



The Witherbee Buzz

Vol. 16 No. 4 Newsletter

Fall 2019

The Witherbee Neighborhood Association includes the area bounded by 33rd to 56th and Randolph to "O" Streets

September WNA Meeting

Meet Your Council Members

James Michael Bowers, Northeast District 1 Council member and two At-large members, Bennie Shobe and Sändra Washington met with over 25 residents of the City of Lincoln at the September general meeting of the Witherbee Neighborhood Association. After a brief business meeting, the Council Members introduced themselves and shared their backgrounds.

A question & answer period ensued. The Council members addressed the assembled concerns about the City's Emerald Ash Borer treatment plan, and lack of affordable housing in Lincoln. Advocates for designating the City of Lincoln a "no kill" city with regards to animal shelters also presented their plan to educate the Council and residents. The discussion was wrapped up with comments about Lincoln's water sources and the Mayor's taskforce on resiliency.



Participants at the meeting mentioned how approachable and knowledgeable the Council members were. If you have a topic that you would like to discuss with a member of the City council, they can be reached via their email address on the City Council web page. There is also information about upcoming meetings and minutes for past meetings. <https://lincoln.ne.gov/city/council/index.htm>

Witherbee Neighborhood Association

Annual Celebration & Meeting November 7th • 6:00 pm

The Witherbee Neighborhood Association will hold its Annual Meeting, Celebration and Election of Board Members/Officers on Thursday, November 7th beginning at 6:00. This year the gathering will be held in the LifeQuest Conference Room at Tabitha Rehabilitation Center (48th and Randolph). Please come in the front entrance and you will be directed to the meeting room.

Food, beverages and a presentation by one of our own neighbors, Ed Zimmer, will make it an evening you are not going to want to miss!! Get this one on your calendar!

Ed Zimmer has lived in the Witherbee Neighborhood for over 30 years. He is currently the Historic Preservation Planner for Lincoln/Lancaster County Planning Department and has held that position since 1985. Ed was born and raised in Omaha. He attended Lindenwood College in St. Charles, Missouri where he received his BA in art history & sociology/anthropology. He received both his master's degree and Ph. D. from Boston University.

At the Annual Meeting, Ed Zimmer will make an illustrated presentation on Witherbee history.



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About Your Witherbee Neighborhood Association

Boundaries:

33rd to 56th & 'O' to Randolph

Meetings:

7:00 p.m. first Thursday of each
month at Tabitha LifeQuest Center,
48th and J.

www.facebook.com/witherbeena
www.WitherbeeNA.org

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President's Message



As we prepare for our annual meeting, November 7th, this is a good time to look back at some of the accomplishments of the Witherbee Neighborhood Association for 2019. One of the goals of WNA is to facilitate and provide activities that promote a sense of community within the neighborhood. In August the WNA Board & membership hosted our 13th annual Pool Party & Ice Cream Social. This is just one activity that seeks to promote neighbors getting to know neighbors. Other events include our annual neighborhood garage sales and our neighborhood clean-up.

In addition to promoting a sense of community, a second goal is to provide educational opportunities for WNA residents. Programs this year included: how to plant a pollinator garden, the Lincoln Bike Plan, the latest update on the Emerald Ash Borer, meet your city council representatives (see highlights in this issue) and the walking tour of the middle third of WNA (40th - 48th streets). This is not a comprehensive list but you get the idea!

Other accomplishments this year: revisions to our bylaws (we are looking to vote on these changes after the first of the year), and written guides or "how to's" for events such as the garage sales, the annual clean-up, the pool party/ice cream social and the publication of this newsletter. Thanks to our treasurer and secretary we now have detailed "job descriptions" for these positions.

At the risk of omitting someone from this list, I would like to thank all of the current board members for their hard work and dedication (see list to the left of this article) especially outgoing board members Mary Schwab and Kathy Stastny. Nancy Shelley and Kari Gentzler provided tremendous impetus for our accomplishments this year. Lisa McNeel deserves a huge thank you for organizing and editing this newsletter for the past 3 years. In addition to those names listed in the spring newsletter, these individuals helped deliver our newsletter to roughly 1700 households this past year: Margaret Ruff & family, Dawn Hopwood, Cheryl Wesolowski. I would like to thank Russell Miller, Fred Freytag, Rick Bagby and Tim Duey for keeping us informed about city government issues pertinent to WNA. Congratulations to Russell Miller who was appointed by the Mayor to sit on the Advisory Committee on Transportation which will provide oversight as to how our new quarter cent sales tax monies will be spent on street repair.

But more importantly, we couldn't do any of this without your support, and that support includes your membership! If you are a member we hope you will renew your membership in the coming year. If you aren't currently a member, please consider joining us as a member and a volunteer!

With gratitude to our Witherbee community,

Kathy Holland
2019 WNA President

The Witherbee neighborhood association would like to thank the following organizations and households for sponsoring the Buzz newsletter with their membership donation.

Organization Sponsors:

Jacobson Veterinary Clinic, PC
Redeemer Lutheran Church
Stubbs Chiropractic
Tabitha, Inc.

Individual Sponsors:

Terri Bailey
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Stephen Johnson
Russel & Sherry Miller
Mary Schwab
Rick & Mary Jo Shibata

Looking for Knitters and Crocheters!!

- Are you experienced with a pair of knitting needles or a crochet hook?
- Have you always wanted to learn the skill of knitting and/or crocheting?



A group of skilled and novice knitters/crocheters get together twice a month to share patterns, idea's and friendship! The group is open to anyone who enjoys knitting and/or crocheting AND those wanting to learn a new skill. If interested, bring your current project and/or your idea's and questions. If you are interested in learning to knit, bring size 8 knitting needles or if interested in learning to crochet, bring a size G crochet hook. Yarn and crochet thread will be provided for beginners. Basic stitch and a working sample will be taught by an experienced gal named Marge!!! The group meets at 1:30 on the 1st and 3rd Monday each month at Tabitha Home (4720 Randolph) on the second floor in the Crossover Room. If you have questions feel free to call Marge at (402) 310-1890.

Waslking the Witherbee "Middle Third"

with Ed Zimmer

On Sunday, September 8th, sixteen people joined Ed Zimmer, local historian and City of Lincoln Historic Preservation Planner, on a walking tour of the Witherbee Neighborhood. We learned the history of people and places in the "Middle Third", an area bounded by O and Randolph Streets and 40th and 48th Streets.

Beginning at Witherbee Park, 46th & O Streets, we wound our way through the Witherbee Neighborhood and ended the walk at Tabitha Health Care Services, 46th & Randolph Streets. Details of the walk will be in an article in the Winter issue of The Buzz.



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HOT WEATHER DOESN'T DIM THE BEAUTY OF OUR JULY AND AUGUST YARDS OF THE MONTH

July Yard of the Month

The Witherbee July Yard of the Month at 630 South 52nd Street was nominated by Sherry Miller, who drives past several times a week. Ron and Nancy Gottula have created a stunning retreat in their small front yard, which reminded Sherry of gardens among the Mews in London, England.

The yard, enclosed by an ornamental wrought iron fence, is filled with perennials that flourish in Nebraska's wet springs and hot summers. Daffodils and tulips lead to phlox, lilies, roses, Russian sage, veronica, irises, yarrow, peonies, hosta, succulents, and more. A red bud tree is bracketed by two well manicured yews. Planters of annuals add bright highlights. A bench beneath a shade tree provides a restful spot to enjoy all this abundance.



The Gottulas have lived on South 52nd for 32 years. Ron commented on its great location to raise a family with an easy commute to downtown Lincoln for his work and to the Lincoln Lutheran Schools for their children. They especially appreciate long friendships with their neighbors.



August Yard of the Month

The August yard of the month was awarded to Mary Anne and Gary Wells at 3460 Woods Ave. When they purchased the property in 1984 there were only two mature honey locust trees in the parkway, some overgrown yews against the house and a burning bush in the front yard. Their goal was to minimize the amount of turf, create a diversity of shrubs, ornamental grasses and perennials for song birds and pollinators, and create shade for the house and outdoor living spaces. The two honey locusts along the street have died and have been replaced with a single honey locust. A red maple was planted to shade the front porch and a river birch shades the back porch.

The bluegrass lawn was removed and replaced around 1998 with a turf-type tall fescue which included a rhizomatous turf-type tall fescue. The new lawn is heat-tolerant, drought and disease resistant. The lawn requires very little water; even in this hot dry summer, they have only watered once.

A rain garden was added with a grant from The City of Lincoln Rain Garden Project in the front to catch the storm water runoff from the downspouts. A low growing pollinator garden was added in the parkway. The native perennials/grass seed mix for this test plot was provided by Shoestring Acres seed company.

They have tried and tested many plants over the years; way too many to list here. A few that stand out:

Shrubs: Green Velvet Boxwood, Everlow Yew, Compact Cranberrybush, Viburnum, Endless Summer Hydrangea, Lo & Behold Butterfly Bush

Perennials: Copper King Hibiscus, Purple Coneflower, Missouri Primrose, Bee Balm, Liatris, Husker Red Penstemon, Russian Sage, Daylily, Thyme, Iris, Butterfly Milkweed, Spiderwort,

Grasses: Morning Light Miscanthus, Karl Forester, Hameln, Blaze Little Bluestem, Prairie Dropseed, sedges



*Above:
Before*



*Right:
After*



*Left: Before
Below: After*



Ash Tree Alert - It's Time to Make a Decision

By Mascha Miedaner

The Emerald Ash Borer is here, has been here, and ALL ash trees are at risk. When the trees are infested and die, ash trees become very brittle and very dangerous.

The City of Lincoln is in the process of removing all ash trees from the right-of-way (generally the area between the street and the sidewalk).

Become informed and be proactive. Here are the options and some websites to help you.

Option 1: Removal of Ash tree(s). No cost to property owner.

Option 2: Removal with Replacement. Some cost to property owner.

Option 3: Treatment to preserve ash tree(s). All costs of treatment are the responsibility of owner.

As the City surveys ash trees for the removal schedule, owners will be notified with a yellow door hanger and have approximately 10-14 days to respond with their plan from one of the above options. Per Adam Klingenberg, City of Lincoln Community Outreach Forester, it would be of great help to the City's scheduling and lower costs if homeowners could be proactive, make a decision about their right-of-way trees, and contact the City about their plan. This way scheduling for removal of ash trees can be done more effectively and efficiently. The City's plan is to remove all ash trees in the right-of-way. Contact the City to let them know how you want to participate.

For additional information visit <https://lincoln.ne.gov/city/parks/communityforestry/> or call 402-441-7847, ext. 0. Information about the Emerald Ash Borer can be found at www.eabne.info

If the ash tree is on private property, all costs for removal, treatment, etc. are the owners'. Research your tree service provider carefully so that you are hiring a company that is licensed; insured, and has the appropriate documentation to do work in the City of Lincoln. The following City of Lincoln website contains useful information to help with that process. <https://lincoln.ne.gov/city/parks/communityforestry/arborist.htm>

The Summer issue of [The Buzz](#) has additional articles about EAB.



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Pot Holes Filled by What \$\$\$\$

By Russell Miller

Today Lincoln streets are funded by Lincoln wheel tax, Federal gas tax, State gas tax and Lincoln impact fees. Almost no property tax money is used. The only exception I am aware of is snow removal.

In 1958 Lincoln passed the wheel tax ordinance to provide additional funds to improve arterial streets. The tax was used to match federal funds and the first project was the K & L streets conversion to one-ways. In the following 61 years the federal and state gas taxes have not increased with inflation, especially the inflation of the cost of street building materials. Which means additional money sources are needed.


In 1960 Lincoln had approximately 380 center lane miles and by 2018 we had about 1,300 centerline miles (or about 2,760 lane miles when you account for streets with 2 or 3 lanes).

So how do all of these miles get funded plus funding new miles for City growth? The first choice was the wheel tax (1997 it was \$39) but by the late 1990s wheel tax increases were meeting large opposition. In 2002 infrastructure funding was to be provided by impact fees. Unfortunately, impact fees were not allowed to increase with inflation, so again the City went back to the wheel tax with increases to \$74 by 2013. By 2019, with wheel tax and impact fees increase stymied, and our aging street infrastructure in desperate need of repair plus additional streets for new development, a new source of money is required. That new source is the just passed 1/4% sales tax and the tax is to last 6 years.

25% of the sales tax has to be used for streets serving new developments; i.e. City growth. 1.5% must be used for the 33rd & Cornhusker railroad overpass. The remainder, 73.5%, is to be used for City street improvement or "economic growth." It is essential for each of us to watch the Street department to make sure "our" money is used for interior street rehabilitation and none for new development growth.

This can be done by following the street repair survey that Lincoln citizens were able to take in mid October. Most people listed arterials (which is okay), but the immediate need is for residential streets. The ACT committee has been told that no arterials will be improved for about 2 years because of the time required to coordinate with affected businesses, water and sewer departments, arranging for detours and drawing up the plans.


Together we have a voice in our street repair and in how our maintenance dollars are allocated. Understanding where the money comes from and how it is dispersed is crucial.




Support our Troops Care Packages

Spirit of America is taking donations to deliver a care package for Nebraska's men and women deployed overseas. **Please drop off donations at 325 N 52nd St.** Thank you for supporting our Military!


"Heroes Into Homes" is a non-profit Veteran assistance organization, helping homeless Veterans into homes. Spirit of America is collecting canned items for their pantry. Please drop off your donations in the Credit Union lobby. Thank you for supporting our Vets!



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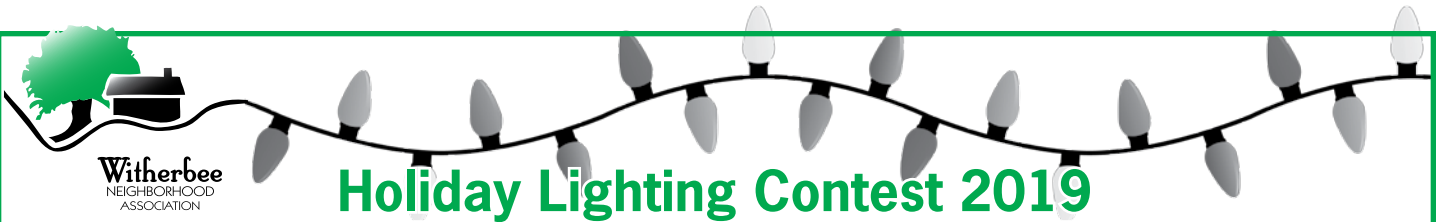


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Holiday Lighting Contest 2019

At the time of this article being written, the WNA neighborhood is enjoying many days filled with sunshine and the leaves are just starting to show off their fall colors. It's difficult to imagine scooping snow instead of mowing grass but we all know the white stuff is coming! Instead of dreading winter, let's focus on all the wonderful holiday fun that goes along with the season !! So get ready to break out those icicle lights, wreaths, inflatables, manger scenes, Santa's, angels, snowmen and whatever else puts you in the Christmas spirit. The Witherbee Neighborhood Association is once again sponsoring a holiday lighting contest with future Buzz recognition and PRIZES for the following categories!!!

- 1) Traditional/Simple Elegance Award
- 2) Lincoln Electric System Superior Customer Award (most lights)
- 3) Visions of Sugar Plums Award (kid favorite)
- 4) Reason for the Season Award

Judging will occur during the third week-end in December (21st and 22nd) and winners will be notified the following week. This gives everyone plenty of time to get those lights untangled, fluff that wreath and dust off Santa and his elves!!

Call or email Mary Schwab with your own home as a nomination (don't be shy... toot your own horn!!) or another home that you feel deserves recognition! (402) 440-4131 • maryschwab3510@gmail.com

WNA Pool Party Wraps Up Summer

Woods Pool was a cool splash for over 200 neighbors and friends and the ice cream social at the Woods Tennis Center plaza was the perfect end to summer at the 13th annual meet and greet for WNA. This event was a great way to reconnect with old friends, welcome new families and enjoy a cool treat from the 18 buckets of ice cream that was donated by area businesses.

We were honored by a visit from Chief of Police, Jeff Bliemeister, Captain Don Scheinost, Center team, and Captain Michael Woolman, Southeast Team. Adam Klingenberg, Community Outreach Forester with Lincoln Parks and Recreation, discussed current and correct information on Emerald Ash Borer. Equally exciting was exploring the large bucket truck used to remove city tree's that Mr. Klingenberg arranged to have present at the gathering. We appreciate the time and attention our city provides to keep us safe and well informed. Please thank these amazing public servants every chance you get!

All the ice cream, toppings and supplies for the WNA Pool Party were donated by area businesses. Please thank the managers at Super Saver, Hy-Vee, Yogurtini, A Street Market, Fresh Thyme, as well as Target and Walgreen's. Thanks also to Kevin Ward at Woods Tennis Center and City Parks and Rec, and the many volunteers who help to make this day a success.



Sisters Ellie & Felicity enjoy their ice cream.



Officers Urrea & Sullivan join WNA president Kathy Holland to enjoy a bowl of ice cream.



Time to go swimming!!



Twins Rocven & Remington enjoy splashing around.



Ice Cream = Happiness!