

## WNA's Volunteer Appreciation Event

*Join us for Pizza Dinner*

*Thursday, Nov 21, 6 pm*

*At Redeemer Lutheran Church • 510 South 33rd Street*



Last year, Witherbee Neighborhood Assn celebrated twenty years. To mark this milestone, we hosted a Volunteer Appreciation Event, a night to honor our incredible volunteers and their contributions to our community. The event was a resounding success, a testament to the strength and unity of our community. We are thrilled to continue this tradition and invite you to join us on Thursday, November 21, 6 PM, at Redeemer Lutheran Church in the Family Education Building, 510 South 33rd Street.

**What to expect:** Joshua Guilford, a high school freshman who attends Southeast High School and a member of Redeemer will play the piano for live background music. Julian Leisure, a local comedian well known for his comedic style, will provide our entertainment. The evening promises laughter, good food, and a time to meet new and old friends alike.

**Recognizing the Volunteers:** This is a snippet of what we accomplished this past year. Buzz Newsletter Production and Delivery, Clean-up, Garage Sales, Pool Party, Holiday Lights, Crime Watch, Yard of the Month, Woods Park Keep It Green, Witherbee Park maintenance, Mayor's Roundtable, monthly meetings with informative speakers,

and Government Liaison were all accomplished by 75 of your neighbors. This diverse range of activities reflects the rich tapestry of our community, and we are proud of each and every one of our volunteers.

Would you consider being a part of WNA Board? We are always looking for new talent. If you have a desire to serve, we are here to support you. We warmly invite everyone in the Witherbee neighborhood to join us, celebrate, and learn more about our activities and opportunities. Your participation is what makes our community strong and vibrant.



### Stormwater Bond on Ballot November 5th

For over 40 years, stormwater bonds have helped protect Lincoln's property and people from floods. The upcoming election on Nov. 5th includes a stormwater bond on the ballot.

You can learn more on the City website at [lincoln.ne.gov](http://lincoln.ne.gov).

**Witherbee  
Neighborhood Association**

**Boundaries:**

33rd to 56th & 'O' to Randolph

**Meetings:**

Fourth Thursday of the month, 7pm  
Redeemer Lutheran Church

[www.facebook.com/witherbeena](http://www.facebook.com/witherbeena)

[www.WitherbeeNA.org](http://www.WitherbeeNA.org)

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Lincoln, NE 68505  
402-413-0156

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## President's Message

### Mike Kreikemeier



### Grants, Plants & More!

The days are getting shorter and temperatures are cooling down. I think our extended summer is finally turning to Fall. It's perfect weather for a stroll through the neighborhood enjoying the leaves changing color and putting on a wonderful show.

Fall is also the time for the WNA annual appreciation dinner. Make plans to attend on Thursday, November 21st. We will celebrate the many accomplishments of WNA and thank the volunteers that make it all happen. More details about the annual appreciation dinner is found on page one.

I am excited to report that WNA was awarded a \$1,000 Strong Neighborhoods grant. The grant is funding a project to rejuvenate the flower beds in Witherbee Park. I am already looking forward to Spring when the daffodils and tulips will bloom and bring a burst of color to Witherbee Park. As with all projects for Witherbee Neighborhood, volunteers are needed. This will be a fun and rewarding project so get involved and help plant bulbs!

Speaking of making the neighborhood look good with flowers, I would like to thank Margaret Indriksons for leading our Yard of the Month again this year. I always look forward to Margaret's articles during the summer months. Margaret does a great job selecting yards to feature and getting to know the gardeners. I enjoy gardening and when I see the wonderful Yard of the Month features it makes me say "Maybe some day I'll be able to plant a garden that looks that great." Thanks Margaret for your dedication to Yard of the Month.

Don't forget about the WNA Holiday Lights contest. This fun and festive holiday tradition is a great way to celebrate the most wonderful time of the year. Decorate, Nominate, Win!

## WNA Calendar of Events

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| Nov. 5                                    | Election Day   |
| Nov. 21                                   | James Michael Bowers' Monthly Northeast Citizens' Meeting, 5:30 – 6:30 pm Anderson Library, 3635 Touzalin Ave. |
| Nov. 21                                   | Volunteer Appreciation & Annual Meeting; 6:00 pm, Redeemer Lutheran Church, 510 S 33rd St.                     |
| Dec.                                      | Holiday Lighting Contest, Dates to be Announced  |
| Dec. 19                                   | James Michael Bowers' Monthly Northeast Citizens' Meeting, 5:30-6:30 pm Anderson Library, 3635 Touzalin Ave.   |
| No WNA December Meeting – Happy Holidays! |  |
| Jan. 16                                   | James Michael Bowers' Monthly Northeast Citizens' Meeting, 5:30 – 6:30 pm Anderson Library, 3635 Touzalin Ave. |
| Jan. 23                                   | WNA Monthly Meeting; 7:00 pm, Redeemer Lutheran Church, 510 S 33rd St.   |

## WNA Board Says Thank You

Thank you, neighbors, for joining us at our highly successful end-of-summer Pool Party at Woods Pool! Sponsored by Redeemer Lutheran Church and the WNA Board, we welcomed a fantastic turnout of 185 people.

We appreciate you joining us for this family event, which was a true testament to our vibrant community. We hope that you found the experience fun and pleasurable and that you connected with others from our neighborhood, either poolside or during the post-swimming snack.

We also extend our heartfelt thanks to our invaluable community partners, Lincoln Police Department and Lincoln Fire and Rescue, Hy Vee, Redeemer Lutheran Church, and Super Saver. These partners played a crucial role in making this evening enjoyable for everyone, and we are truly grateful for their support.

We look forward to seeing you at future events, and for all of you planners, Pool Party 2025 is August 3, 6-8 PM.



**Thank you to the following individuals & businesses who support the activities of the Witherbee Neighborhood Association with their sponsorship donations:**

### **Organization/Business Sponsors:**

Tabitha Health Care

Dr. Jacobson Veterinary Clinic, PC

### **Individuals:**

Rick Bagby

John Dzerk

Michael & Elizabeth Fitzgerald



## **Redeemer Lutheran Church**

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## Yard of the Month – July

by Margaret Indriksons

July Yard of the Month is the home of Sonya Janson at 3353 M, where she's called the Witherbee Neighborhood home for the past two years. She is a retired software and mechanical engineer, who enjoys time spent with her sister and her nieces and nephews here in Lincoln.

For 40 years, Sonya has been gardening and was a Master Gardener and Master Naturalist in Idaho, Vermont, and New Hampshire. It was in New Hampshire where she started her business to reclaim neglected flower gardens.

Working as a conservationist, Sonya uses good pollinator plants and ones needing less water. She used her knowledge in Boise, Idaho where she worked with pollinator gardens at the Native Center. Her work included to replant fire damaged and over-used areas.

Sonja says that she enjoys the sense of community of Witherbee and the wonderful people who take pride in their homes and yards. Sonja's favorite site in her garden is the side yard. There she can sit under an ornamental red maple surrounded by shade plants and ground cover.

Take a stroll down M Street and introduce yourself to Sonja. Ask her your gardening questions, and with her vast knowledge and experience, she will probably have an answer for you.



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## Yard of the Month – August

by Bryon Ronnfeldt

The Witherbee Yard of the Month for August goes to Paul Brown and Bryon Ronnfeldt. Paul is a chef at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln, while Byron is an analyst with the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service.

They have been long-time fans of the Witherbee Neighborhood, having lived in the area a total of 27 years in three different residences. Their current home was a diamond in the rough that has been a labor of love restoring for the past several years.

It started with slowly transforming the outside in phases. The first area tackled was along the driveway by bringing in truckloads of dirt to create a space ideal for planting a variety of grasses and perennials. It was a lot of sweat equity by Paul, but the results were well worth the effort. The next year, they redesigned the walkway to the front door and added plants to complement the home. The final phase involved adding decorative rocks and a tree to the front of the home. This led to a new driveway, siding, and windows this year to finish the exterior project.

Although there is enough in front to keep any gardener busy, Paul enjoys getting his hands dirty and working with the variety of plants and raised beds of tomatoes, beans, and other vegetables in their backyard.

Paul and Byron certainly enjoy calling Lincoln their home and planting roots in the Witherbee area with no plans to leave.



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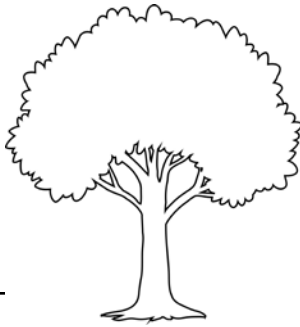


## Grant to Plant

by Mike Kreikemeier

Witherbee Neighborhood has been awarded a \$1,000 Strong Neighborhoods grant. The grant will fund renewing the flower beds in Witherbee Park. WNA was a leader in getting the Lincoln Parks Department to improve Witherbee Park in 2007-2008 when additional lanes were added to "O" street. In the fall of 2012 a group of volunteers led by WNA planted over 5,000 tulips, daffodils and hyacinths. For several years Springtime at Witherbee Park was celebrated with a burst of colorful blooms.

Over the years the bulbs have faded with fewer and fewer blooms each spring. This "Grant to Plant" project will plant another 5,000 bulbs throughout the park. Witherbee has teamed up with Boy Scout David Swanson, who grew up in the neighborhood, to help with this project. David will be organizing boy scouts of Troop 28 to help plant the bulbs as part of his Eagle Scout Project. Of course we can always use more help.



The City of Lincoln Urban Development Department has money available to homeowners who income qualify and have dead or dying Ash trees. Called the *Ash Tree Removal & Replanting Grant Program*, funds are available to remove Ash trees from their property at no cost and re-plant a new tree!

To learn more about this program and the grant application process, contact Loren Roberts at Urban Development at 402-441-8209.



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If you are interested in volunteering send an email to [president@witherbeena.org](mailto:president@witherbeena.org), call and leave a message at 402-413-0156 or check the WNA Facebook pages. The planting dates will be in late November or early December depending on the weather. Hopefully it rains before we plant the bulbs.

The Strong Neighborhoods grant is sponsored by the Lincoln Community Builder Coalition. The coalition is made up of several partner organizations that promote community organizing, planning, and implementation efforts alongside neighborhood residents. This summer the Lincoln Community Foundation provided \$25,000 to fund additional grants and increased each grant up to \$2,500. For even more good news the grant can be awarded multiple times to the same organization. WNA will be able to apply for another Strong Neighborhoods grant to help fund another neighborhood project. More information about the Strong Neighborhoods grant can be found at [civicnebraska.org/strongneighborhoods](http://civicnebraska.org/strongneighborhoods)

*Several WNA Board Members went to The Ross Theater to see the movie "Join or Die". The documentary explores the idea of social capital and why it's important for people to be involved with clubs & organizations. The biggest takeaway from the film? Everyone should join Witherbee Neighborhood Association!*

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# Curbside Mailbox Question Resurfaces

By Mike Fitzgerald

Shortly after new homeowners moved into their home on H Street this summer, they were informed by the Lincoln Post Office that they would not receive mail until they installed a curbside mailbox. They needed their mail but did not want to buy and install a curbside mailbox. Noticing there was only one other curbside mailbox on the street, the married couple visited with neighbors who have lived in the neighborhood for many years and were informed that the Post Office similarly prodded new homeowners 13 years ago trying to get them to install curbside mailboxes.

Residents on H Street asked WNA President Mike Kreikemeier to revisit the issue with Lincoln Postmaster Kerry Kowalski. Kreikemeier and Kowalski visited and the bottom line remains as it was in 2011 – there is no requirement for new homeowners to convert a house-attached mailbox to a curbside mail box.

When Kowalski spoke at a WNA meeting in October 2011 he also answered questions from those in attendance. He said the Post Office encourages curbside delivery to save the agency money but that residents with mail delivery at their door may continue that service. Further, there is no requirement that they convert to curbside mail delivery within 30 days or any date, Kowalski said.

Other questions and answers from that meeting included these.

Q: Wouldn't curbside mailboxes on narrow streets create parking problems?

A: The Post Office didn't consider parking issues when it sent the post card.

Q: Did the Post Office consider that many residents believe curbside mailboxes detract from the character and beauty of a neighborhood and reduce the curbside appeal of homes?

A: No, we really didn't.

Q: When ownership of a home changes, does the new owner have to use curbside delivery.

A: The Post Office may ask the new owner to convert to curbside delivery, but it is not mandatory.

Q: Does the Post Office encourage use of community or cluster mail boxes?

A: The Post Office used to help pay for community mail boxes, but it no longer does. Homes in new developments are required to have community boxes, paid for by the builders. In existing neighborhoods, the Post Office will help neighbors by suggesting a location for a community mailbox.

Q: How can I get more information?

A: Contact your mail carrier or a Post Office station, call the main Lincoln Post office (402-473-1731) or access the U.S. Post Office website at [www.usps.gov](http://www.usps.gov).

Join Witherbee Neighborhood Association and support the many ways WNA keeps everyone informed, safe and works to preserve and improve the neighborhood. Together we can make a difference.

*The Annual Witherbee Holiday Lighting Contest is just around the corner.*

*Win some great Prizes ❄️ Join the Fun!*

*Nominate your Neighbors or nominate Yourself!*

*The winning homes will be featured on the WNA Facebook page and in the Witherbee Buzz.*

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*Or call 402-413-0156 to leave a voicemail message*

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# Banners Add Beauty to Laura Avenue

*by Sally Buchholz and Margaret Indriksons*

Laura Avenue is a unique two-block street in the Witherbee Neighborhood. It runs from 34th to 36th Streets between Randolph and J and has three islands. In 2013 a group of Laura residents requested permission from the City to beautify the islands and take on responsibility for their maintenance. In the past 10 years, Laura neighbors have worked together to maintain the grassy east and west islands and collaborated to create a beautiful perennial garden in the center island.

Last fall, the Rehtus family, who have coordinated some of the island activity, installed temporary flag holders on four of the islands' lamp posts. They adorned the lamp posts with seasonal banners celebrating winter holidays, spring beauty, and American flags for Flag Day and the Fourth of July. Our windy weather often flipped the cloth banners around the flag holders, so to celebrate summertime, Angela Rehtus prepared thin boards, hand painted with the help of her crafty sister, Annata, and Laura neighbor Sally Buchholz.

Whether driving, biking, or walking, summertime visitors are welcomed to Laura Avenue with images of smiling suns, ice cream cones, delicious watermelon with hungry ants, busy bees with happy flowers, a Celtic Tree of Life, and our resident fox.



# Coffee with a Cop Events Well Attended by Witherbee Residents

*by Julie Flodman*

Witherbee neighbors along with Crime Team members attended the annual Coffee with a Cop LPD event October 2nd for both the Northeast and Southeast Area Teams. The area of 40th – 56th Streets is a part of the Southeast Team while the area of 33rd – 40th Streets is in the Northeast Team.

The Southeast Area Team meeting was held at Chick-fil-A, 6810 S. 27th St. At the Southeast Team meeting we learned that Captain Mike Woolman will be retiring in January of 2025. LPD Captain Ben Kopsa will be assuming the leadership position for this team. Captain Kopsa previously served with the Lincoln Area Incidents Command System and has served on the police force for more than 15 years.

The Northeast Team event was held at the HyVee at 5010 O St. LPD Captain Hubka took time to visit with attendees and answer questions, including what residents can do regarding troublesome neighbors. Additionally, he



talked about ongoing northeast neighborhood problems.

LPD Chief Michon Morrow attended meetings in all four quadrants.

October is National Crime Prevention Month, and the LPD is committed to keeping Lincoln safe and thriving. They want to remind us all about the importance of crime prevention and how everyone can contribute:

**Be Aware:** Report any suspicious activity to the police.  
**Secure Your Property:** Lock doors and windows, and consider installing a home security system.

**Participate in Local Programs:** Join or support local crime prevention initiatives and events.

**Engage with your Community:** Build strong relationships with your neighbors. A connected community is a safer community.

Preventing crime is a shared responsibility and together we can create a safer environment for everyone.