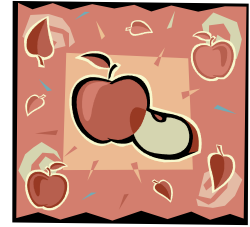


The Lilac Letter

Fall 2007



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 by funds from Neighbors Building Neighborhoods.

Neighbors Building Neighborhoods - Sector 6
Cordially invites you to the
State of the Sector Conference
Saturday November 3, 2007
School #12 999 South Avenue
8:30 am to 3:30 pm

Have you ever wondered about the large tracts of land that encompass our southeast neighborhoods? We have acres of green spaces like Highland and Genesee Valley Parks and the Mt. Hope Cemetery. These spaces are islands of stability. But what does the future hold for the vacant Iola Campus on Westfall Road? What plans are in the works for the old Downtown Motor Lodge site on Byron St? What will the infill building look like next to the Green Grocer on South and Gregory? What will the Al Sigl Center do with the land that runs along South Avenue from Elmwood to the Science Park? Where is the University of Rochester planning to expand?

These and other questions will be answered in detail on Saturday November 3. Come in the morning and listen as developers share their plans, maps and drawings that show what our area might look like in the future. This is a unique opportunity for citizens and developers to come together and study plans. Since each developer will have 15 minutes for a presentation, citizen questions and conversations with the developers will take place over lunch.

Afternoon sessions will teach citizens about researching grant opportunities, or securing low cost home loans, or writing neighborhood newsletters. Please review the bright orange page included in this newsletter that lists all the details the State of the Sector Conference.

The conference was conceived and organized by neighborhood volunteers. NBN Sector 6 applied for and received a NeighborGood grant to fund this Conference. The University of Rochester offered to underwrite the cost of the lunch. The event is free of charge.

Please come. Please bring a neighbor. Make the State of the Sector Conference a success.

People and Places in the News

Welcome to our new **Fire Captain of Quint / Midi 3, Russ Merrick (South Avenue)**. Captain Merrick graciously said yes to our request to hold the ice cream social at his “house.” And in spite of finishing his work shift at 3 pm, Russ and his wife came back at 7 pm to eat ice cream and to meet the neighbors. ❁❁❁ Reservoir Avenue has three new residents. **Roshan Ali, Matt Meleski and Jay Pritchard** are calling 11 Reservoir home while they pursue their college studies. Welcome to the Lilac Neighborhood. ❁❁❁ **Amy Vallee** bought her first house at 40 Highland. A nurse at the Golisano Children’s Hospital, Amy has a very short commute time to the U of R. We’re glad you chose the Lilac Neighborhood, Amy. ❁❁❁ **Captain Mark Case** was promoted to Commander of the Eastside Rochester Police Department. Mark takes over for recently retired **Peter Brunett**. Pete will continue his police career as a professor of criminal justice at MCC. Congratulations to both Mark and Pete. Good luck in your new jobs. ❁❁❁ **Andrea Fisher and Heather Oechsle** have moved into 31 Pavilion Street. Welcome ladies. ❁❁❁ **Marguerite Frarey (Reservoir)** had a starring role in Aaron Copeland’s opera, “The Tender Land.” Marguerite performed at Nazareth College in the Mercury Opera production in September. ❁❁❁ Congratulations to **Sue Gustafson (Reservoir)** for winning the U of R’s Distinguished Achievement and Artistry Award in Undergraduate Teaching. And you thought Sue was just famous for being Kaia’s and Xen’s mom! ❁❁❁ **Sue O’Neil of Meadowbrook Rd.** is the new leader of the **Azalea Neighborhood**. Sue is active in Neighbors Building Neighborhoods and is on the Board of Directors of Friends of Mt. Hope Cemetery. The Lilac, Azalea, and May St. Neighborhoods are collaborating on community meetings and events. ❁❁❁ Tax day will be a source of great joy in the Anderson – McKeever Family. No, Mike and Meghan don’t enjoy paying taxes. Their son **Simon Abbott Anderson (Pavilion)** was born on April 15, 2007. ❁❁❁ Congratulations to the **Rochester Sisters of Mercy** on the 150th anniversary of their ministry in Rochester. We are fortunate to have the **Mercy Prayer Center (Highland)** in our midst. ❁❁❁ **Joshua Dill (Furman)** graduated last June from the School of the Arts. Josh went west to begin his college career at the University of Buffalo. ❁❁❁ Congratulations to **Charlie and Emily Westfall (Reservoir)** on the celebration of their 65th Wedding Anniversary this summer! ❁❁❁ **Malcolm Rieck (Castle Park)** graduated from Seton Catholic School in June and now attends middle school at Siena Catholic Academy. ❁❁❁

In Memoriam

Stan Hampson 1917 - 2007

As this year’s lilac blossoms faded, Stan Hampson passed away on June 1, 2007. Stan was a lifelong resident of Rochester and a longtime neighbor at 40 Highland Avenue. Stan had a varied career as a professional referee in basketball as well as baseball, as a Zoning official at City Hall, and as a member of the Monroe County Parks Department. Stan was responsible for laying out the Birdsong Trail at Mendon Ponds Park. Hunting and fishing kept Stan active well into his 80’s. We will miss our good friend and neighbor. Many neighbors attended Stan’s funeral mass at St. Anne Church on Mt. Hope Avenue.



May Stan rest in peace.

Summer '07 in Review

On May 5th nine Lilac Neighbors and one handsome doberman marched in the first ever **Southeast Community Spirit Parade**. Starting at the Trinity Covenant Church on S. Clinton Avenue and wending our way to the Baber A.M.E. Church on Meigs Street, we carried our Lilac Neighbor's banner. Taking things literally, our "float" consisted of purple helium balloons. Xenie Gustafson, fresh from a softball game, pulled the red wagon that advertised the upcoming Plant Sale. We made our first sale during the parade!

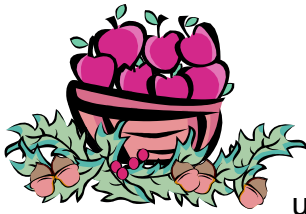
The east side of the City participated in **Clean Sweep** on Saturday May 19. Seven neighbors from the Lilac, May, and Mt. Hope areas worked along the cemetery wall from May St. to Highland Avenue. Weeding and sweeping were the order of the day. The top of the cemetery wall was weeded before the sedum opened their yellow blossoms. The volunteers alerted the City to the deteriorating condition of the pedestrian ramp. The Preservation Board approved repair of the ramp in August. Some work began in October. Hopefully, the pedestrian ramp will be repaired before the next Clean Sweep in 2008.

61 Reservoir Avenue was the place to be on May 26. Bob Schnacky's front yard was covered with perennials for the 9th annual **Lilac Neighbors' Plant Sale**. Although the sale officially began at 8 am, shoppers were toting off prize specimens at 7:30. Plants sold for \$1 and \$2 each. By 10 am, the inventory was completely gone. Laura Rich helped Joan Lindberg count the money. \$399 was the take for the 2007 Lilac Neighbor's Plant Sale! Thanks to everyone who dug, bought, or sold plants. Our good friends from May St., Geri and Joe Machado helped to set up for the sale at the break of dawn (or so it seemed to some of us). Thanks to Janice Smith for the wonderful breakfast casserole, and to Bob Schnacky for the java that kept the workers going. Proceeds from the plant sale pay for the Ice Cream Social, the Reservoir Dogs softball team, photocopies, the community garage sale, the street permit for the Furman Crescent Block Party, and a variety of other expenses.

Fast on the heels of the plant sale, another infusion of money came to the neighborhood. The **Community Garage Sale** took place on June 8 and 9. Eighteen households participated in this yearly ritual of selling stuff to each other. Armed with maps of the participating homes and alerted by purple mylar balloons, buyers found bargains in backyards and garages. Silas Ruth (Pavilion) showed his entrepreneurial spirit when he set up a very successful lemonade stand for thirsty shoppers. It was, however, closed during his nap. Thanks go to Victoria Posner (Furman) for organizing a great sale again this year.

The **Lilac Neighbors Ice Cream Social / Night Out Against Crime** took place on Wednesday, August 1. RFD Captain Russ Merrick graciously allowed us to set up shop at the Fire House. Ninety neighbors and friends spent an enjoyable evening, eating ice cream, looking at vintage neighborhood maps, and catching up on the latest news. It was a great opportunity for the neighbors to interact with the firefighters. Infants Sasha Ruth and Simon Anderson (Pavilion) made their debut at the Ice Cream Social. Friends from the Swillburg, Azalea, and May St. neighborhoods joined us. Even when the firefighters responded to a call for service, we partied on. Thanks go to all our scoopers for dishing up the ice cream. And thanks go to our firefighters for their hospitality.

Summer came to an unofficial end on September 15th when Furman Crescent closed the street to traffic, and opened it to lawn chairs, tables and grills for the annual **Furman Crescent Block Party**. Despite rainy and cold weather on the morning of the 15th, 25 hearty souls celebrated their friendship with delicious chili, soup, shrimp and champagne.



Cornell Cooperative Extension's Holiday Artisan Fair

By Margaret O'Neill

Are you looking for unique gifts for yourself or for holiday giving? The Extension's Holiday Artisan Fair on Saturday, November 3rd will feature unique, handcrafted items from local artists and agriculture businesses. Foods from local farmers will include preserves, condiments, and baking mixes that can be purchased that day or ordered on-line for shipping. Delicious NY wine and apples can be shipped anywhere in the country. Local artists' work will feature jewelry, pottery, weavings, wood items, and handcrafted clothing and accessories. Enjoy delicious fresh cider, donuts and apple products throughout the day at the "apple café".

Select fragrant holiday evergreen wreaths and colorful poinsettias, provided by Chase's Greenhouse. Items can be ordered at the Artisan Fair, with pick up in late November at the Extension Center.

Extension's Artisan Fair will be held at Cornell Cooperative Extension, 249 Highland Avenue in Rochester from 9 AM to 4 PM on November 3rd. A silent auction featuring work from each vendor will be held throughout the day, closing at 3:30 PM. Benefits from the fair will help support Cornell Cooperative Extension's education programs.

A Reminder

By Lt. Frank Churnetski, Rochester Police Department

This is as good a time as any to remind people to be aware of the problems associated with allowing "homeless" bottle collectors to have free reign in our neighborhoods. Many of these folks use the opportunity to go door to door and help themselves to objects of opportunity - in other words, they take what is available in addition to the bottles and cans that they may be taking. There are other neighbors who may store their returnables on porches. These bottles and cans are summarily stolen by the bottle collectors. By allowing folks to take your bottles and cans you unknowingly facilitate these other crimes.

The Rochester Police Department encourages you to donate your bottles and cans to charitable organizations (boy/girl scouts, sports clubs, school musical groups, etc.) if you don't want the trouble of returning the cans yourself. Perhaps your neighborhood organization has something set up or can set up a collection process with a worthy group.

Please ask your neighbors to participate in a unified front so that we don't have scavengers going through yards, porches and garbage and increasing crimes in our neighborhoods.

Should you come upon someone on your property who doesn't belong - please call 911 to report them and do so by providing a good description and direction of travel so that officers will have a better time locating these offenders.

From the Rochester Civic Garden Center
Save seed from your garden this summer to use
as admission to our January seed exchange event!

Property Reassessment 2008

The following is from Mary Shelsby's blog.

The City mailed letters several weeks ago announcing a reassessment of all residential and commercial property in the City of Rochester during the next four months. There was a neighborhood meeting on September 26 at St. John's Home with good information about the assessment process.

The City announced that, on average, property assessments will go up 10% in order to have assessed values closer to market value. Of course, that fact caused many groans as most citizens thought that meant that property taxes would go up 10%. Tom Huonker, Rochester's City Assessor, did a good job explaining that an increase in assessment does not automatically mean an increase in taxes. Tax rates are based on budgets. If the budget stays the same, and all assessments increase the same amount, then taxes stay the same. Of course, not all assessments will change the same amount. If that were the case, there would be no need to do the reassessment. In some neighborhoods, properties are selling for less than what they were in years past and so those assessments will go down.

The staff appraisers are in the process of studying recent sales in an effort to assign a fair market value. Letters will be mailed in December to inform property owners of the new assessed property value. Property owners who disagree with their new assessments can request an informal hearing, which will be held from December 2007 through February 2008. If the issue is still not resolved, the owner can apply for a formal hearing. **The deadline to apply for a formal hearing is March 18, 2008.** There are no exceptions to this deadline. Final assessments will be announced on May 1, 2008.

What can you be doing about this? First and foremost, you need to make sure that the City property records are accurate. The letters mailed to us gave basic information such as lot size, square footage, number of bathrooms. If you no longer have that letter, you can find your tax information on the City of Rochester's web site: <http://www.cityofrochester.gov/>. You don't want to pay taxes for an 1800 sq. foot house if your house is actually 1675 sq. feet!

If you missed Tom's Huonker's **Reassessment** presentation on September 26th, you have another chance to hear his talk on Saturday November 3 at School #12. Tom will repeat the presentation during the State of the Sector Conference, starting at 1 pm.

Disney Mania

Monroe County Parks Director Larry Staub gave the Lilac Neighbors 40 free Disney Mania tickets for the performance in Highland Bowl. Joan Lindberg distributed the tickets to folks with small children. Monday August 20th was cold and rainy, but the performance kept the kids warm. Thank you Larry for your generosity to the neighbors.

Reservoir Dogs Softball Team

At the end of the regular softball season, the Reservoir Dogs had an impressive 13 – 3 record in the Southeast Classic Softball league. Then the playoffs came. On October 13, the Dogs lost in the playoffs to the mighty "Swillburg Rocks the Diamond" team. A cookout celebration seemed to soothe all disappointment. Thanks go to Gary Gustafson for once again managing our team so successfully. Lilac Neighbors who played for the Reservoir Dogs include Vern Lindberg, Mike Anderson, Jonathan Rich and Gary Gustafson.

If you missed the meeting on **Rental Properties**, you have another chance to hear this talk on Nov. 3. It is called "**Code**" of **Conduct**. It will be presented by Pete Saxe and Lt. Frank Churnetski at the State of the Sector Conference, at 1 pm at School 12, 999 South Avenue.



Neighborhood Calendar



- Sat. Nov. 3** **State of the Sector Conference.** Neighbors Building Neighborhoods Sector 6. School #12. 999 South Avenue. 8:30 am – 3:30 pm. All are welcome. Free.
- Sat. Nov 3** **Artisan Handicraft Sale.** Cornell Cooperative Extension. 249 Highland Ave. 9 am – 4 pm. Free.
- Until Nov. 16** **Fall Chrysanthemum Display.** The Lambertton Conservatory. 180 Reservoir Ave. 10 am – 4 pm daily. \$2.
- Mon. Nov. 5** **Seeing Life Through Corrective Lenses.** Voter Preparation Lecture. Mercy Prayer Center. 7 – 9 pm. \$15. Call 473-6893 to register.
- Thurs. Nov. 8** **Those Beautiful Bones: Woody Ornamentals.** Slide-lecture. Rochester Civic Garden Center. 6:30 – 8:30 pm. Call 473-5130 to register. Fee.
- Fri. Nov. 9** **Caregiver Respite.** Mercy Prayer Center. 9 am – 3 pm. \$45. To register, call Sr. Anne Maloy at 271-0760.
- Fri. Nov. 9** **I am the Apple of God's Eye.** Weekend Retreat. From Friday at 7 pm until after brunch on Sunday Nov. 11. \$175. Call 473-6893 to register.
- Mon. Nov. 12** **Using Your Binoculars to See Locally and Act Globally.** Voter Preparation Lecture. Mercy Prayer Center. 7 – 9 pm. \$15. Call 473-6893 to register.
- Mon. Nov. 12** **Neighbors Building Neighborhoods.** Monthly meeting. NET Office. 846 S. Clinton Ave. All are welcome. Light refreshments served.
- Tues. Nov. 13** **Fall Is a Great Time to Get Organized.** Lecture. Rochester Civic Garden Center. 6:30 – 8 pm. Call 473-5130 to register. Fee.
- Tues. Nov. 13** **Holiday Grapevine Spiral.** Hands on class. All materials provided. Rochester Civic Garden Center. 7 - 9 pm. Call 473-5130 to register. Fee.
- Thurs. Nov. 15** **Gardening for the Birds.** Lecture. Rochester Civic Garden Center. 7 – 9 pm. Call 473-5130 to register. Fee.
- Nov. 17 –
Jan. 16** **Winter Holiday Plant Display.** The Lambertton Conservatory. 180 Reservoir Ave. 10 am – 4 pm daily. \$2. Closed Christmas Day.
- Mon. Nov. 19** **Magnifying Significant Issues.** Voter Preparation Lecture. Mercy Prayer Center. 7 – 9 pm. \$15. Call 473-6893 to register.
- Tues. Nov. 27** **City Gardening.** Lecture. Rochester Civic Garden Center. 7 – 8:30 pm. Call 473-5130 to register. Fee.
- Wed. Nov. 28** **Seasonal Garland.** How to class. Materials provided. Rochester Civic Garden Center. 7 - 9 pm. Call 473-5130 to register. Fee.
- Thurs. Nov. 29** **The Sharpest Tool in the Shed.** Lecture. Rochester Civic Garden Center. 6:30 - 8 pm. Call 473-5130 to register. Fee.
- Tues. Dec. 4** **Ribbons and Bows.** Hands on demonstration. Rochester Civic Garden Center. 6:30 - 8 pm. Call 473-5130 to register. Fee.
- Wed. Dec 5** **Make a Knock-out Holiday Wreath.** Demonstration. Rochester Civic Garden Center. 6:30 - 8 pm. Call 473-5130 to register. Fee.
- Thurs. Dec. 6** **Caregiver Respite.** Mercy Prayer Center. 9 am – 3 pm. \$45. To register, call Sr. Anne Maloy at 271-0760.
- Mon. Dec. 10** **Advent Mass and Soup Supper.** Mercy Prayer Center. 5:30 pm. \$10. Call 473-6893 to register.
- Wed. Dec. 12** **Police and Citizens Interaction Committee.** Quarterly Open Meeting. 630 N. Clinton Ave. 5:30 pm.