



The Witherbee Buzz

Newsletter

Winter 2007

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

Lincoln's Economic Report Card To Be Presented At February WNA Meeting

Jason Smith, Director of Business Development with the Lincoln Chamber of Commerce, will be the featured speaker for the WNA meeting on February 1st.

Mr. Smith works directly with the Lincoln Partnership for Economic Development, which is a community-based, public-private collaboration that provides focused direction for Lincoln's economic development activities.

His presentation will be an updated "report card" and annual report on Lincoln's economic development efforts since the Angelou Economic Development & Marketing Plan for Lincoln was initially completed in 2002. Hear what is being done to attract new investment and jobs, assist existing businesses, and how the public and private sectors are working together to further implement the Angelou Plan. Also, find out the status of Lincoln's economic growth and where things are moving.

Topics, Speakers Set For March And April

The March 1st presentation will be a look at the Antelope Valley Project. JJ Yost, Construction Manager with the City of Lincoln Parks & Recreation Department, will be presenting an overview of what has been completed and what yet is to be done for the largest public construction project ever undertaken in the City of Lincoln.

The April 5th presentation will be looking at the successful renovation of Sunken Gardens and the upcoming

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Membership Renewals Are Due Now!

Your membership in WNA is highly valued. Please use the coupon on page 8 to remit your dues. If you are not a member, we ask you to join us in helping to make Witherbee the Best Neighborhood in Lincoln.



Neighbors anticipate start of Annual Meeting

Annual Meeting Big Success

By Lisa McNeel

Neighbors and friends, strangers and vague acquaintances, they came together. It was the 3rd annual meeting of the Witherbee Neighborhood Association. Most of them share a zip code, some of them know each other from neighborhood schools or churches or maybe just the association meetings. Most live in houses older than your average first grade teacher. Some rent, some own, some have moved on to other zip codes, but recall with fondness a "starter" home. A son attended with his mother because it was their regularly scheduled night to eat out. A set of parents busied young children with activities and crayons.

Our association is a geographic one: 56th to 33rd, Randolph to O Street, but it is becoming so much more. As 36 people gathered at Tabitha's Lifequest Center on November 2, we shared more than Braeda pizza, more than conversation, more than a dynamic look at Lincoln's present with an eye toward the future as presented by the eloquent Roger Larson. We were truly neighbors.

Robert's Rules of Order were invoked, officers were inducted, a new president was named, motions were made and seconded. Yes, there is the inevitable business side of things. Order is good.

Together we celebrate a voice. That voice might speak

Continued on page 8

About the Witherbee Neighborhood Association

Boundaries:

33rd to 56th & 'O'
to Randolph Streets

Web Site:

www.WitherbeeNA.org
Meetings: 7:00 p.m. first Thursday
of each month at Tabitha Lifequest
Center, 48th and J.

Executive Board:

Steve Schwab, President
440-7630
ohair42@aol.com

Mike Fitzgerald, Vice President
486-4073
seven_f_ranch@juno.com

Larry Frisch, Secretary
486-9380
lfrisch@alltel.net

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435-6022
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Fred Freytag, Past President
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President's Message

It is 2007 and I would like to wish everyone a Happy New Year! The start of the New Year is often a time to reflect upon the past and think about what we might do this year to make things better. This also applies to your Witherbee Neighborhood Association (WNA.)

Since 2003, when the Witherbee Neighborhood Association was first established, its elected officers, boards and active members have planned and participated in numerous neighborhood activities. Conducting monthly neighborhood meetings, distributing the "Witherbee Buzz" quarterly newsletters, having informative presentations and speakers, coordinating and planning yearly neighborhood activities, partnering with local businesses, and working with our elected public officials and City departments for the benefit of our neighborhood has been done in the past and will continue again this year.

As your newly elected president, I will work towards making WNA better serve everyone who resides in our neighborhood. Like past WNA presidents and boards, the current board and I would like to develop an even stronger and active neighborhood association. I believe one way to accomplish this is to increase our membership—a.k.a. "Strength in numbers." The greater the number of WNA dues-paying members, more WNA can do to improve our neighborhood. For those who are current dues-paying members and/or who have recently renewed their 2007 membership, I want to thank you on behalf of the WNA. If you previously were a member but have not renewed and/or would like to become a member of WNA, please fill out the form on page eight of this newsletter and mail with your dues payment to Karen Vogeley.

Membership is one of the most essential and important valuable resources for neighborhood associations and the Witherbee Neighborhood Association is no exception. Having both dues-paying members who contribute their time and energy and those who pay their dues and maybe contribute a little more, but do not always attend meetings or contribute their time, is essential in order for WNA to continue working towards improving our neighborhood.

Great neighborhoods do not just happen. It takes leadership, partnerships, commitment, vision and goals to make and keep them great. Your Witherbee Neighborhood Association is doing these things and more in working towards making our neighborhood a better place to live. It is important to remember that this is your neighborhood and mine. What we do individually as homeowners and residents and collectively as a neighborhood association does make a difference.

If you have a neighborhood concern, comment and/or recommendation for WNA, please let us know. Either you can attend a monthly meeting on the first Thursday of the month at 7 p.m. at the Tabitha LifeQuest Center at 48th & J Streets, or you can go to www.witherbee-na.org and contact us by email.

Please take the time to read the rest of the "Witherbee Buzz" for valuable coupons and neighborhood news. Also, please patronize the businesses that advertise in our newsletter because they make it possible for WNA to bring this great newsletter to you.



Steve Schwab

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West Gate Bank Enhances Greenspace

By Steve Schwab

Thanks to the generosity of West Gate Bank and Carl Sjulín, West Gate President and CEO, the city-owned greenspace west of S. 50th & 'N' Streets now has numerous new trees and shrubs.

Last fall, Mr. Sjulín approached both Urban Development and the Lincoln Parks & Recreation Department about doing a landscape project to further enhance the greenspace to the south of their new Midtown branch bank building at S. 50th & 'O' Streets. An agreement was reached whereby West Gate Bank would do landscaping and the Lincoln Parks & Recreation Department would establish buffalograss and do limited maintenance of this public greenspace.

Mr. Sjulín then hired Finke's Gardens & Nursery to design the landscape plan and do the installation. Luann Finke worked with both Parks & Recreation and LES in determining what trees would be planted and where to avoid overhead utility lines.

Due to the extremely mild weather conditions and lack of snow cover, Finke's was able to install all the coralberry, juniper and sumac shrubs and 18 new trees on December 27th. A landscaping boulder collection was also installed toward the northeast corner of the greenspace area.

This spring, ornamental perennial grasses will be planted by Finke's and an Arbor Day tree planting ceremony will be held in April by West Gate Bank and WNA to plant a large 'Autumn Gold' ginkgo tree. West Gate Bank has also placed a permanent picnic table within the greenspace area for their employees to use and they have invited anyone else to also enjoy and use it.

WNA is fortunate to have another excellent local business in West Gate Bank locating to our neighborhood. Please stop into their new Midtown branch when it opens in February 2007 and meet Stacy Svoboda, V-P, Branch Manager.

WNA wishes to thank Tabitha for being a great neighbor and providing meeting space for us each month. We appreciate it.



50th and N landscaping site

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First Place home at 3400 Woods Ave.



Tom and Cuddy Houchen, center, were congratulated by Steve Schwab, WNA President, left, and Karen Vogeley, Lighting Committee Chairperson, for winning the Holiday Lighting contest.

Witherbee Holiday Lighting Contest Winners Announced

By Karen Vogeley

The residents who decorated their homes with lights and accessories were not the only participants in the third Witherbee Neighborhood Association lighting contest.

Local retailers contributed prizes. Neighbors nominated various homes. Volunteers from local organizations drove through the area to score the contestants for their creativity, presentation and theme. The Journal Star published an article about the contest, listing the winners and their addresses, which encouraged many people to drive through the neighborhood.

Eldonna Rayburn, Director of Marketing for Tabitha Health Care Services, and Serena Reeves, Coordinator for NeighborWorks Lincoln, awarded the first prize to Tom and Cuddy Houchen, 3400 Woods Avenue. Gifts from Lincoln Lighting, Ideal Grocery, Discount Depot, and Perfect 10 Nails were awarded to them and the runner-up homes at 4200 Randolph Street and 635 South 37th Street.

If you would like to be a participant in the 2007 contest, read the Witherbee Buzz newsletter and/or our website (www.witherbeena.org). We'll announce the contest date and rules in the fall newsletter so you can be a nominee, a nominator or just enjoy viewing the wide variety of decorations in our neighborhood.





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WNA Calendar 2007

Check our web site for more details and updates.

www.witherbeena.org

All WNA membership meetings first Thursday of each month 7:00 P.M. at Tabitha's LifeQuest Center.

(Please note that membership is Not required to attend WNA meetings.)

Thu. February 1st: WNA membership meeting. Topic: Lincoln's Economic Development Report; Speaker: Jason Smith, Director of Business Development, Lincoln Chamber of Commerce

Thu. March 1st: WNA membership meeting. Topic: Lincoln's Antelope Valley Project; Speaker: JJ Yost, Const. Mgr., City of Lincoln Parks & Recreation Department

April: Start of 'Yard of the Month Award'

April: Arbor Day Tree Planting with Westgate Bank at new 50th & 'N' greenspace

Thu. April 5th: WNA membership meeting. Topic: Lincoln's Sunken Gardens & Antelope Rose Garden renovation projects; Speaker: Steve Nosal, City Horticulturist, City of Lincoln Parks & Recreation Department

Thu. May 3rd: WNA membership meeting. Topic TBA

Sat. May 5th: Annual Neighborhood Cleanup. Same location as last year. Details in Spring 2007 newsletter.

Sat. May 5th: Second Annual Plant Sale Fund-raiser. North Parking lot of Hawthorne School 340 S. 48th.


June 7th: WNA membership meeting. Topic TBA

June 7-10: WNA Annual Garage Sale

Special Summer Event: 'Celebration at Woods Park' - Free WNA. Ice Cream Social & Swim at Woods Pool. TBA

November: WNA Annual Meeting.

December: Holiday Lighting Contest



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Hours
8 a.m.-6 p.m. M-F
8 a.m.-12 noon Sat.

Yard Of The Month

By Josh Sovereign

This is the time of year we hear so much about New Year's resolutions. Consider a resolution that will be easy to keep. Simply nominate a neighbor for the "Yard of the Month" award. The committee is looking forward to another great year of deserving winners. As Spring arrives the sign will again make it way throughout the neighborhood. Wouldn't it look great on your street?

If you have a worthy neighbor, friend, or family member please do not hesitate to call me at 327-9360 or email from www.witherbeena.org.

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Meet Your New Neighbors



Stacy Svoboda
VP - Br. Manager
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Faith Gustafson
Asst. Br. Manager
323-8952

Nancy Johnson
Personal Banker
323-8955

West Gate Bank is excited to be in the heart of Lincoln. Please visit us at Midtown @ 50th & O - opening February 15! We look forward to being an integral part of the Witherbee Neighborhood!

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Witherbee History

By Ed Zimmer

In your last newsletter I invited you to add to (or correct) my knowledge of our neighborhood. That led to an entirely proper suggestion that for this edition I write a guide to researching your own house in Lincoln.

Let's start with the basics, then move on to more specialized sources:

BUILDING PERMITS:

The City of Lincoln has safeguarded lives through building codes and permits since 1904—and provided a priceless source for historians. For most Lincoln houses, the building permit is like a person's birth certificate, saying when and by whom a house was created. Permits also include the estimated cost of construction, and some permits identify an architect (if one was involved). These public records are held by the City's Building and Safety Department and can be accessed between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday to Friday, by visiting the Department on the second floor of the County/City Building, 555 S. 10th Street.

TIP: If you provide me your address by phone (441-6360) or email (ezimmer@ci.lincoln.gov), I'll send you a copy of your building permit, saving you (and the Building and Safety staff) from a potentially time-consuming wait at the service counter.

NOTE: Lincoln's historic regulations and practices did not require blueprints for single family houses and duplexes, so IF there were ever blueprints, Building and Safety does not have them. For apartments, commercial buildings, churches, and schools, there may be blueprints on microfilm.

CITY DIRECTORIES:

Since the 1870s, publishers have issued extensive directories listing the residents and business of Lincoln. Bennett Martin City Library (14th & N Streets) and the Nebraska State Historical Society Library (1500 R Street) have microfilm copies of the Lincoln Directories. If you know the names of early residents of your house, you can look them up in the alphabetic directory of residents and often find occupations, employers, names of spouses, names of adult resident children, and so on.

But what if you don't know their names? In 1889 and 1890, and every year from 1910 to present, the directories also provided an address key, listing residents by address. So for most of our Witherbee houses, you can search by address to find names of residents each year, then use the alphabetic directory to learn more about them. The directories are also great sources of advertisements for Lincoln businesses and other local information.

FURTHER BIOGRAPHICAL RESEARCH:

Say you have found the names of the family who first occupied your house and you want to know more about them than the bare listings in the directories. You might be able to find obituaries in the Lincoln newspapers. The "Nebraska Newspaper Index" at the Historical Society library (1500 R Street) is a card index to thousands of articles in Nebraska newspapers, mostly relating to births, deaths, and marriages. The Society has a very extensive collection of Nebraska newspapers on microfilm. Bennett Martin City Library also has Lincoln newspapers on microfilm, and has evening and Sunday hours, which the Society does not.

TIP: If you do not know the date of death of a person you are research-

ing, and the Nebraska Newspaper Index is silent on their name, you might check whether they are buried at Wyuka Cemetery (along with over 50,000 other folks). Wyuka has a web site (www.wyuka.com) through which you can identify whether someone is interred there. If so, the Cemetery can provide you a date-of-death from their records (3600 O, 474-3600) and from that you may be able to find an obituary in Lincoln newspapers.

HISTORIC PHOTOGRAPHS:

I often get requests for historic photos of individual houses. Most often I cannot locate any, but the Nebraska State Journal and its successor Sunday Journal Star, for most but not all years between 1900 and 1925, published year-in-review pictures and stories, typically on the first Sunday in January. Some years those features included pictures of dozens of houses—often grand houses, but sometimes more typical examples. My little bungalow on M Street was illustrated in 1925. If you have a house of that era, it can be a fun place to check, even just for a sense of events at the time your house was new.

Other editions of the Lincoln papers have house photos, especially Sunday papers in the spring and summer, but those are true needle-in-the-haystack searches. The Nebraska State Historical Society has extensive collections of photographs, but this is a big state with lots of houses—most are not represented. A wonderful collection of Lincoln photos that is extensively indexed is the Macdonald Studio Collection, with images from the 1920s-50s. As a commercial photo studio, Macdonald Studio was much more often hired to photograph businesses (and accident scenes, for insurance purposes) than houses.

If old photos of your house exist, they are most likely family heirlooms of early families from your house. Your biographical research on early residents might lead you to such gems, if you are lucky (and persistent).

REGISTER OF DEEDS:

Finally, every property in Lincoln has a set of historic documents in the Lancaster County Register of Deeds (555 S. 10th St.), indicating owner-

Continued on next page



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Teens – WNA & Lincoln's Future Leaders

By Bridget Fitzgerald

Hey Teens! Getting involved in your neighborhood isn't just for adults! You can be a big part of our community by hearing what's going on and what's being planned; and helping write **The Witherbee Buzz** and even going to meetings! And this new space in the **Witherbee Buzz** is by and for us! It's going to be for fabulous thoughts and ideas for and about our top-notch neighborhood.

The Witherbee Neighborhood Association is totally cool organization. They do everything from free pool and ice cream parties to planting trees and cleaning up trash around here! I'm 13 years old and I find it a lot of fun to take care of and be in the company of people who care and know how to get things done!

To share your ideas and comments about what you'd like to see in the WNA Teens section or if you'd like to help write it, send an email to teens@witherbeena.org.


WNA Officers Elected

The 3rd Annual meeting held in November was not only a time to eat, socialize, and listen to a great speaker, but also to elect board members and officers for the new year.

Re-elected, to the board of directors were: Fred Freytag, 530 S. 38th St., and Christine Nesmith, 224 S. 40th St. New board members elected were Mary Kay Kreikemeier, 3743 Woods Ave.; Lisa McNeel, 611 S. 34th St.; and Curtis Wood, 342 S. 50th St. Other Board members serving current terms are: Mike Fitzgerald, 3794 H St.; Larry Frisch, 4105 N St.; Russell Miller, 341 S. 52nd.; Steve Schwab, 3510 Woods Ave.; Karen Vogeley, 3535 Frost Ct.; and Fred Zarate, 5110 L Street.

Officers elected were: President--Steve Schwab, 3510 Woods Ave.; Vice-President--Mike Fitzgerald; Treasurer--Karen Vogeley, and Secretary--Larry Frisch.

These board members give unselfishly of their time to help make Witherbee one of the best neighborhoods in Lincoln. If you have neighborhood concerns please contact one of the board members, or come to the next WNA meeting. See page 2 for phone numbers and e-mail addresses.



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Witherbee History Continued from previous page

ship, mortgages, and so on. I list this source last because if your house is documented by building permits, directories, and obituaries, there may be little additional information you will find through deed research. However, for houses built before the building permit system started in 1904, deed research is essential. Deeds are indexed by legal descriptions of properties (subdivision name, block, and lot) and they identify sellers, buyer, prices, and any special conditions. By establishing the chain of owners, loans, and prices, you can often gain strong clues as to when a house was built on a parcel, but the deeds do not usually provide construction dates (unlike building permits). Sometimes if construction bills were contested, Mechanics Liens were filed among the deeds and those can provide rich information on building activity.

Finally, if you are researching your house and hit a roadblock, you can contact me for coaching (or for sympathy). And if you research your house and no one seems to share your excitement at what you have found, contact me. I would be excited, and grateful, to learn what you can teach me.

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NEWS FROM HAWTHORNE SCHOOL...

NEW NEIGHORS: The Hawthorne School Character Council welcomed the Braeda/Runza restaurants to the neighborhood in late October by delivering colorful banners. The children had pop and cookies and took a brief tour. The restaurants also hosted a fundraiser night for Hawthorne School on January 16th. We appreciate all that Braeda/Runza has done for the school and look forward to future projects. The West Gate Bank staff has already visited Hawthorne and provided volunteers for our annual Harvest Fest and a delicious meal for the faculty during Parent Teacher Conferences. We are looking forward to the bank opening!

CANS FOR BOOKS: We need your help! We are asking the neighborhood to save aluminum cans for our school. During the month of April, the cans can be taken to the recycling stations listed below. When delivering the cans, be sure to say they are for Hawthorne School's CANS FOR BOOKS drive and the school will get a percentage of the profits. This is a project for all LPS elementary schools. The money is then used to buy books for the school library at Lee's Booksellers. We can only receive credit for cans turned in during the month of April.

This project runs the entire month of April. Cans may be taken to: A-Can Recycling, 3255 S. 10th Street, A & K Recycling, 3400 N. 22nd Street, or Hawthorne School Parking Lot (south end) – April 27th (7:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.)



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March, April Speakers

Continued from Page 1

renovation of the Antelope Rose Gardens. Steve Nosal, City Horticulturist with the City of Lincoln Parks & Recreation Department, will be presenting the history of Sunken Gardens, including its recent renovation. He also will be giving an overview of what the renovated Antelope Rose Garden will be like when done.

Annual Meeting Continued from Page 1

about taxes or snow removal or that old man who walks his pug dog. That voice might strive for downzoning or redevelopment or planting more trees. That voice might be in a conversation or a presentation or a letter with the collective weight of an association behind it. We are grateful to all who came, who ate, who listened, and who offered their voice. Feel free to join us at any of our regularly scheduled first Thursday meetings. We need your voice.

Volunteers needed ...

We are looking for a few more volunteers to help deliver the "Witherbee Buzz" newsletter on a regular basis, once every three months. If you can help deliver one or two blocks in your area please send an e-mail or call Fred at 466-4655 or Jim at 483-4919.

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WNA is a Non Profit Association. Contributions of \$35.00 or more will receive a **tax deductible receipt**.

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Membership Categories:

___ Single	\$10.00
___ Family	\$15.00
___ Senior Family	\$10.00
___ Additional Household Member	\$ 5.00
___ Sponsor	\$35.00
___ Benefactor	\$50.00 & up
___ Business	\$40.00

Benefits of membership: (besides being in the loop of things)
 Single – one vote; Family – two votes, one per person; Senior Family – same as Family; Additional Household Member -one vote; Sponsor – up to three votes, one per person; Benefactor – same as sponsor and listed in newsletter once
 Business – one vote as per bylaws, reduced ad costs, one free listing in newsletter, and an ad on our web site.