



The Lilac Letter

Spring 2008



Lilac Neighbors is a community organization with Castle Park and Highland Park Condominiums as the north south boundaries, and South and Mt. Hope Avenues as the east west borders. All residents are welcome at our events. If you have questions about Lilac Neighbors or The Lilac Letter, please call Joan Gray Lindberg at 244-1217.

This newsletter was made possible by a NeighborGood Grant from the Rochester Area Community Foundation.
And funds from Neighbors Building Neighborhoods – Sector 6.

Lilac, Azalea, and May Street Neighbors Public Safety Meeting Thursday April 17, 2008, 7 pm St. John's Home Sunrise Room

**NET Officer Brian Bannerman will discuss
Current crime trends, personal safety, crime prevention
and mail theft.**

There will be time for questions and answers.

Bring a neighbor. See you on Thursday April 17th.

Save the Date! Start Digging! Tenth Annual Lilac Neighbors' Plant Sale 61 Reservoir Ave.

Saturday May 24th, 2008

8 am till all plants are sold (usually 11:00 am).

This is the Lilac Neighbors' annual fundraiser.

It's time for serious plant selling and fund raising. Or plant raising and fun selling. Hostas are huge. Ferns are fabulous. Columbines are sure sellers.

If you have perennial plants that need dividing, please donate your surplus. If pots or trays are cluttering your garage, recycle them to 32 Highland or 61 Reservoir. If you need pots, pick them up at either of the two "pot" locations. We need people to donate, buy, and sell plants. Please label your donations! Any questions, call Joan Lindberg at 244-1217.



Set your clock. Don't miss this fun event.

One Call to City Hall → 311

From a presentation by Barbara Korpala to Neighbors Building Neighborhoods, March 10, 2008.

On February 29, 2008, the “One Call to City Hall” became a reality with the new 311 Center. Already used by the Rochester Police Department for non-emergency calls, 311 now answers calls formerly handled by the DES Office of Customer Service (428-5990). Located at 945 Mt. Read Blvd, the 311 Call Center answers 1200 calls per day. Using a knowledge-based system, 311 personnel can perform key word searches on a database of city information. The new system can answer user requests by sending out email or faxing forms.

The 311 Center provides information on taxes and foreclosures; they can provide new toters or blue boxes. 311 answers NET phones when the NET office is closed. Cell phones can access 311 from within the City. In some rare cases, 311 may transfer the caller to a subject expert. Operated all day every day, the new 311 system tracks service request performance. For example, potholes should be filled with 24 hours of receiving a call. The goal is to answer 90% of incoming calls within 30 seconds. The staff is bilingual. The 311 Center has the ability to transfer calls directly to 911 when deemed necessary. The 311 Call Center operates out of the City’s Office of Budget and Management. Additional 311 information can be obtained from the City’s website, www.cityofrochester.gov.

Mail Theft Happening to You?

This first appeared in Swillburg’s newsletter, The New Yorker and is used with permission.

I live on Field St. and had my outgoing mail stolen. I would like you to warn people if possible. My mail was stolen and a check I wrote out for \$10.93 was altered and changed to \$1,593.00 and cashed at Merchants Rd. ESL. They changed the “pay to” line to (another) person’s name ... It was cashed and I am out \$1500.

The police and bank are investigating. “Washing” a check is where you can erase any ink using acetone or other household cleaners and write whatever you want on it. My whole check was altered except the date and my signature. Kelly, A Swillburg Neighbor.

Please use the link below to learn more about check theft and check washing. Please report any suspicious activity to 911.

<http://www.ckfraud.org/washing.html>

This website recommends using a gel pen like the Uniball 207 when writing checks. It is very difficult to bleach gel ink. These pens cost about \$2.

Use postal drop boxes for outgoing mail. There is a postal box on Highland near the Cornell Cooperative Extension (249 Highland). Additionally, in St. John’s Home near the Sunrise Room (where many of us vote), there is an outgoing mailbox. Or hand outgoing mail to the letter carrier. It is especially important that tax documents, which contain social security numbers and signatures, are not left vulnerable to mail theft and identity theft.



New Incentive for University Employees to Buy a City Home

Up to \$9,000 Available for Each Purchase, Advice for First-Time Homebuyers

Financial incentives to attract University of Rochester regular full-time and part-time faculty and staff into city neighborhoods closest to the River Campus and the Medical Center begin this month with a new arrangement among the University, the City of Rochester, Advantage Federal Credit Union, and Canandaigua National Bank and Trust.

“We’re offering \$3,000 with a comparable amount from the City of Rochester and Advantage Credit Union or Canandaigua National Bank & Trust to encourage employees to seriously consider owning a home in the city that is close to our University,” said University President Joel Seligman. The targeted areas for the incentive program are the 19th Ward, Plymouth-Exchange, and other neighborhoods on the west side of Rochester in Sector 4; while to the east, they include Highland Park, the South Wedge, and other nearby communities in Sector 6. (*This includes the Lilac Neighbors*).

“The University of Rochester is our largest employer and a steady supporter of what this city has to offer,” said Mayor Robert J. Duffy. “We are proud to match the University’s investment and want to thank them for their ongoing support. We also want to thank Advantage Federal Credit Union and Canandaigua National Bank & Trust for offering an additional incentive to help people save for a down payment and closing costs.

The benefit program provides new homebuyers in Sectors 4 and 6 with up to \$9,000 toward the purchase of a primary residence. Buyers are not limited by their income. Regular full-time and part-time faculty and staff are eligible.

The University’s benefit is provided through a loan that will be forgiven if a five-year occupancy and certain employment commitments are satisfied.

Ron Paprocki, the University’s chief financial officer, said, “We see value in our employees being part of city neighborhoods and also benefiting from easy walking and busing distance from their homes to work.”

As part of the new University Home Ownership Incentive Program for Sectors 4 and 6, NeighborWorks Rochester, a community-based nonprofit agency devoted to strengthening city neighborhoods, will provide participants with home ownership counseling and pre- and post-purchase education. Fees for education services will be paid at closing.

Rochester employers Eastman Kodak Company, Xerox, PAETEC, Unity Health, Visiting Nurse Service, and the City of Rochester participate in similar programs to promote city home ownership.

Graffiti

At a March 27th City Hall meeting for Neighborhood leaders, Molly Clifford spoke of the growing graffiti problem in our area. Molly is the Director of the Neighborhood Empowerment Teams. She shared some very disturbing statistics with the group. Since 2006, the number of graffiti incidents has increased 75%. From three to five individuals are responsible for 75% of all the graffiti! Crime Stoppers is offering rewards for the identification and arrest of graffiti vandals. Please report neighborhood graffiti by calling 311 so that the City can put the location on a list for graffiti removal.

State Representative Susan John has supplied the City with \$80,000 in state funding for the removal of graffiti.

This year’s Clean Sweep, scheduled in the Southeast for Saturday May 10th, will work on graffiti removal, among other chores.

The City has created a database of digital pictures of graffiti. The City is also assembling kits of products for graffiti removal. The products are stored in 5 gallon pails. They are available to neighborhood groups who volunteer to remove graffiti. Call 311 to volunteer to remove graffiti.

**An Open Letter to the Lilac Neighbors Regarding the Use of Highland Bowl and Highland Park
Or why I bother to distribute those fliers door to door.** By Joan Gray Lindberg.

County Legislator Harry Bronson advised the members of Neighbors Building Neighborhoods (Sector 6) that a proposal was coming before the legislature in January to allow Jeff Springut to produce “up to 8” **paid events in Highland Bowl** in 2008. If the events were spread throughout the summer, the proposal could mean a concert every weekend and a fenced Bowl every weekend. A meeting was held at the Parks Department Office on January 15, 2008, prior to this proposal’s coming before the legislature. Neighborhood representatives, Director of the Parks Larry Staub, representatives from SEAC and SWPC, Legislator Harry Bronson and promoter Jeff Springut were present. That meeting produced several positive outcomes. (1) Neighbors agreed to communicate concerns to the Parks Department. In 2007, private grumblings about paid events in the Bowl did not reach the ears of Jeff Springut, or Larry Staub, or SEAC. Nothing negative appeared in NBN6 minutes. (2) The Parks Department freed up dates for the South Wedge and the Business Association of the South Wedge to use the Bowl. (3) The legislature proposal was reduced to “up to five” events in the Bowl.

Larry Staub and Jeff Springut attended the NBN6 meeting in February. Jeff spoke of scheduling three possible concerts in Highland Bowl in 2008, but neither performers nor dates were definite.

At the March NBN6 meeting, Larry announced that the City of Rochester was subsidizing the Omnium. **The Rochester Omnium (an international bicycle race)** will take place in Rochester from August 8 to August 10th. The City of Rochester is sponsoring this event with \$100K. Larry had some concerns about the third day, a road race that will begin in Honeoye Falls and proceed north to the City. Race planners had hoped that the finish line could be at Highland Bowl, where people could celebrate. The event organizers anticipate a crowd of 25,000 people. The total route for this road race is 105 miles. Certain City streets will be blocked off from 2:30 to 3:45 pm on Sunday August 10th. Larry had concerns with this plan, especially with a final destination at Highland Bowl. Parking is a major problem. NBN6 members, many of whom supported the concept of the Omnium, suggested that Genesee Valley Park or Frontier Field would be better locations for the finish line. Since that March meeting, and over objections from some City organizers, the finish line will be in Genesee Valley Park. The road race will circle our southeast neighborhoods, but disruptions will be minimal and residents will enjoy an up close experience of an international road race.

The Vintage Film Festival, cosponsored by the George Eastman House and the Business Association of the South Wedge Area, is scheduled for August 26 to August 30, 2008. NYS Representative Susan John secured \$28,000 for this event. Christine Jones, the president of BASWA, said that additional funding is still needed. The event will be free to the public, but Highland Bowl will be fenced because South Avenue merchants will be selling alcohol. I learned of the dates and funding information at the March NBN6 meeting. Please consider this an update to the flier responses you kindly submitted. All of your responses to the proposed Vintage Film Festival were sent to Larry Staub, Susan John and Christine Jones.

Shakespeare in the Bowl has ten scheduled dates this summer. I do not know those dates yet. These performances are free and the Bowl will not be fenced.

Movies in the Bowl will take place on six consecutive Thursdays, 7/10, 7/17, 7/24, 7/31, 8/7, and 8/14. The movies are free. They start at dusk (8:45 pm). The Bowl will not be fenced. No movie titles are known at this time.

Wedge Stock, the alternative annual meeting of the South Wedge Planning Committee, is scheduled for one day this summer. No fence. Music. Free.

Phil Lesh Concert (part of the City of Rochester’s Summer Jamboree ’08). This is one of the “up to five” concerts that Jeff Springut is permitted to do in Highland Bowl. July 12, 2008. 3 pm to ? Advance sale tickets are \$42. Day-of-event tickets are \$47. The Bowl will be fenced. Alcohol will be sold. This is an outdoor show. Rain or shine.

Ribfest July 10 – 13. Highland Park South. I submitted all the neighbors’ responses on April 7 to Larry Staub. Many neighbors raised serious concerns about putting this event in Highland Park South. However, it appears that the venue will be, and always was planned to be, Highland Park South. The park will be fenced. Alcohol will be sold.

I apologize to those of you who believed, as I did, that neighbors would have a say in where Ribfest would be held. You had many good ideas regarding softening the impact of the event on the community. Hopefully those will be implemented. The lines of communication are still open.

Your neighbor,
Joan

Rochester's Clean Sweep

The City of Rochester invites you to the Saturday Clean Sweep.

Gather at Cobbs Hill Park on Saturday May 10 at 9 am.

The City will provide the tools and food.

You bring your civic pride.

To volunteer, call 311 or

sign up at www.cityofrochester.gov

Local Extreme Makeover

The historic 1839 Ellwanger Estate at 625 Mount Hope Avenue will be transformed from top to bottom by 35 leading interior designers, artists, and craftsmen from across the region as part of the fifth biennial Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra Showhouse. The month-long fundraising event begins on Friday, May 16 and runs through Sunday, June 8, opening with flair during a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Thursday, May 15 at 10:00 a.m., with special guest, RPO Music Director Christopher Seaman. The Showhouse will be open to the public for tours, Wednesdays-Sundays from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Private tours and special functions including chamber concerts featuring RPO musicians, chef events and more will take place on Mondays, Tuesdays and evenings. Preferred Care and Mrs. Dawn and Dr. Jacques Lipson will be the presenting Showhouse sponsors.

Designers will be very busy reconstructing every square inch of the mansion's 37 rooms and spaces prior to opening day. Each room has been stripped, renovated and completely furnished by a different designer, resulting in an eclectic array of extravagantly adorned spaces including bedrooms, bathrooms, a kitchen, several living areas, multiple porches, and a unique Bride's Room. Surrounding the house is a beautiful garden – which will be available for outdoor enjoyment during Showhouse – and decorative wall designed by Fletcher Steele. The original 4000-square foot Carriage House still stands on the property.

The Ellwanger Mansion is truly a significant piece of Rochester history. In 1835 as a 17-year old German immigrant, George Ellwanger came to Rochester with interests in developing a horticulture business. The result was the Ellwanger & Barry Nursery specializing in flowers and fruit, becoming the largest of its kind in the world at the time. It inspired the Rochester moniker "Flower City," replacing the earlier, more industrial-focused "Flour City." Venetian Oak paneling, staircases, and columns accent the 10 bedroom, 13 bath home, complemented by an original Hook & Hastings pipe organ constructed in 1878. Five acres of the original gardens still surround the property, including one of the original 16 greenhouses adjacent to the beautiful Carriage House. Ellwanger's granddaughter Helen was an early preservationist who helped to establish The Landmark Society of Western New York in the 1930s, hiring landscape architect Fletcher Steele to add design elements to the gardens. Upon her death in 1982, Helen willed the house and garden to The Landmark Society, which maintains the garden and opens it up to the public several times a year.

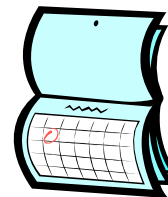
Visit www.rposhowhouse.org to obtain tickets. Ticket prices are as follows: adults/\$15 in advance, \$18 at the door; children 12 and under/\$12 in advance, \$15 at the door. Babes in arms are free.

Lilac Neighbors' Phone List and Map AND Email List

The most recent **Lilac Neighbors Phone List** (September 2006) is way beyond its shelf life. If you have a new cell phone number, please call Joan Lindberg at 244-1217 so she can correct the entry. If you have changed your name, tell me that too. Fortunately, nothing has changed on the map! If you are not on the current phone list, please call me with your information. Only phone list members receive a copy of the neighborhood list. The list is confidential and not used for commercial purposes. Deadline for telephone responses is May 15th.

I also want your **email addresses**. It is so easy to send out announcements and alerts via email. It's also eco-friendly. Save a tree; send an email to vwlsps@rit.edu and you will be added to the Lilac Neighbors Email distribution list. Emails go out under a Blind Carbon Copy (BCC), so your address remains confidential. There is no deadline for email additions, but do it soon, please. At present, there are 58 email addresses on the Lilac List.

Neighborhood Calendar



- Mon. Apr. 14** **Neighbors Building Neighborhoods Sector 6. Monthly meeting.** Plan the future of your neighborhood. 5:30 pm. Parks Office. 171 Reservoir Ave. Light supper served.
- Tues. Apr. 15** **Growing and Using Heirloom Vegetables.** Lecture. Rochester Civic Garden Center. 7 – 8:30 pm. Call 473-5130 to register. Fee.
- Wed. Apr. 16** **Choosing Plants for Continuous Color.** Slideshow lecture. Rochester Civic Garden Center. 6:30 – 8:30 pm. Call 473-5130 to register. Fee.
- Wed. Apr. 16** **Butterfly Gardening.** Lecture. Cornell Cooperative Extension. 7 – 8:30 pm.
- Thurs. Apr. 17** **Police Public Safety Meeting.** Lilac, Azalea and May St. Neighbors. St. John's Home Sunrise Room. 7 pm. All invited.
- Tues. Apr. 22** **Day for Office Professionals.** Day of Reflection. Lunch included. Mercy Prayer Center. 9:30 am – 2:30 pm. Call 473-6893 for reservations. \$25.
- Tues. Apr. 22** **Getting a Healthy Body by Lifting Weights.** Exercise training. Mercy Prayer Center. 7 - 9 pm. Call 473-6893 for reservations. \$15.
- Tues. Apr. 22** **Grow Up With Vines.** Slide lecture. Rochester Civic Garden Center. 6:30 – 8:30 pm. Call 473-5130 to register. Fee.
- Wed. Apr. 23** **Urban Gardening.** Lecture. Cornell Cooperative Extension. 7 – 8:30 pm.
- Sat. Apr. 26** **Planning and Planting a Potager.** Lecture. Rochester Civic Garden Center. 10 – 11:30 am. Call 473-5130 to register. Fee.
- Sun. Apr. 27** **Iris Society.** Meeting. Cornell Cooperative Extension. 2 pm.
- Thurs. May 1** **Perennial Society Annual Drag and Bag Meeting.** Cornell Coop. Extension. 7 pm.
- Tues. May 6** **Soothing Stretches for the Soul.** Stretching training. Mercy Prayer Center. 7 – 8:30 pm. Call 473-6893 for reservations. \$15.
- Tues. May 6** **Long Lasting Cut Flowers from Your Garden.** Slide lecture. Rochester Civic Garden Center. 7 – 9 pm. Call 473-5130 to register. Fee.
- Thurs. May 8** **Using Shrubs and Perennials in Containers.** Lecture. Rochester Civic Garden Center. 6:30– 8:30 pm. Call 473-5130 to register. Fee.
- Fri. May 9** **Lilac Festival** begins.
- Sat. May 10** **Lilac Festival Parade.** Some local streets are closed in the morning.
- Sat. May 10** **Garden Maintenance.** Outdoor lecture demonstration. Rochester Civic Garden Center. 9 am – noon. Call 473-5130 to register. Fee.
- Sat. May 10** **Clean Sweep** in Southeast Rochester. Call 311 to register. Meet at Cobbs Hill Park at 9 am for coffee and assignments. Lunch at noon at Cobbs Hill Park.
- Sat. May 10** **Trough Planting Demystified.** Lecture demonstration. Rochester Civic Garden Center. 10 – 11:30 am. Call 473-5130 to register. Fee.
- Sat. May 10** **Tour of Mt. Hope Cemetery. The New Section.** Noon – 1:30. Meet at the south entrance, opposite the Distillery. \$4. Refreshments after the tour.
- Mon. May 12** **Neighbors Building Neighborhoods Sector 6. Monthly meeting.** Plan the future of your neighborhood. 5:30 pm. Light supper served. Call 244-1217 for location.
- Thurs. May 15** **Wee Gardens.** Hands on class. Materials provided. Rochester Civic Garden Center. 7 – 9 pm. Call 473-5130 to register. Fee.
- Sun May 18** **Lilac 5K and 10K Races.** 8 am. Start and Finish line at Highland Ave. Between South Ave and S. Goodman St. Local streets are impacted in the morning.
- Sat. May 24** **Lilac Neighbors Perennial Plant Sale.** 61 Reservoir Ave. 8 am till all sold out.
- Sat. May 31** **Tour of Mt. Hope Cemetery. East Avenue.** Noon – 1:30 pm. Meet at the North Gate by Robinson Drive. \$4. Refreshments after the tour.

Lilac Neighbors Community Garage Sale

Victoria Posner is planning an early June Community Garage Sale.

Please contact her at 271-3495 for details.