🌱 The Senior Center may become a teaching site for gardening and nutrition classes sponsored by Growing Hope, a local non-profit dedicated to improving people's lives through gardening. Lisa Bashert reports that they have ideas for several classes, including seed starting indoors on the cheap, organic vegetable growing, and a seedling exchange. Contact Lisa Bashert at wombbat@umich.edu for more information.

🌱 It's not too early to start thinking about the Plant a Row for the Hungry (PAR) program. Last year, over 150 lbs of fresh vegetables and herbs were grown at the RPCG and donated to Food Gatherers. This year, local PAR organizers would like to see more participation from people who grow vegetables in their backyard. Normal Park residents with backyard gardens can pledge to plant a row of vegetables or herbs to donate to the worthy cause of hunger prevention. Look for more information in the spring NPNA newsletter.

🌱 The Ypsilanti Garden Club is a fun, low-key group of local gardeners who meet monthly to discuss garden topics and tour gardens. Two Normal Park neighbors, **Vicki Patterson** and **Paul Mayes**, lead the group. For more information, contact Vicki or Paul at 961-9414.

🌱 Look in the Spring NPNA newsletter for information on the first Normal Park Garden/Yard tour. We will be asking for volunteers to show off some of Normal Park's great gardens and yards.

HOMES FOR SALE/HOMES RECENTLY SOLD

As of this printing, the following homes are for sale in our neighborhood:

1115 Grant	\$179,900
1129 S Congress	\$184,900
316 Hiawatha	\$189,900
475 Owendale	\$189,900
1207 Sherman	\$195,000
105 Oakwood	\$198,000
6 Elm	\$223,900
472 N Mansfield	\$229,900
916 Grant	\$229,900
1209 Westmoorland	\$229,900
909 Pearl	\$240,000
960 Sherman	\$244,900
1205 Westmoreland	\$259,000
1117 W Cross	\$271,000

The following homes have sold recently:

1501 W Cross	\$169,900
1116 Grant St	\$202,000
907 Pearl	\$210,000
1129 N Congress	\$226,000

Sue Collins, an NPNA resident and agent at Real Estate One provided the above information. Contact her at 483-6609 or 662-8600.



2004 BOARD MEMBERS/CHAIRPERSONS

President:	Lisa Wozniak	483-5013
Vice-President/ New Neighbor	Heather Benoit	481-0726
Treasurer:	Rebecca Dunkle	482-9330
Secretary/ Newsletter/Website	Joe Capuano	483-6091
Recreation Park:	Carol Leyshock	481-0836
Greenscape Chair:	Sarah Weiss	480-1823
At-large members:	Jenna Bacolor	483-1647
	Sue Collins	483-6609
	Patrick McLean	485-5852
	Kirsten Mowrey	483-6811
	Bea Otis	482-8567

If you have questions about our neighborhood, items you would like discussed at the next board meeting or information on opportunities to volunteer please contact a board member.

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Bread - Eggs - Milk - Soap - Candles
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Friends Welcome

NPNA AND YPSILANTI HAPPENINGS

For more and up to date information please visit normalpark.org

- **NPNA Yoga Classes Thursdays** Jan 6
Chapelle Elementary (through Feb 24)
- **NPNA General Meeting** Jan 26
Senior Center, Rec Park, 7:30 - 9:00 pm
- **NPNA Board Meeting** Feb 16

NPNA DUES

In addition to the annual yard sale, dues are one of the NPNA's main sources of funding. They are not required but they do help our neighborhood pay for projects like Recreation Park improvements. Dues are \$10.00 per household and anyone who contributes \$40.00 or more will receive a NPNA coffee mug. Payment of cash or check made to NPNA can be given to any of the board members.

NEIGHBORHOOD EMAIL GROUP

Have you signed up for our NPNA News email? Keep up to date on neighborhood news and announcements. It's a nice supplement to the quarterly newsletter. To sign up send your email address to listserv@normalpark.org or visit normalpark.org.

If you have news items of your own that you would like to send to the neighborhood, email npna@umich.edu.

NORMAL PARK NEIGHBORHOOD WEB SITE

Keep up to date on the latest information and events happening in our neighborhood and city. There is also an extensive list of links to city, community and business websites.

It can be found at normalpark.org

ADVERTISE IN THE NEWSLETTER

The NPNA newsletter reaches over 700 households in Ypsilanti. A business card sized ad is only \$30.00 per issue. If you are interested in advertising in the newsletter please contact a board member or visit normalpark.org.

THE NPNA NEEDS YOU

The April NPNA general meeting when new officers are elected and the board members terms begin. If you are interested in running for elected office or would like to be on the board please contact Kirsten Mowrey at 483-6811. We will also review the NPNA Charter. We have recently made some changes to it. The charter with the revisions can be viewed online at normalpark.org.

SPECIAL THANKS

Special thanks go to Kristi Martin for the printing of this newsletter. Thank you!