



npna

normal park neighborhood association

normalpark.org

Newsletter, Vol. XVII, No. 2, Spring 2005

General Meeting Information

Where: Senior/Community Center Rec Park
Date: Wednesday, April 27, 2005
Time: 7:30 – 9:00 p.m.
Speakers: Laura Rubin, Executive Director of the Huron River Watershed Council
Program: Elections and Its Spring Again

NPNA GENERAL MEETING

The next NPNA General Meeting is at 7:30 PM on Wednesday, April 27th at the Senior/Community Center in Recreation Park.

We hope you will join us for what we are sure will be an interesting and fun presentation by Laura Rubin, Executive Director of the Huron River Watershed Council.

Laura began her tenure as Executive Director in 1998, overseeing all program, administration and fundraising efforts for the organization, which currently includes a staff of eleven. Laura is an outstanding speaker and a font of information about the Huron River and its environs. She earned a joint MBA and MS in natural resource policy from the University of Michigan, and currently lives with her husband and two small sons in Ann Arbor in the Allen Creekshed.

Laura will talk about the many things we can do in our own backyards and the Normal Park neighborhood to care for the health and well being of the beautiful Huron River.

The April 27th general meeting is also the annual NPNA elections! We will elect the next President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary. This is also when the board member terms begin. We need your vote to ensure a high level of participation from our neighborhood.

We also need your vote regarding proposed changes to the NPNA Charter. The changes have been posted on the NPNA website since late 2004. April 27th will be your opportunity to say 'yay' or 'nay'. You can view the charter at www.normalpark.org.

CALLING ALL BIRDERS!

The NPNA is seeking information from local birders for our website. We would love to have lists of bird sightings, particularly what birds and what time of year they have been seen in the neighborhood. We will place the information on our website for the neighborhood's enjoyment and information. Please send us your lists via email, as that will make incorporating them onto the website easier. Please send them to **Kirsten Mowrey** at mowjac@provide.net. Thanks!

NEIGHBORHOOD YPSI PRIDE ACTIVITIES ON SATURDAY, MAY 21

On Saturday, May 21, from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm, Ypsilanti PRIDE (People Restoring Image & Developing the Environment) is celebrating its 10th anniversary; with volunteer efforts being organized around ten areas within the city and township. In a break from tradition, volunteers will receive wristbands instead of t-shirts. Participants are asked to wear their Ypsi PRIDE shirts from prior years, as a demonstration of the ongoing efforts of community members over the past decade.

Our own Recreation Park complex is one of the ten designated work sites. This includes the Senior Center, Rutherford Pool, the Community Garden, and our ongoing efforts to clean-up and beautify the Rose Garden, play areas and parking lot as well as along Congress Street. Additional neighborhood project sites include Hefley Park, the landscaped end-caps on the boulevards as well as work at neighborhood schools such as Chapelle. Bring gloves and any appropriate gardening tools. Projects suited to children are noted with an asterisk *.

Recreation Park

- **Play Area*:** Trash pickup, raking sandbox, raking chips under slides and swings, spreading new chips, pruning buckthorn at base of trees
- **Parking and Picnic Pavilion:** Trash and stick pick-up
- **Senior Center:** Building Painting (Ypsi Jaycees), Landscape Maintenance at the entry and around the building
- **Rose Garden:** Weeding, pruning, raking, planting, spreading chips
- **Community Garden*:** Projects to be determined

Hefley Park*: Trash pickup, weeding, planting by sign & peace pole, raking, spreading chips, cutting wild shrubs on East boundary

Congress Street: Summit to Wallace trash pick-up.

Because of the expanded efforts this year, we are asking neighbors to serve as Site Captains for each of the specific areas noted above. Please call **Sarah Weiss** for details at 480-1823.

So be sure to reserve the date of Saturday, May 21st, so you can join in the rewarding fun of community volunteering, followed by an afternoon of entertainment and refreshments at Riverside Park. Call the Ypsi PRIDE Hotline at 544-3636 for further information.

NEIGHBORHOOD GREENSCAPE EFFORTS

Our neighborhood is made more beautiful, walkable and even safer by the volunteers who tend the landscaped end caps on the boulevards and at the Congress "V".

On Wallace Blvd. the end caps need two or three additional volunteers to rake, weed, cut back dead perennials, plant new as needed, spread new chips, re-define edges.

Four end caps on Westmoorland need revitalization.

Volunteers are needed to define beds, remove turf/weeds, rake soil, plant new perennials and annuals, and spread wood chips.

We want to extend our thanks for these ongoing, valuable gardening efforts. Please contact **Sarah Weiss** at 480-1823 if you are willing to continue or are interested in helping or adopting an end cap. Plants and gardening advice are readily available.

A WALK IN OUR WOODS

Kirsten Mowrey

One of my favorite things about Normal Park is the trees. They provide shade and windbreaks, color in spring and fall, and are part of the character of our neighborhood. There are some trees I notice more than others, and I would like to draw attention to them so that you too can enjoy them on your strolls.

This part of Michigan, as well as much of the eastern US, used to be Oak-Hickory forest before European settlers came. You can still see remnants of that great forest as you walk Normal Park.

Grant Street has many Black Walnuts, whose fruits are those green balls you see on the sidewalk, while Shagbark Hickories are found along Pearl - their bark looks like uncombed hair, an easy identifier. There is a mature Red Maple on the northeast corner of Owendale and Westmoorland, which gives a stupendous autumn show. All of our graceful Ashes that we have lost are also natives to this area.

Best of all are the oaks. Our neighborhood has many oaks, which is a marvel considering that oaks are the slowest growing trees, taking over a century to reach full size. The two massive White Oaks on Pearl, between Elm and Oakwood, are estimated at 300 years old! We can assume that the Bur Oak in Recreation Park, at the eastern end, is about the same age. There is also a large grove of Red Oaks that stretches from Mansfield near Westmoorland past Owendale, and another in Rec Park, shading the play area. Oaks hold onto their leaves through the fall and into the winter, so if you are in the park in December, you can hear the snow falling on the leaves.

Smaller, flowering trees provide quite a show in the spring. The Redbuds found near the alley on Pearl Street bloom a purple-pink and the flowers cluster along the branches, while the cherry in Hefley park (not a native) creates a fountain of pale pink blossoms. And let's not forget the flowering crabs down the middle of Wallace, with their white blooms. In Normal Park, you don't have to go far to enjoy a walk in the woods.

GARDENING EDUCATION SERIES OFFERED AT SENIOR CENTER

The 2005 Growing Hope Community Education Series is underway, with all classes being held at the Ypsilanti Senior Center in Recreation Park. The first class, "Seed Starting on the Cheap," took place on March 13 and drew 20 participants. Basements all over Ypsilanti now are crowded with swelling seeds ensconced in cozy moist garden flats, poised to emerge.

Please plan to join us at upcoming classes! Over the summer, classes in Veggie Gardening 101 & Composting, Container Gardening, Growing & Cooking with Herbs, Building Cold Frames, Seed Harvesting and Saving, and Preserving the Harvest will be offered. Dates and times will be publicized as soon as they are finalized. Details will be posted on the web site growinghope.net. Also watch for posters around town or alerts from the NPNA email list.

Growing Hope is still in search of volunteer instructors and volunteers to help out on the days of the classes. Please contact Kathryn@growinghope.net or 646-4053 if you'd like to lead one of the workshops on a topic listed above, or another one in your area of expertise. Check growinghope.net for more information.

HELP FIGHT HUNGER -- PLANT A ROW FOR THE HUNGRY CAMPAIGN BEGINS

Do you have a backyard vegetable garden? Please consider devoting part of your garden to the Plant a Row for the Hungry (PAR) campaign, a national effort to encourage gardeners to grow a little extra and donate the harvest to a local food bank. Girl Scout and Brownie Troops, church youth clubs, and other organizations are also encouraged to participate. Our two Normal Park area community gardens will participate in this program as well. Last year, the Rec Park Community Garden's three PAR plots produced 150 pounds of produce, which was donated to Food Gatherers.

To participate in the program fill out a pledge card, available at normalpark.org or call Amanda Edmonds at 786-8401. Pledge cards will also be available at the Rec Park and West Middle School gardens. After sending in your pledge card, you will receive information about when and where to bring your harvest. Once again, the Rec Park garden will serve as a convenient drop-off location. As part of this year's campaign, signs will be placed in a few spots around the Normal Park neighborhood as a reminder to drop off PAR harvest.



DR. KATHLEEN DVORAK
Chiropractic Physician

DR. LINDA S. BERRY, Chiropractic Physician
RENÉE RUTZ, Massage Therapist
LISA DARROW, Massage Therapist
KIRSTEN MOWREY, Massage Therapist

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734/677-1900 FAX: 734/677-0830

REGISTER NOW FOR A COMMUNITY GARDEN PLOT



It's time to register for a community garden plot at one of our two Normal Park area community gardens! With a new garden coming soon at West Middle School, plenty of gardening space will be available to people who want to rent a plot this year.

Both the Recreation Park Community Garden and the West Middle School garden are affiliated with Growing Hope, an Ypsilanti-based non-profit community gardening

agency. Growing Hope has helped launch several community gardens in Ypsilanti and is involved on a continuing basis by providing liability insurance and technical assistance. Check out the Growing Hope website which includes pictures of our own Rec Park garden at www.growinghope.net.

On this year's registration form, gardeners will select a first and second choice from the two Normal Park area gardens:

Recreation Park Community Garden: This garden, located behind the Senior Center on Congress Street, was home to 20 small plots last year. Seventeen of the plots were rented to individuals and families from nearby neighborhoods; the remaining three were devoted to the "Plant a Row for the Hungry" program (see related article). Plot sizes at Recreation Park, which were quite small last year, will likely increase because some gardeners will move to the West Middle School location. **Lisa Bashert** is the contact person for more questions about this garden (483-6420 or wombbat@umich.edu).

West Middle School Community Garden: Growing Hope staff are busy working with school staff and residents of nearby neighborhoods to design and build this garden. Can you contribute a few hours of time to preparing the site for this garden? Please contact Amanda Edmonds at 786-8401 if you can. The Normal Park contact person for the WMS garden is Jenna Bacolor (483-1647 or bacolorj@ewashtenaw.org).

Registration forms and gardening guidelines are available on the Normal Park website (normalpark.org), at the Senior Center, or by contacting **Lisa Bashert** or **Jenna Bacolor** at the phone numbers above. Gardeners will be able to choose either a full plot (approximately 8' X 16') or a half plot (approximately 8' X 8') at either location. There is a sliding scale fee required to rent a plot. **The fee and registration form are due by April 30.** Drop off form and fee to either **Lisa Bashert** at 909 Grant Street or **Jenna Bacolor** at 1216 Grant Street.



FRIENDS OF RUTHERFORD POOL NEWS

Because of the excellent support of community minded people, such as the residents of Normal Park and Woods Road, the Friends of Rutherford Pool (FORP) was able to open the city pool and had a very successful (if chilly & damp) summer. The pool will be open again this summer. However, the threat of financial doom hovers just outside the fence. The FORP has developed a responsible business plan for the long-term operation of the pool that includes a slight increase in admission fees. This increase will not address the expenses we anticipate as many of the mechanical components at the pool are nearing the end of their operational life. In order to assure the future use of the pool we need to raise \$20,000 to purchase a new water heater and flow meter, to install new water saving showers and to maintain the building.

Last year FORP hosted a very successful winter party and this spring we had a similar event titled 'Fools for the Pool' on April 1 at Frenchies in Depot Town.

On April 13 FORP had a "dough raising night". With the help of Matthew Smith, a student at EMU and a customer relations guy with Dominos, coupons were delivered to the Normal Park and Woods Road neighborhoods the week before. When a pizza was ordered on the 13th using the coupon FORP received 20% of net sales before taxes and delivery.

On April 30 The FORP is having their 'Pennies for the Pool'. They will be collecting change at Senior Center from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm. You will also be able to register for swim classes and purchase season passes at last year's prices.

If you have any questions about the fundraisers or how you can help keep the Rutherford Municipal Pool open please contact **Wendy Gouine** at 482 1575 or **Matthew Smith** at 262 1067.

NORMAL PARK YARD AND GARDEN TOUR



Would you like to be part of the Normal Park Yard and Garden Tour? We are looking for volunteers to show off their yards and gardens the last weekend in June. We would like to have ten locations on the tour.

To volunteer or for more information contact **Paul Mayes** at 961-9414 or **Joe Capuano** at 483-6091

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NPNA NEIGHBORHOOD YARD SALE, SATURDAY, JUNE 4, 2005, 9:00 AM TO 4:00 PM

Every year the first Saturday of June in Normal Park means yard sale. It is the main fundraising event for the Normal Park Neighborhood Association.

An \$8.00 registration fee will get your home included on a neighborhood map with descriptions of your items for sale. Your registration fee allows the NPNA to place newspaper ads, post signs at the boundaries of our neighborhood, and distribute the neighborhood maps. Use this opportunity to get rid of a lot of cool stuff you no longer need. There are always hundreds of eager customers. You keep all the money you make.

Send your registration form in by Friday, May 27, so your sale can be listed on the map. You can use the form below or print one from the NPNA website at normalpark.org.

Send the form by mail or drop off at: NPNA Yard Sale, c/o **Rebecca Dunkle**, 922 Pearl St, treasurer@normalpark.org.

Checks should be made payable to **NPNA**.



Name: _____ Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Please list items you would like to have printed on the map (e.g. furniture, books, antiques, toys, miscellaneous household items)



REC COMMISSION UPDATE – MARCH 2005

The Recreation Commission is a six-member board, appointed by the Mayor, to help address the critical issues surrounding the elimination of recreation funding from the city's general budget. This winter the Commission conducted several activities with a focus on beginning to implement the strategic recommendations it presented to the Ypsilanti City Council and Mayor in September. These recommendations can be found on the city's web site at http://www.cityofypsilanti.com/boards/bd_recreation.

In November and February, the Commission met with City Council and the Mayor in public working sessions to begin addressing the items in the strategic recommendations. The group worked on four main items during these sessions.

First, the Recreation Commission presented its ideas for a Recreation Coordinator position. Since recreation was removed from the general fund, a host of alternative pathways to recreation have emerged from the community and city. The Commission believes that a newly established Recreation Coordinator post would be vital to support these existing and new partnerships, in addition to managing grants, supporting recreation staff and developing new programming.

Second, the Commission, City Council and Mayor began exploring the notion of a Regional Recreation Authority. Such an entity could be formed through partnerships with Ypsilanti and Superior Townships, Washtenaw County, Ypsilanti Public School District, Lincoln School District, and/or Willow Run Community Schools. An Authority could raise a milage to support regional recreation and could better coordinate and operate recreation programming.

Third, the Commission, Council and Mayor examined the city Recreation Master Plan and began prioritizing the improvements outlined in the document.

Finally, the group discussed and planned better mechanisms for communication.

The Commission has been working on other recreation related business as well. The proposed Salvation Army partnership to create a Kroc Community Center in the city was not approved for funding by the regional Salvation Army group. The local Salvation Army, however, is still committed to building a smaller recreation center in Ypsilanti. Initial meetings to explore how and when that could occur began in early March. The city is applying for a capital improvement grant for Riverside Park to improve lighting, landscaping and install a new playground. On April 1 the Friends of the Pool held a pool fundraiser.

The Recreation Commission meets the first Thursday of each month at 6:00 pm in City Hall. Public comment is welcome at the beginning of each meeting. Additionally, if there is other information or comment you would like to provide, please contact the Recreation Commissioners in the third ward: **John Weiss** at 480-1823 or weissjk@umich.edu or **Lisa Zuber** at 484-0372 or lzuber@ameritech.net. Additionally you can contact Robert Bruner, Assistant City Manager, either by phone: 483-1810 or by e-mail at rbruner@cityofypsilanti.com.

NEW TRAIL CONNECTS YPSILANTI TO GALLUP PARK IN ANN ARBOR

Normal Park residents who bike, walk, or roller blade can now enjoy a much longer paved path that connects to eastern Ann Arbor. Two newly-completed sections of the Washtenaw County park system's border-to-border non-motorized trail link with existing trails on the east side of the St. Joseph Mercy Hospital campus. One segment of the path connects directly to a path in Gallup Park in Ann Arbor, where visitors can walk or bike along the Huron River for several miles. The other segment includes two scenic overlooks along the river.

How can you get to these new paths from Normal Park?

- Cross Washtenaw north to the College Heights neighborhood.
- Enter the non-motorized trail that starts off Cornell just past Collegewood, next to New Horizons school; take the trail west toward Hewitt.
- At Hewitt, turn right and follow the path north, passing the EMU convocation center and stadium, to the St. Joe Hospital campus. Cross Clark and follow McAuley around the St. Joe's campus.
- On the north side of the St. Joe campus by the Senior Health Building, you will see markers for the new path. There are side paths to the picnic areas, basketball courts, and a children's play structure.
- Continue on the path where it turns right onto Huron River Drive. When the path ends, you can continue to Dixboro in a bike lane.
- Turn right onto Dixboro. The Gallup Park entrance will be on your left, through a parking lot.
- Note: the new Dixboro Dam bridge is under construction here and there is frequent traffic back-ups and heavy equipment nearby. Try to visit during non-peak traffic hours.

Now that spring is slowly making its way to our area, the path will be an excellent option for some outdoor physical activity. Enjoy!

JOIN THE NORMAL PARK BABYSITTING CO-OP

Neighbors **Julie** and **Mitch Hollberg** are interested in starting a baby-sitting co-op in the neighborhood. A babysitting co-op is a currency system for babysitting services, created by a group of parents who usually live in a limited geographic area, in our case Normal Park. The underlying principles of a babysitting co-op are the free market, goodwill, trading adult babysitting for our kids, and developing new friendships. Members take turns babysitting each others' children and exchange 'chits' or coupons.

There will be an organizational meeting at their home on Sunday, May 8, at 5:00 pm. Interested families will have the opportunity to meet each other, discuss the principles of the co-op, and fill out brief paperwork about your child or children to be exchanged among the members. If you are unable to attend the meeting, but are interested in joining the co-op, feel free to call Julie Hollberg at 485-0664.

HOMES FOR SALE/HOMES RECENTLY SOLD

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

| | |
|-------------------|-----------|
| 1217 Sherman | \$174,900 |
| 1115 Grant | \$179,900 |
| 475 Owendale | \$189,900 |
| 1207 Sherman | \$195,000 |
| 1219 Grant | \$209,900 |
| 1218 Westmoorland | \$224,900 |
| 472 N Mansfield | \$229,500 |
| 916 Grant | \$229,900 |
| 1113 Westmoorland | \$247,500 |
| 1205 Westmoreland | \$249,000 |
| 1510 Washtenaw | \$269,000 |

The following homes have sold recently:

| | |
|-----------------|-----------|
| 1204 N Congress | \$186,000 |
| 308 Wallace | \$205,000 |
| 1117 W Cross | \$263,000 |

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



2004 BOARD

MEMBERS/CHAIRPERSONS

| | | |
|---------------------|----------------|----------|
| President: | Lisa Wozniak | 483-5013 |
| Vice-President/ | Heather Benoit | 481-0726 |
| New Neighbor: | | |
| Treasurer: | Rebecca Dunkle | 482-9330 |
| Secretary/ | Joe Capuano | 483-6091 |
| Newsletter/Website: | | |
| 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.

SPECIAL THANKS

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



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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

For more and up to date information see normalpark.org

- **NPNA General Meeting** Apr 28
Senior Center Rec Park, 7:30 – 9:00 pm
- **Pennies for the Pool** Apr 30
Senior Center Rec Park, 10:00 am – 1:00 pm
- **Show & Shine Street Rod Show** May 1
Riverside Park
- **Baby Sitting Coop Info Meeting** May 8
1118 Grant, 5:00 - 6:00 pm
- **NPNA Board Meeting** May 11
- **Chapelle School Carnival** May 13
- **Ypsi Pride Day** May 21
9:00 am – 12:00 pm
- **Michigan Volkswagon Festival** May 22
Riverside Park
- **Memorial Day Parade** May 30
Downtown, 9:00 am
- **NPNA Yard Sale** Jun 4
Normal Park, 9:00 am – 4:00 pm
- **Orphan Car Show** Jun 5
Riverside Park
- **NPNA Yard & Garden Tour** Jun 25
- **Independence Parade** Jul 4
On Cross Street, 11:00 am

NORMAL PARK NEIGHBORHOOD WEB SITE

Keep up to date on the latest information and events happening in our neighborhood and city. Check it out at normalpark.org.

NPNA NEIGHBORHOOD EMAIL

Sign up to receive our moderated neighborhood emails containing neighborhood updates, announcements, and other local news items. It's a nice supplement to the newsletter. To receive emails send your email address to Rebecca Dunkle, 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.

THE NPNA NEEDS YOU

Interested in being more involved in the Normal Park neighborhood? The NPNA is always seeking volunteers. You can run for elected office, join the board, or help make our events run smoothly. Please contact **Kirsten Mowrey** at 483-6811 or any board member if you are interested.

ADVERTISE IN THE NEWSLETTER

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

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. Thank you for your support.