



## Free Witherbee Pool Party And Ice Cream Social July 26th, 6 p.m.

Once again Witherbee Neighborhood Association (WNA) will furnish a FREE swim party at Woods Park Pool along with FREE ice cream in front of the Woods Park Tennis Center

at 401 S 33rd Street next door to the pool. Super Saver at 48th & O Street has sponsored this event by donating the ice cream again this year. Super Saver has been generous with their support of this party and advertises regularly in our newsletter.

All neighbors are welcome regardless of whether they are members of WNA. The pool will be reserved just for our party. Bring your family and friends and have a swim

and a dish of ice cream courtesy of the members, board, and officers of WNA. Woods Park Pool is huge so there is plenty of room for all your guests. This is our third year presenting this event and we are hoping for the largest crowd yet. The more we have the better our time together will be.

This year the Woods Park Tennis Center is helping us put on this event by providing tables and cleanup equipment. New tennis professional Kevin Heim has opened up his area to us so we can enjoy our event even more than ever.

**Come on over for a free swim and free ice cream.**

## Bryan Community's Life Stories Project Will Be Explained at August 6th Meeting

Scott Bendler will present our August meeting with information about the "Life Stories" project at Bryan Community. Scott is leading a program that is changing lives for young and old, who work together to produce the stories in multimedia format, engaging the young in a marketable skill and breaking down barriers of age. Scott will be seeking volunteers for this year and telling us about the successes of previous years. He will present a program that has recently been shown at the Ross Theater on the UNL campus in May. Join us for a treat for all ages and talents. Imagine a show about your life! How interest-



Scott Bendler

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**Money-Saving Coupons**  
In this issue are located on  
**Pages 3, 5, 9, and 11.**



Rain Gardens channel water run-off into planting beds

## Join WNA for Woods Ave. Rain Garden Tour On Aug. 25

A rain garden improves water quality, doesn't require additional watering or fertilizers, incorporates native plants and looks beautiful. Planted in a small depression on a natural slope, it is designed to temporarily hold and soak in storm water runoff that flows from rooftops, driveways, patios and lawns. Rain gardens are effective in removing up to 90 percent of nutrients and chemicals and up to 80 percent of sediments from the storm water runoff.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates

**Continued on page 3**

## About the Witherbee Neighborhood Association

### Boundaries:

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

### Meetings:

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

### Web Site:

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

### Executive Board:

Curtis Wood, President  
817-3809  
[cwood57@neb.rr.com](mailto:cwood57@neb.rr.com)

Rick Bagby, Vice President  
488-8567  
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327-9646  
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Steve Schwab, Past President  
440-7630  
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### Additional Board Members:

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## President's Message

Getting involved in the neighborhood is actually pretty darned easy. Just come to a meeting and join in the activities by bringing your topic of interest. We are constantly looking for ways to help our neighbors, but could use more input to help steer the work and energy we generate from the fun we have at our meetings. That fun grows more with each new person that gets introduced at the monthly meetings. We always have some laughs at the beginning of each meeting which helps each one know more about the persons in the group and our officers.



Curtis Wood

We operate through making motions, discussing the topic, and reaching a consensus of what we can do to make the neighborhood better based upon the ideas brought to our attention at the meetings. Our reputation is based upon the freedom to speak one's mind in free and open discussion then the membership gets behind the idea to make something happen when the idea becomes a part of our goals. The ideas come from surprising sources and your idea could be the next great thing the Witherbee Neighborhood Association (WNA) accomplishes.

### Won't you bring your ideas to a meeting soon?

The WNA is looking for a few good persons to nominate to the board and officers for the coming year. We are about to have some very experienced and motivated officers to reach their term limits. These are neighbors who will continue to share their time and talents but, our bylaws are setup to encourage a rotation of officers so our association does not become a one person "show". This method keeps fresh, new ideas coming to the front as each new person steps in to leadership positions. This also protects those who have served from "burning out" by taking a break away from the responsibility for a while. Our nominating committee will be forming in August to nominate the new leaders.

We know that it will take personal contact to get the best people for this job. I want to encourage you to send names and/or contact information so we can do the heavy work of recruiting the persons to serve. You can nominate without asking the person and we will do the rest. WNA can use your input as to people who you feel would be possible leaders and who can bring those new ideas and energy. If you have the opportunities to speak with them too that will help us get the very best. We want to find our finest to carry on the critical missions of helping keep our neighborhood the leader it has become in Lincoln. Contact any person listed along the sidebar to this article to give them the nomination.

Don't forget  
to mention all the  
fun we have, too!

Also, You can  
nominate your-  
self!

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## Rain Garden Tour On Aug. 25

Continued from Page 1

that pollutants in storm water runoff are responsible for about 70 percent of all water pollution in lakes, rivers and creeks. Since most property is privately owned, we all need to do our part to reduce this type of pollution.

The major difference between a rain garden and a regular flower garden is that the bed of the rain garden is planted as a depression rather than in a mound or at ground level. Installing a rain garden is relatively easy, the most important part is the location--you want to capture storm water runoff coming from your roof, driveway or patio, but not all the runoff from neighboring properties. If you need help with your rain garden, there are upcoming classes and online resources available.

Last spring, the City of Lincoln received a two year grant of \$145,000 from the Nebraska Environmental Trust to encourage residents to join a community effort to improve water quality. The city is installing approximately 80 homeowner and 10 school rain gardens with 80 percent of the cost of the gardens covered by the grant. To date, over 50 gardens have been installed and 7 of those are in the Witherbee Neighborhood. As a part of this project, they also plan to monitor a series of rain gardens on home-owner properties for their effectiveness to reduce runoff and pollutants.

The popularity of this project was overwhelming and the City is currently looking for new grant opportunities.

Please join us as we tour the rain gardens on Woods Avenue and discuss this timely topic with Amanda Meder on August 25. Meet at 3300 Woods Avenue at 7 p.m., The tour will conclude in approximately 1 to 1 ½ hours with refreshments at 3510 Woods Avenue. If it rains, be sure to bring your umbrella!!!!

## Historic Photo Show Contributions Needed

Witherbee residents will have another special treat at the annual meeting in November. An historical photo slide show, customized for the Witherbee neighborhood, will be presented.

This year's show will have different pictures than last year's, and we could use your help.

To prepare for the Witherbee Show, we are asking that Witherbee residents share their old photos of houses/places in the neighborhood.

It has been reported that there was a horse pasture located in Witherbee, and we would like someone to furnish photos of horses, or horseback riding, in the area.

If you locate old photos, contact Larry Frisch, 486-9380, or [larry@npcenter.com](mailto:larry@npcenter.com), before the end of September, so they may be included in the show. Now is the time to dig out those old photo albums.

Summer 2009

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For More Information Contact

**Lindsay Hute**

Director/Teacher

**477-1710**



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## Bryan Community's Life Stories Project To Be Explained at August 6th Meeting

Continued from Page 1

ing it would be to a young person ready to begin their adult life!

Scott Bendler wrote the following in May of 2006 after the first *Life Stories*

"In all my years of teaching, I've been involved in some very creative and exciting classroom experiences. BUT, I've never been involved in a project as rewarding for students and me, personally, as this project. Watching our students become immediately connected with our elder friends gave me a teacher equivalent of a "proud parent moment". These students will probably gain as much from this experience as any in their entire educational lives. There's more than "school" going on, there's a learned respect and caring that goes both ways. This experience has been incredibly inspiring."

### Volunteers are needed for the project:

- Who:** Older residents in the Lincoln & surrounding communities
- What:** Participants are paired with students from The Bryan Community
- When:** Wednesdays at the Bryan Community (LPS) from 2:00-3:00 PM
- Where:** Media Center, Bryan Community, 1801 So 40<sup>th</sup> St.

### WNA Membership Continues To Increase

For the second year in a row we mailed statements to all 2008 members and all homeowners listed in the neighborhood. Despite all the bad economic news the mailing has been a smashing success. At the end of June our membership and homeowners had paid their dues and created an enrollment of 272 current members.

The word on the street is that people are spending their money where they feel they can achieve the most value for their dollars. The board takes this to mean that Witherbee Neighborhood Association (WNA) continues to be a great value in the minds of our neighbors and friends. Encourage your neighbors to join in the best neighborhood value in Lincoln, Nebraska.

Our newsletter has experienced similar results. Businesses actually contact us seeking to advertise in the "Buzz". A new advertiser recently ran their first ad in our newsletter and was able to sign up 100 new customers in our area. They were so impressed with the results they increased the size of their ad back to the ¼ page size that had been so successful. Similar results are reported by each of our advertisers as they tell Larry Frisch, our newsletter editor, of the great results they have each time they place an ad with us.

Thanks to our neighbors for making WNA a shining star in a time of daily bleak economy news!

--Curtis Wood, WNA President



Margaret Opp and her great grand daughter, Alyssa Schroeder at one of the project meetings in the Bryan Media Center

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual 37<sup>th</sup> & H Streets Potluck Date Set For Sept. 13th

Residents of 37th & H Streets are going back for seconds. Last year's inaugural potluck attracted more than 60 residents of all ages who enjoyed a wonderful array of homemade food, along with cool fall air and visiting with friends and meeting neighbors. Not to disrupt success, the second annual 37th & H Streets Potluck is planned for the same weekend - Sunday, Sept. 13, from 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Last year, the potluck was held at the intersection of 37th & H Streets. This year, to attract and accommodate more residents the potluck will be held near 38th and H.

Other areas in Witherbee have been enjoying block parties for several years; and in Woods Avenue's case, for more than 30 years. Residents on 37th and H Streets got a taste of the fun last year and hope add a few activities to enjoy in addition to the food. Anyone interested in helping plan or set up for the potluck can call Kathy Stastny 488-3314 or Mike Fitzgerald at 416-1475.

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# Wyuka Stables Project - The Sept. 3<sup>rd</sup> Topic

The September WNA monthly meeting will be of interest to all residents of Midtown Lincoln. Lori Merliss, Executive Director of the Wyuka Historical Foundation will talk about the renovation project at Wyuka Stables. The meeting will be held at the Tabitha Lifequest Conference Room at 7 p.m.

By Lori Merliss

Just past the main building at Wyuka Cemetery and down a slope near the lake bridge is an old building that may have escaped your attention. It is deteriorated, but if you look closer you will see an attractive structure built in the Craftsman style. This is the Stables, built in 1906 to house the horses that worked at Wyuka. Before there were gasoline powered engines all the work at the cemetery was performed with man and horsepower. The building may also have been used to rest the horses which pulled the first trolley cars out "O" St. to the cemetery gates. The cemetery was the last stop on the route of that first trolley system.

The volunteers of Wyuka Historical Foundation have worked for more than a decade to save the Stables, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Two years ago a restoration project was approved for funding by the Transportation Enhancement Program, a federal program administered by the Nebraska Department of Roads. Transportation Enhancement funds include historic preservation monies that

are specifically for the renovation of transportation related structures. Buildings that are no longer needed for their original purposes are refitted for public use as museums, community centers, or other uses.

The Stables have been used for storage over the years, and they are the summer home of Flatwater Shakespeare Company. The building has no utility service or indoor plumbing,

which has limited further community use. The building is currently in such poor condition that without significant work it will soon be unusable. The renovation will transform an eyesore into a community center that will be available to the public for meetings and events of all kinds. The project is moving forward, with the goal of beginning construction in the spring of 2010.

Currently, groups like the Hartley Neighborhood Association and the Purple Heart Veterans meet every month at the cemetery's Garden Room. The Stables will provide a new classroom space that will accommodate those groups as well as tour groups and student visitors. Wyuka Historical Foundation is developing a program for 5th graders that will combine study of the wetlands pond with



Artist's rendering of rennovated Stables.

a Nebraska history tour. Belmont Elementary School students have participated in a similar program for the last five years. Our goal is to have all 5th graders from Lincoln Public Schools enjoy a field trip to Wyuka. The Stables classroom will enable this and other programs to take place year round.

Do you have other ideas about how the Stables building can be used by the community? Please contact the Historical Foundation office at 416-5056. Wyuka Cemetery is a state property, founded by statute in 1869. The mission of Wyuka Historical Foundation is to support the preservation, interpretation, and public use of Nebraska's historic state cemetery. We want people to be aware that this beautiful property is here for the public to use and enjoy. Wyuka Historical Foundation gratefully acknowledges the Nebraska Department of Roads Transportation Enhancement Program, which is providing the funds for the Stables project.



Lori Merliss

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# Tabitha Construction Continues At Fast Pace

By Eldonna Rayburn

Tabitha Health Care Services has begun construction on its five-point expansion plan to add and improve services, create jobs and enhance facilities on its campus located at 48th and Randolph Streets. Tabitha has taken a number of steps to reduce and alleviate issues surrounding a construction project.

**Parking.** Tabitha has asked Lincoln Public Works to post *No Parking* signs on the south side of J Street from 48th to 46th Streets, and on the north side of J Street from 48th to 47th Streets to alleviate the congestion we have been experiencing as of late. We are hopeful that these signs will be installed in the next few weeks. In the meantime, Tabitha staff has been parking in a lot south of Tabitha to free up more campus parking and avoid parking on J Street altogether. A new parking lot will be opening up in late July 2009 just north of Tabitha's campus, which should alleviate parking congestion throughout the construction projects.

**Noise.** The noise factor should be much improved for our neighbors now that we have completed demolition on the south face of the building. The construction company is working with us to do everything they can to keep the noise to a minimum.

## Project Updates:

Tabitha Nursing & Rehabilitation Center's south entrance will undergo a three-story redesign that will include construction and remodeling to improve admission and consultation spaces and expand reception and waiting areas. Construction has begun and should wrap up in spring 2010.

Tabitha will begin construction of an Assisted Living facility on the main campus at 48th and Randolph Street in August 2009. The new facility will include 15 apartments of assisted living and 48 apartments of memory care assisted living with studio, single and double-occupancy options. Construction is expected to finish in late fall, 2010.

Tabitha will begin conversion of the existing building on the corner of 47th and J Streets, to a Green House home. Construction will begin in October 2009 and wrap up in



Artists rendering of new Tabitha South Entrance

the summer of 2010. Two additional Green House homes are expected to begin construction mid-2010. Tabitha Adult Day Services (previously located at 47th and J) will move to a facility on the Lincoln Medical Education Program campus at 4600 Valley Road.

Tabitha will build a 12-patient skilled nursing facility dedicated to Hospice care. Construction will begin mid-2010 and wrap up in the spring of 2011. Hospice provides very specialized and compassionate care for individuals facing an end-of-life illness.

Tabitha will expand its rehabilitation program by converting its fourth floor from long-term care to a state-of-the-art short-term rehabilitation environment. Construction is slated to begin in 2011.

**Feedback.** Catch the construction as it happens by visiting our Web site at [www.Tabitha.org](http://www.Tabitha.org). Stay tuned for invitations to upcoming events! As always, our neighbors are very important to us. If you have questions or concerns, please contact Tabitha Public Relations at 486-8559 or [pr@Tabitha.org](mailto:pr@Tabitha.org).

## 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.

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## Plan Your Holiday Lighting Now!

By Dee Wood

Wetherbee Neighborhood Association took a different approach to the awards last year. The idea was to emphasize participation rather than competition. Holiday decorating really does make the season a little brighter and helps keep our spirits up through the long nights and shorter days of winter. If your house was one without lights last year, think about putting out something simple or perhaps decorate from the inside out by putting something in your windows. That way you can avoid the challenge of ladders, extension cords, inclement weather, and procrastination. If you need some ideas, consider last year's awards. Some of these were determined ahead of time and some were created as the judges drove by!

I can't promise the awards will be exactly the same this year; the idea is to spread the awards around and simply encourage everyone to get involved! Over 36 people got coupons for hot chocolate or coffee at some of our favorite local businesses last year. We'd love to distribute even more this coming year.

Decorating doesn't have cost a lot either. Consider the **Most Creative RE-USE of Material** award. It's fun to see what our neighbors came up with on this one.

Then there's the **Simply Elegant** award. Ah, what a pleasure to drive by these!

Go crazy with the **Hot Air** award. This one goes to the residence with the greatest concentration of inflated décor on a single property.

The **Merry and Bright** award is for the most lights on a single property. This was also known as the **LES Loves You** award.

Those of you more interested in color coordinating might be interested in the **Red, White and Blue** award, the **Best Monochromatic Display** or the **Best Polychromatic Display**.

The **Spirit of the Season** award recognizes décor with a religious theme. These homes and churches remind us of what the season is all about.

There's also the **Kid Friendly Décor** award and the **Waiting for Santa** award. Did you see the landing strip for Santa last year? Or the countdown calendar?

People all over Lincoln recognize the Wetherbee Neighborhood. Let's make the holidays a time that others want to drive through our neighborhood and enjoy the lights. Let's show our pride and to make the season a little brighter!

## Dietitian To Speak Oct. 1st.

Karen Hollis obtained her master's degree in nutrition and health sciences with a minor in teaching at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) in 2008. She is a 2007 graduate of UNL's Dietetic Internship Program, and she has an associate degree in culinary art from Southeast



Karen Hollis

Community College-Lincoln. Karen's specialties include counseling and instruction in the areas of heart disease, diabetes, weight management, sports nutrition and celiac disease, as well as healthy cooking and menu development. She enjoys teaching classes and interacting with customers in the Hy-Vee aisles. Karen is ready to provide you with creative and realistic ways to make healthy eating part of your daily routine.

Karen's presentation is entitled "Small Changes... BIG Results". She will discuss simple food and lifestyle modifications we can all make without much effort that will equal significant long-term health improvements! Her tips can help prevent holiday weight gain without a feeling of deprivation.

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# Sixth Annual WNA Cleanup Is Another Success

By Rick Bagby

Witherbee Neighborhood Association's sixth annual Cleanup, held on May 9th, was another in a long line of great days for the neighborhood. Thanks to all who worked to help Witherbee be a destination neighborhood. With the work of neighbors like you, Witherbee is where we all want to live, regret leaving when we have to, and move back to when we can.

Families, singles, couples, kids, teens, and adults of all ages gathered to make the day a success. Business partners made a big contribution as well, with thanks going out to returning partners Carter Refuse, Neiderhaus Bros. Refuse, Braeda/Runza, and FM Lawncare. They were joined this year by new partners Paragon Refuse, Scrapy's Metal Recycling, Hofeling Enterprises, and HyVee. These businesses added to our previous efforts and allowed us to take in more items, and greater tonnage than last year, while coming in well under the allowed budget total of the grant we received from The Great American Cleanup office at Keep Lincoln and Lancaster County Beautiful in the County/City Health Department. Thank You.

This year's cleanup had three major components. All three components were enhanced this year to provide better service and/or to conserve KLLCB's grant money by recruiting additional donated services. The services were: The drop-off site with roll-off trash bins on the north side of Hawthorne School at 48th + M, curbside pickup available throughout the neighborhood, and brush coupons to allow residents to take tree and bush trimmings to be mulched and composted.

At the drop-off site, Scrapy's Metal Recycling provided the roll-off (and semi-trailer) for metal recycling. A full to nearly overflowing roll-off dumpster of metals and a full flat-bed semi-trailer for appliances made an impressive sight. HyVee joined previous sponsor Breada/Runza in keeping us warm and well fed with coffee and rolls and snacks. FM Lawncare returned with the trailers and a canopy to provide us with an 'office' and shade for the site. FM Lawncare also made sure we were all stylish by handing out Witherbee Neighborhood Association T-shirts to all volunteers.

The refuse haulers Carter Refuse and Neiderhaus Bros. were joined this year by Paragon in providing compactor trucks and crews for a free curbside pickup of acceptable waste items. Witherbee volunteers then scoured the area to pick up recyclable items and visited those addresses who called in to request special help with pickup of items that the neighbors could not bring to us.

For the third component, the mulching of brush and tree trimmings, new partner Hofeling Enterprises offered brush coupons good for dumping brush at their location. This allowed us to avoid sending 20 loads of material to the city's site, stretching the time and \$ the city spends to provide that service. Thank You Scott Hoefling.

We were entertained by neighbors trying out the mini-



bicycle and pogo-stick. We cajoled a former division I collegiate volleyball star into giving out volleyball tips as we tossed around the volleyball.

A little time and many hands, good food and good people made a great day. Oh, and we took 18,000 pounds of refuse out of our homes and garages, and cleaned the back and side fences of their built-up discards as well.

Planning for next year has already started. Thank you all.

## Sturh Park Neighbor's Potlucks Continue

For the fourth year in a row the neighbors near Sturh Park have been continuing their monthly potluck held on Sunday evening at 6:00 PM. Cheryl Hejl (489-2557) is the main organizer of this monthly event. She usually furnishes tables, ice tea or lemonade, and some paper goods to keep the tradition going.

We have had four so far this season and have three more planned.

August 16, 2009	6:00 PM
September 13, 2009	6:00 PM
October 4, 2009	6:00 PM

Everyone is welcome. We have even had our Senator Bill Avery drop by on one occasion. This is a great way to meet neighbors and establish the knowledge of each other that makes friendlier neighbors after having shared some time together. Invitation is open to all who read this article and your guests as we feel you are all our neighbors in Midtown Lincoln.

Bring your own table service and a covered dish to share. (don't forget the recipe, too)

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Veterans touring the WW II Memorial in Washington D.C. included Sen. Bob Dole and WNA resident John Dzerk, first right. Other WNA residents also made the trip.

## Vets from WNA Flew on Heartland Honor Flights

By Mike Fitzgerald

Witherbee residents were among the 1,500 Nebraska vets who flew this spring to Washington, D.C. to see the World War II Memorial erected in their honor. The memorial opened in 2004 and honors the 16 million who served, the more than 400,000 who died and those who supported the war effort from home.

Four vets who are Witherbee residents are John Dzerk, 3769 H St.; Junius Koch 345 S. 52nd; Louis Meyer 4720 Randolph; and Howard Schiefelbein 3801 H.

I often cross paths with Dzerk while walking in the neighborhood and one evening the topic of the honor flights came up. I asked him about the trip and about his service in WW II.

He traveled to D.C. on April 24 with 375 other veterans on the last honor flight. Like young GIs 65 years ago they followed instructions, this time meeting up at the airport Holiday Inn in Omaha on the 23rd. Appropriate for soldiers, they received their wake up call at 2:15 a.m. The early start was necessary to feed breakfast to 375 and have everyone in their plane seats for a 7:00 flight. The day long visit to D.C. included stops at the WW II Memorial, the Korean War Memorial, Arlington Cemetery's Tomb of the Unknown Soldiers, the White House, the Capital and the statue of the flag-raising on Iwo Jima. The flight returned to Omaha that evening. It all went like clock work Dzerk said because organizers put veterans in color-coded groups, and well, because the soldiers still know how to follow orders.

Dzerk enlisted Oct. 1, 1942 at age 19 and served 32 months in Europe as an Air Force mechanic. By January, he was on a ship that landed in Casa Blanca where President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill were meeting to discuss war plans. Dzerk's group followed and supported infantry advancing north through Italy to near the Swiss Alps. After victory was assured in Europe, Dzerk thought he would be returning to the U.S., but he was notified by his superiors that his tour of duty would be extended by helping fight against Japan. "I remember being on a ship and learning one day short of passing through the Panama Canal on our way to Japan that Hiroshima had been bombed. Our ship headed to New York for the victory celebrations and I was home by August of 1945. He married his high school sweetheart at age 22 on Sept.

1, 1945, his birthday. Dzerk bought the lot at 3769 H Street from his father-in-law in 1950. His house was built in 1951. "The lots on both side of me were available then, too, but I didn't have the money to purchase them."

He utilized GI benefits to help pay for a Business Administration degree at UNL. To support his family his management training experience at Elgin Watch Co., enabled him to secure the supervisory position in charge of University buildings and grounds. His beginning salary in January 1956 for overseeing 260 employees was \$4,800. He kept that position until he retired in January 1989. Now he is enjoying visiting his children, Robert in Lincoln, Alan in Ceresco and John in Rockport, Texas.

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# Woods Avenue Preparing for the 33rd Annual Block Party

The neighbors in 57 homes on Woods Avenue, 33rd to 38th Street, really know how to throw a party!!

Saturday, September 12, 2009 will be the 33rd consecutive year for the annual Woods Avenue Block Party. Mary Pack of 3315 Woods Ave organized the first Woods Avenue block party in August, 1976 to welcome new neighbors, the Beecham's, who had just moved in across the street.

The number of children in the neighborhood was much smaller in those days because many of the homes were inhabited by their original owners. There were only 8 children between the ages of 4 months and 9 years between the corners of 35th and 37th on Woods Avenue, and only 12 others in the remaining 3 blocks. Those original kids often bring their own children to the current block parties and they are joined by the huge influx of children who have moved into the neighborhood. Last count was approximately 60 children in the 5 block area. Excitement is high as the time for the water balloon toss nears. Last year's total of 1600 balloons gave us plenty of wet clothing, shrieking and laughter, not to mention the longest distance award for the water balloon launch.

Those first years were especially fun with dance music provided by Dick Turpin and his family band, The Poverty Hill Band and Kazoo as well as local kids' 4-H club song and dance groups. A neighborhood watch and a local book club have also been born of the neighbors' common interests. The Lincoln Police has sent an officer to talk about neighborhood safety. There was talk in the early years of the need for a neighborhood association. In 2003 the Witherbee Neighborhood Association was formed which includes the area between 33rd and 56th Streets, from O St to Randolph. Many of the Woods Avenue residents are taking part in this area wide organization.

The weather has been surprisingly friendly during all those years, with only a couple of rainy days but no complete cancellations. There have been at least a couple of tornado watches, but this is Nebraska, the appetite is ready for all those delicious potluck dishes and the party must go on.

We will soon be sending out the invitations to this



Lots of food and socializing always accompany the Woods block party.



Games keep neighborhood children entertained.

year's Woods Avenue Block Party. Let's hope the day dawns bright and the neighbors come once again to meet, greet and eat.

The Witherbee Neighborhood Association will have information on membership and the many beneficial projects and free events that are open to all Woods Avenue residents.

If anyone in the Witherbee area is interested in information about organizing a block party, please feel free to contact Mary Schwab at [Ohair42@aol.com](mailto:Ohair42@aol.com).

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Barb and Duane Bechtolt, 5500 L Street

## June Yard of the Month

During the 33 years they have lived and gardened at 5500 L Street, Barb and Duane Bechtolt have seen their yard change from a sunny site to one of dappled shade. As their shade trees grew, Barb reluctantly cut back on growing her beloved roses and discovered shade plants. Duane said since Barb is the one with the green thumb in the family, he helps her with everything else that goes along with having a beautiful yard.

With a professional landscaper's help, the Bechtolts transformed the west side of their home into a shady oasis. Multi-stem serviceberry trees provide shade for shade tolerant plants such as hosta and Jacob's ladder. Also included is a small area planted to absorb rain runoff from the roof. Planted with vinca, Japanese painted fern and bergenia, these plants can tolerate wet and dry situations, given the soil is well amended with organic matter such as compost. A meandering wood chip path spanned with a small footbridge (built by Duane) completes this tranquil setting.

The Bechtolts later added a retaining wall to correct a soil wash problem. They were careful not to disturb the soil level around their mature oak trees while building the wall. Barb was delighted to find some hostas (such as Hosta lancifolia and H. francee) can tolerate partial sun. She added trailing sedums that will eventually grow out and down the wall.

The Bechtolts mulch most of their plantings with shredded wood mulch. They also apply a small ring of wood mulch to plants in rock borders close to the house. This mulch ring is important as rock borders can quickly become hot (especially if facing south or west) and negatively affect the root systems of shallow-rooted plants.

Barb still has enough sun for two small gardens devoted to vegetables and sun loving perennial flowers on the east side of her yard. She has fallen in love with blackberry lilies and is still passionate about roses.

Summer 2009

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

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# Witherbee's Recipe for Self-Rising Neighborhood

By Mike Fitzgerald

The recipe for the Witherbee Neighborhood Association and its successes has a large number of ingredients. In this case, the more cooks in the kitchen, the better.

WNA was formed in March 2003 and continues to grow. It is evolving and has more than 270 paid memberships, a 16-page quarterly newsletter hand-delivered to all residences and businesses in the neighborhood, and a full-featured website [www.witherbeena.org](http://www.witherbeena.org).

It was formed in response to a proposed oversized development which threatened to change the Norman Rockwell character of the neighborhood. Most recently, the board approved and officers signed and submitted an application for incorporation, a key step toward becoming an official non-profit. Between the two events is a long record of a whole lot of work and fun.

One of the essential ingredients is residents who are proud of their homes and neighborhood who volunteer to help maintain and enhance the area that is bounded by 33rd and 56th Streets and by O and Randolph Streets. A few of the homes were built as early as the 1880s, but most were constructed between 1920 and the 1950s.

While neighborhood pride and willingness to contribute are common characteristics, diversity of interests is another ingredient that keeps the dough rising. Residents choose to make their home here because the area has a central location with a balance of residences, schools,



WNA volunteers take time out from cleanup activities to sign organization's application for incorporation. Left to right, seated, Dan Weslowski, Ryan Weslowski, Ann Richards, Kathy Holland, Rick Bagby, Shawn Gordin, Curtis Wood, and Pat Seeba. Standing, Fred Freytag, Paul Bartz, Michael Freytag, Steve Schwab, Nichollette Smith, Larry Frisch, and Mike Fitzgerald.

churches, parks and businesses, combined with convenient access to other sections of town. New neighborhoods in Lincoln such as Fallbrook and Village Garden have modeled themselves on Witherbee's time-tested design. Witherbee residents are flattered.

Initially, there was one cause – save the neighborhood from a proposed character-changing development. Once that was resolved, varied experiences and interests of volunteers sprouted proactive efforts with city officials and Midtown business leaders as well as recreational projects and activities that include annual events such as a neighborhood clean up, garage sale, pool party and ice cream social and holiday lighting contest, as well as promotion of block parties and a yard of the month awards.

Monthly meetings held the first Thursday of each month are opportunities for residents to hear from speakers on a wide spectrum of topics – practical to fun. Topics range from protesting property tax statements, gardening tips, pest control, building and safety regulations, updates on projects from city and county officials. Others presentations include soldier duty in Iraq, sleep disorder research and therapy and historical photos.

Another key ingredient is a commitment by board members not only to help with projects, but also to cultivate candidates for their replacement when their term expires. The deliberate turnover prevents burnout and keeps fresh ideas and energy injected to the association. There is also an unwritten understanding that discussion of board agenda items can be candid, but that all board members support whatever consensus decisions are made.

The association is applying for non-profit status so that it can accept tax-deductible donations for self-help projects. The first such dough-raising project could be improvements for Witherbee Park at 45th and O Street.

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# How Old Do You Want to Be?

By Bridget Fitzgerald

Last week I started driving alone. I also landed my first job. I turned 16 last month. I feel devastated.

I can't say that I'm not open to the greater independence and income of financial means. But the big changes let me see the differences between then and now. The differences between the world then and the Bridget now. It makes me reflect upon the summers years ago where us neighborhood kids would play. Nobody had to leave for work, or thought they were too old, too grown up, too sophisticated, to join in. We'd play zoo, servants, knights, fugitives, jaguars, Indians. We never played "house" because being orphans was so much cooler than having parents. If you wanted parents, pushy siblings, and a regular schedule—you could go home. An afternoon of a game would always start by everyone would choose how old they wanted to be in the world of the game. Generally, girls fought over who was the youngest and Maureen, the boys, and I would fight over who was the oldest. Twenty was the oldest we ever went. Someone had to be kidnapped at least once to ensure a thrill. Our playing grounds, or territory of sorts, consisted of my backyard, the Werner's backyard, the Kollman's backyard, and Joe Wright's backyard. After starving as orphans, suffering as mistreated servants, enduring as weary knights on quests, or attacking as warring Indians in the neighborhood—snack promptly followed. Usually cookies and juice at my house, though it was more fun if snack was at someone else's house.

My personal favorite game was "servants". It was never the same way twice. But the general idea was brooding servants of a medieval castle rebel, and escape (and get kidnapped). For as young as we were, our plots got pretty complex and intense. Games got more predictable when I was the oldest left and came up with all the ideas.

One by one we tried to grow up as fast as we could, and succeeded. First Maureen and Jordan. Then Daryn. Then Ian and Alec. It seemed they were way too cool for us anymore. And now me, except I still have at least one foot and half a head full of ideas still ready for another afternoon of a game—servants, or whatever, whenever, and if ever that might be.

I feel I am the only 16 year old in the world who isn't



Combinations of dress-up outfits and props were as numerous as the characters imagined by H Street kids, Fitzgeralds, Kollmans and Werners. The security of the neighborhood provided the freedom to be creative.

racing to be 21, to grow up. I'm 16—nostalgic. Its bitter-sweet for me at this point in my life. I've got the whole world at my feet and I can't turn back. It's brand new game now. And the starting question, as with every game, is how old do I want to be?

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Mark and Marsha Munger home at 3423 'M' St.

## July Yard of the Month

Shaded by two grand oak trees, a visit to Mark and Marsha Munger's yard at 3423 'M' street is a cool respite from July's hot weather. Marsha says Mark is the main gardener in the family and really enjoys working in the yard. His dedication and hard work certainly shows in their well tended landscape.

Under the Munger's oak trees, their shade plantings are flourishing. To conserve water and keep the weeds in check, Mark put down a dark brown shredded mulch that shows off the plants beautifully. The beds have been finished with an attractive edging. The burgundy leaved cultivars of Heuchera (coral bells) Mark planted contrast nicely with the green and variegated Hosta foliage. Bergenia and Helleborus (Christmas Rose) are planted in around one of the beds. A small row of Ilex (Inkberry) flank the front porch. Mark has done a good job of spacing his plants properly too.

The Munger's front yard has a lot of late afternoon/early evening sun on the west side of their lot. To protect their shade plantings from this hot sun, they planted some taller growing, sun loving/tolerant perennials where the sun can be the most intense. They planted Rudbeckia (Black-Eyed Susan), Sedum (different cultivars for height) and the groundcover Ajuga (Bugleweed). Mark also planted annual alyssum with the Ajuga for a nice effect in the border's front. Generally, you would not see sedum, black-eyed-Susan and hosta planted so closely together in one spot. However, in this shade/sun situation, it works very well.



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## Homes Needed For Holidays Tour

By Julie Noffsinger, LWCC

The Lincoln Women's Chamber of Commerce (LWCC) is looking for homeowners or residents who would be interested in showcasing their homes for the annual "Homes for the Holidays Tour". LWCC is looking for beautiful, unique, or interesting homes to have on this year's tour in Midtown Lincoln.

The tour will be held Sunday, November 22, 2009, (the Sunday before Thanksgiving) from 1 to 4 p.m.

We asked that the homes be ready and open at 11:00 a.m. for the LWCC members to view and open to the public from 1 to 4 p.m. Members of the LWCC will assist in greeting guests from the tour to your home and selling tickets at your door. Protective shoe covers will also be provided, if requested, by the LWCC.

A local florist or decorator will decorate each home during consultation directly with the homeowner or resident. Use of your own decorations as well is encouraged to augment the decorations furnished by each sponsor/ decorator. Also, each participant will receive a \$50 gift certificate to their assigned florist or decorator's business compliments of the Lincoln Women's Chamber of Commerce.

This is a great way to start off the holiday season and get some new ideas from the pros!

Tickets (\$7 in advance/\$10 day of event), will also be sold the day of the event at the front door of each home. Proceeds from the ticket sales will be divided between two local charities yet to be determined.

If you are an interested homeowners to contact: Julie Noffsinger home number is 435-5704 and the Lincoln Women's Chamber phone number is 488-2034. You can also reach Julie Noffsinger email at [Rnoff@inebraska.com](mailto:Rnoff@inebraska.com) or [jnoff@live.com](mailto:jnoff@live.com).

Curtis and Dee Wood, members of Witherbee Neighborhood Association, have already signed up and we would like to have more houses in the neighborhood to join them to make the tour easy to go house to house for this unique event. We hope you can join us to show off Witherbee's terrific homes.

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## Witherbee Recycling Gets Boost

RecycleLink has been providing curbside recycling in Lincoln and surrounding communities for one year and has made a positive impact on the area's recycling efforts. RecycleLink offers a unique way to recycle by offering recycling customers a 65 gallon cart to mix all of their recyclables in. No sorting necessary for recyclers means less hassle and a little extra motivation to recycle more frequently.

"Sorting out recyclables into many compartments or bins can take time and space both of which are limited in most households. We take the hassle out of recycling by offering our customers an opportunity to simply toss their recyclables into the cart and wheel it to the curb each week. We'll do the rest," says Craig Gubbels, representative of RecycleLink.

Making recycling easy has encouraged more people to recycle more but that's not the only reason. RecycleLink offers RecycleBank Reward Points for each pound recycled. Each time a RecycleLink customer rolls their cart to the curb, the cart is weighed and 2.77 RecycleBank Points are credited to the household's RecycleBank account for every pound recycled. RecycleBank Points can be accumulated and spent like frequent flyer miles at local and national retailers. Each month RecycleLink customers earn an average of 200 Points that in turn are used for discounts at stores they choose saving recyclers money on groceries, electronics, dining out, clothing and many other items.

A typical RecycleLink customer can redeem \$25 in discounts each month, savings that are important in this slow economy. "Using our resources the best we can will help us get through this tough time.

In RecycleLink's first year of operation they have diverted over 1,200 tons of recyclables from the Lincoln landfill saving over 1,750 cubic yards of landfill space. In May, city officials noted a 10% drop in landfill tons in 2009. Part of the reason is due to the participation of curbside recycling like RecycleLink.

## WNA Calendar

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

**Additional meeting information may be found at  
Witherbeena.org**

**Sunday, July 26th., 6:00 p.m.,** Free Swim/Ice Cream Social, Woods Park Pool, 33rd and J.

**Thursday, August 6th., 7 p.m.,** WNA Monthly Meeting, Tabitha Lifequest Conference Center, Speaker & topic: Scott Bendler--Life Stories,

**Thursday, August 20th, 5:30 p.m.,**Councilman Doug Emery, Anderson Library, 3635 Touzalin.

**Tuesday August 25th, 7 p.m.,** Rain Garden Walking Tour, 3300 Woods Ave. Tour will take 1 to 1.5 hrs, concluding with refreshments at 3510 Woods Ave.

**Thursday, September 3rd, 7 p.m.,** WNA Monthly Meeting, Tabitha Lifequest Conference Center, Speaker & topic: Lori Merliss--Wyuka Stables.

**Thursday, September 17th, 5:30 p.m.**  
Councilman Doug Emery, Anderson Library, 3635 Touzalin Ave.

**Thursday, October 1st, 7 p.m.,** WNA Monthly Meeting, Tabitha Lifequest Conf. Center, Speaker & topic: Karen Hollis--HyVee Nutritionist.

**Thursday, October 15th, 5:30 p.m.,** Councilman Doug Emery, Anderson Library, 3635 Touzalin.

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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  
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# **Witherbee Pool Party and Ice Cream Social**

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***Sunday, July 26th***

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and



WNA is providing the the free pool time and SuperSaver is providing the free ice cream.