



npna

normal park neighborhood association

normalpark.org

winter 2006

General Meeting Information

Where: Senior Citizen Center Rec Park
Date: Wednesday, January 25, 2006
Time: 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.
Program: Neighborhood News and Community

NPNA GENERAL MEETING

The NPNA General Meeting is at 6:30 pm on Wednesday, January 25, 2006, at the Senior Center in Recreation Park.

In light of all that has happened in our neighborhood over the past few months - both good and bad - the NPNA board thought to stray from our tradition of bringing in a keynote speaker and, instead, turn the meeting into a time to simply be together and celebrate our community.

These past few months have been trying in many ways, with an attack in our neighborhood and news of other attacks in the city, the city's financial crisis, and threats to our neighborhood woods/open space by a proposed public school bus depot. Yet, in the wake of these events our neighborhood has come together in unprecedented ways, creating more community, more hope and more positive possibilities for the future.

As the news of the city's financial woes spread, residents have come together to create an ice rink in Recreation Park, which will provide much needed outdoor recreation opportunities for our families and youth. Others have worked with the Senior Center to think of ways to ensure that the building not only remains open, but that programming for our city's seniors continues. And still others voiced their opinions loudly and clearly to the Ypsilanti School Board in relation to the proposal to relocate the school bus depot to the open space adjacent to the woods on Congress Street. Our neighborhood now has three representatives on the newly formed "Bus Depot Relocation Committee" and they are working hard to find an alternative location.

Given all that has happened and is continuing to happen in our area, the NPNA board is taking a stronger advocacy role within the community. On January 25th, we'd like to share some of our ideas with you and, more importantly, we'd like to hear your ideas and get your feedback in regards to making positive change in Ypsilanti.

We will be joined that evening by two musical neighbors - Eric Moore and Gerry Butterwick - and we'll have yummy snacks for the whole family.

Please plan to join us on January 25th! We all need more opportunities to come together and eat yummy treats, hear music and talk a bit. We look forward to seeing you in a few weeks.

Lisa Wozniak and Joe Capuano, Co-presidents

NIGHT OF LIGHTS

On Saturday, December 3th, Normal Park held our second annual Night of Lights. Over 2000 glowing luminaries lined sidewalks throughout the Normal Park, Woods Roads and Mid-Town neighborhoods.


Throughout the evening neighbors gathered at cider stops to meet new neighbors, catch up with old friends, and have hot drinks while enjoying the glow from the luminaries. A Mid-Town cider stop showed "It's a Wonderful Life" on the side of their house.

We were honored to have the Ypsilanti High School Chamber Singers join us. The group caroled throughout the neighborhood, stopping wherever they spotted neighbors gathering near luminaries and held a grand finale at **Jim and Mary Baker's** house.

Many thanks to **Heather Benoit, Rebecca Dunkle** and **Kristi Coulter** for their efforts towards this wonderful evening, to the Ypsilanti High School Chamber Singers, and to the hosts of the cider stops.

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 looking forward to next year's Night of Lights!



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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RECREATION COMMISSION UPDATE – JAN 2006

The Recreation Commission was appointed by the Mayor, to help address the critical issues surrounding the elimination of recreation funding from the City's general budget. Two representatives from each ward serve on the Commission. This summer and fall the Commission focused on two areas: supporting "friends" groups that have helped to maintain recreation at the City's four main recreation facilities: the Senior Center, Parkridge Community Center, Rutherford Pool and the Freighthouse, and developing strategies to help make recreation programming sustainable into the future. The "friends" groups continue to do incredible work to keep recreational opportunities available to the community.

After facing a challenge to develop a core group that would support the Senior Center, a strong partnership has developed between NPNA, seniors and City staff. This group, led heroically by **Rebecca Dunkle**, has in just a few short months initiated a plan to keep the Senior Center open and growing. The City recently received a verbal commitment from the Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation for a \$20,000 match to the \$10,000 we are raising locally. In addition, the City signed a contract for the Senior Nutrition Program. These commitments will continue to keep the Senior Center in operation until July. Finally, Rebecca and the planning team are looking at a number of exciting partnerships, including one with Elder Wise a group that offers recreation programs for seniors and currently operates out of St Joseph Hospital.

Another recent exciting event at the Senior Center was a reception of the Intergenerational Project at the end of November. That project, led by City staff member Angel Coleman, culminated a series of activities between seniors and teens that began last March. The Senior Center was vibrant with about 100 community members as the teens and seniors shared their two tangible works: biographical stories produced through the "write-link" process, and wonderful images presented through a "photo-voice" project.

The Friends of Rutherford Pool (FORP) completed their 2005 season with tremendous success! An increase in attendance by over 30%, compared to 2004 meant revenues for the pool nearly matched expenses, which included a significant mechanical upgrade to the boiler. Adult lap swim and drop-in water polo were both well attended and FORP revamped a competitive swim team for youth this past season.

The Friends of the Freighthouse (FOFH) are working diligently to re-open the Freighthouse. FOFH has been working on several capital improvements and fund development opportunities. They are currently waiting on the go-ahead from the State Historic Preservation Office to begin work on a foundational beam, which when completed, should allow them to open the Freighthouse.

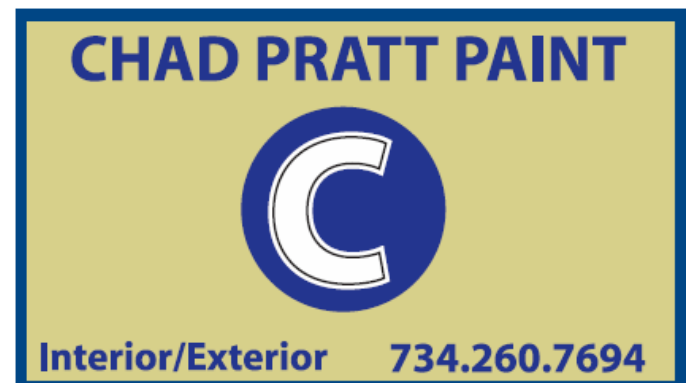
The Committee to Save Parkridge is pursuing several funding, programming and partnership opportunities. The group has been meeting actively since this summer. City staff, the Recreation Commission and community volunteers helped to raise \$38,000 to keep Parkridge open throughout the summer and fall. The Committee is currently working to put together a formal advisory committee, which may happen as early as January.

On the sustainability goal, the Recreation Commission is working with Vic Chaisson and David Clifford from Eastern Michigan University's Institute for the Study of Children, Families and the Communities. We are holding a regional conference on January 25th entitled Recreation 2026: A Community Roundtable on Working Together to Enhance the Quality of Life in Eastern Washtenaw County. The conference will focus on recreation and bring together the local governments, school districts, and major businesses in eastern Washtenaw County to increase our knowledge regarding options and best practices for working together to achieve common goals in recreation.

To support sustainable recreational opportunities in Ypsilanti, the Recreation Commission is promoting and supporting the Ypsilanti Area Recreation Development (YARD). The idea behind YARD is to create one non-profit organization that utilizes all four of the city's facilities and parks and collaborates with other partners (such as EMU). YARD will have six program focus areas: arts/music, education, civic engagement, community service, health/nutrition, and sports/physical activity. By collectively working with all of these sites and program areas, YARD can streamline human resources and fund and organizational development. YARD, as a non-profit organization, would be eligible for several funding streams that the City currently cannot tap. Although much work and further planning is required to move the concept forward, the Recreation Commission is enthusiastic about this approach, and believes it is a model that is unique throughout the country.

Finally, we are all excited by a community-based effort to revamp outdoor ice skating in Ypsilanti. A neighborhood group raised over \$1,500 and constructed an ice rink on the blacktop surface in Recreation Park. Over 35 families made donations to the effort, as did several City Council members, Mayor Farmer, NPNA and a generous contribution by Peter Reinhart of Bombadills. Chief Roberts from the Ypsilanti Fire Department has also been very helpful in the effort. The group finished construction this month and if the weather is cold enough it will be ready by the NPNA General Meeting on January 25.

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 and Lisa Zuber at 484-0372 or lzuber@ameritech.net. Additionally you can contact Robert Bruner, Assistant City Manager at 483-1810 or rbruner@cityofypsilanti.com.



CONTRIBUTORS - REC PARK ICE RINK

We would like to thank the following individuals for their contributions to building the ice rink:

Carol & Rick Leyschock, Georgina Hickey, Stacey Fallis, Scott Thobe, NPNA, John and Sarah Weiss, Ed and Rae Ann Kluitenberg, Jan Morrison, Stephen and Kristine Mucher, Jim Knapp and Rachel Deewess, William Nickels, John Gawlas/Lisa Zuber, Brian Filipiak, J. Gatsby, Barry Larue, Cheryl Farmer, Eileen Shields, Michael and Laura DeBacker, Bombadils Café, Penelope and Gerald Kruse, Edward McGovern, Michael Black, Eric and Mary Beth Maes, Steve and Nancy Wu, Michael and Sharon Paskus, V. Barry Dauphin, David Bates, Brent and Karen O'Banion, Lisa Wozniak & Orlando Simon, Kristi Coulter & John Sindelar, Samir and Julie Abuelsamid, Amy and Robert Doyle, Cam and Elizabeth Ghetto, Penelope and Paul Schreiber, David and Laurie Picard, Dale and Peggy Rice, Jenna and Rich Bacolor, Dennis and Akosua Slough, Ross and Josefa Beyer, Rachel Cuschieri-Murray and Bryant Murray, Harry and Pauline Bowen, Patrick McLean, James and Diane Reppke, Kimberly Grover and Julia Stansky, Leino and Sally Pakala, Shana and Dave Sylvester, Sue Stickel, Cathy Thorburn, Carolyn and John Weins, Tamara L. Greco, Fae and Morris Weiss.

In-Kind Contributors

Joe Schultz, Joe Capuano, Costa Stamos, Garth Smith

WINTER AND FALL OPENINGS AT THE YPSILANTI COOPERATIVE PRESCHOOL

Open House February 28, 1:30-3:30 pm and 6:00-7:00 pm.

Now in its 60th year, the Ypsilanti Cooperative Preschool (YCP) is an Ypsilanti institution that helps parents and children from the city and surrounding communities play and grow together.

Parents run the non-profit school, while a paid educator manages the play-based instruction five mornings per week. The "threes" meet Tuesdays and Thursdays, while the "fours" take the classroom Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. Parents take turns assisting the teacher and getting a morning out.

When they're not in the classroom, parents have a quiet moment alone, run errands, or focus on their other children at home. When it's their turn to help out each month, moms and dads read, sing, and dance with up to 20 children; guide teacher-designed activities; and monitor free play.

Members who have returned year after year until all of their children have gone on to kindergarten praise YCP as a caring environment for children and a great place for parents to form lasting friendships.

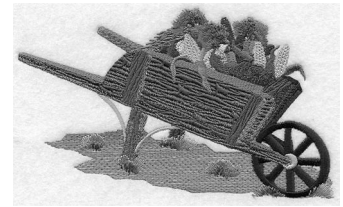
Last summer, energetic YCP parents decided it was time for the beloved school to get a facelift. They pitched broken toys, painted walls, installed new carpet, and acquired new furniture. Parents built new bookcases and added a tree mural to complete the sky-blue, grass-green play space.

Housed in the First Baptist Church at 1110 Cross St., YCP is the teaching home of Mieke Giles, who has an Associates Degree in Early Childhood Education and full-day preschool experience.

For more information, call Sharon Paskus at 945-6502

IT'S NOT TOO SOON TO THINK ABOUT GARDENING!

You would hardly know it is winter for all the gardening activity happening in Ypsilanti and our own Normal Park neighborhood. The



weather outside may be blustery, the ground frozen, and many of our gardens' bird friends enjoying sunny climes, but it's not too early to start thinking about gardening in one of your neighborhood community gardens. In fact, if you plan to have a plot at one of our neighborhood community gardens, you need to start planning NOW.

The registration deadline for a community garden plot is March 5, 2006.

This earlier deadline will help organizers plan to accommodate all who want to garden, and allow gardeners to start planting even earlier. Garden registration forms will be posted on the NPNA website normalpark.org and available by calling the following garden stewards:

Midtown: Lesley Chace, 480-1005 or ledsbeaken@aol.com.
Rec Park: Lisa Bashert, 483-6420 or wombbat@umich.edu.
West Middle School: Jenna Bacolor, 483-1647 or bacolorj@ewashtenaw.org.

Normal Park neighbors and community gardeners experiencing the winter blahs are invited to attend a casual "catalog and seed swap" get-together at Lisa Bashert's house at 909 Grant St. on Monday, February 6, time TBD. Call or email Lisa at 483-6420 or wombbat@umich.edu for more information.

Finally, Growing Hope, Ypsilanti's own non-profit agency dedicated to improving lives and communities through gardening, has received funding through the Ypsilanti Health Coalition and Washtenaw County Public Health to build on the blossoming community garden movement in Ypsilanti. In late winter/early spring, Growing Hope will start a Community Gardening Academy to train community members how to start and sustain community gardens. The grant also includes funds to build new community gardens in Ypsilanti and for a Community Garden Resource Center to serve all community and school gardens. Look for information about all of these projects on the Growing Hope website: www.growinghope.net or by calling 786-8401.



HOMES FOR SALE/HOMES RECENTLY SOLD

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

1123 Congress S	\$158,500
960 Cross W	\$159,000
1304 Congress N	\$169,900
966 Cross W	\$179,900
481 Owendale	\$184,000
1129 Congress S	\$184,900
1309 Congress N	\$189,900
1215 Pearl	\$189,900
1105 Pearl	\$189,900
201 Oakwood	\$199,000
459 Anna	\$199,900
93 Oakwood	\$199,900
1012 Congress	\$206,900
1204 Congress N	\$209,990
909 Sheridan	\$219,900
909 Pearl	\$224,900
915 Sherman Ct	\$224,900
1205 Westmoorland	\$229,000
1124 Pearl Street	\$244,900
907 Pleasant	\$249,900
913 Pleasant Drive	\$259,000

The following homes have sold recently:

214 Oakwood	\$140,000
1121 Grant	\$128,000
1112 Congress N	\$156,900
1240 Cross W	\$167,000
1101 Pearl	\$169,900
947 Cross	\$175,000
100 N Wallace	\$184,900
911 Grant	\$180,000
1208 Congress N	\$244,000
210 Oakwood	\$312,900

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



2005 BOARD

MEMBERS/CHAIRPERSONS

Co-President:	Lisa Wozniak	483-5013
Co-President/	Joe Capuano	483-6091
Newsletter/Website:		
Treasurer:	Rebecca Dunkle	482-9330
Secretary/	Sarah Weiss	480-1823
Greenscape Chair:		
Community Garden:	Jenna Bacolor	483-1647
Economic Development:	Patrick McLean	485-5852
New Neighbor:	Kristi Coulter	547-0620
Zoning/Ordinance:	Joe Schultz	484-1314
At-large members:	Sue Collins	483-6609
	Ariel Moore	483-0122
	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.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

For more additional information visit www.normalpark.org

- **NPNA Yoga Classes Thursdays** Jan 6
Chapelle Elementary (through Feb 24)
- **Recreation 2026** Jan 25
Morris Lawrence Building, WCC, 8:15 am - 12:00 pm
- **NPNA General Meeting** Jan 25
Senior Center, Rec Park, 6:30 - 8:00 pm
- **NPNA Board Meeting** Mar 1
- **NPNA General Meeting** Apr 26
Senior Center, Rec Park, 7:30 - 9:00 pm

HELP SUPPORT THE NPNA

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 receives a NPNA coffee mug. Payment of cash or check made to NPNA can be given to any of the board members.

NEIGHBORHOOD WEB SITE AND EMAIL NEWS

Keep up to date on the latest information and events happening in our neighborhood and city. Visit our website at normalpark.org. While there you can sign up for the NPNA News. It's a nice supplement to the quarterly newsletter. To sign up send your email address to listserv@normalpark.org.

If you have news items of your own that you would like to send to the neighborhood, email npna@umich.edu. The website also has an extensive list of links to city, community and business websites.

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 is 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 any board member.



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Sat: 10am to 4pm **(734) 487-0540**