



The Witherbee Buzz

Vol. 23 No. 2 Newsletter

Spring 2026

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

Neighborhood Cleanup & Scrap Metal Drive Saturday, May 2nd

by Mike Kreikemeier

The Neighborhood Cleanup returns on Saturday, May 2nd from 8 am-Noon.

The collection site will be along M Street directly north of Bryan Community School (48th & M Street). The Witherbee Cleanup is a great way to dispose of unwanted items when cleaning up your garage, yard & home.

Volunteers Needed! Please consider helping out. Litter pick up volunteers get exercise and make the neighborhood look great! It's a great way to spend a Saturday morning and a wonderful way to meet your neighbors. Litter pickup counts for service hours at all Lincoln High Schools.

Dispose of hard to get rid of items, such as mattresses, box springs and old furniture by bringing them to the collection area.

There is a big effort to recycle and reuse as many items as possible:

Tires are taken to Firestone Complete Auto Care at 300 N 66th Street to be recycled. Complete Auto Care has been a generous cleanup partner for several years. No tires mounted on rims are accepted.

This year the focus is a Scrap Metal Drive. WNA earns money for every pound of metal that is recycled. Bring your scrap metal & household appliances (washers, dryers, stoves, refrigerators, old grills, lawn mowers, etc) to be hauled to Alter Trading for recycling. Appliances with freon are safely discharged before recycling.

Construction material and items such as windows and doors from building/remodeling projects as well as left-

over lawn and landscaping materials and furniture in good condition are also accepted. These items are donated to the Habitat for Humanity ReStore at 5601 S 59th Street.

Goodwill Industries will be there to recycle and reuse electronics and household items collected.

Bicycles in usable condition are donated to the Lincoln Bike Kitchen where they are repaired and given to people that need a bike for transportation and recreation.

Items that CANNOT be accepted include trash, leaves, grass clippings, liquids of any kind (including paint, thinners, stains) ammunition/explosives, LP gas cylinders and CRT televisions and CRT computer monitors.

If you need help hauling items to the collection site email Mike Kreikemeier at cleanup@witherbeena.org or call the WNA phone line at 402-413-0156 and make an appointment by leaving a message. The items must be easily accessible and placed near the curb if possible for our volunteers to pickup. Please email or call before Friday, May 1st so you can be added to the list.

The long time volunteer organizers are: Mike Kreikemeier, Dan Wesolowski, Bryan Hurst along with Trevor Phillips and Rick Flodman.

This cleanup event is funded by a grant from "Keep Lincoln and Lancaster County Beautiful". Food and beverages are donated by Midtown Hy-Vee. Refuse hauling is provided by Niederhaus Refuse Services.

WNA Potluck Party in the Park!

Spring is in full swing and flowers are in bloom here in Witherbee! Join your neighbors Sunday, April 26th starting at 5 pm at our very own Witherbee Park (46th & O St) for the spring flower celebration. Volunteers from the neighborhood came together in November 2024 to plant over 3,500 daffodils, tulips, and other spring bulbs to bring color and beauty to our pocket of Lincoln. Feel free to bring a dish of your own and non-perishable food items for our local neighborhood food pantries. Seating is limited so bring a chair! Plates, silverware and drinks provided.



A load of tires to be recycled.



Your scrap metal earns cash for WNA during the Cleanup.

**Witherbee
Neighborhood Association**

Boundaries:

33rd to 56th and 'O' to Randolph

Meetings:

Fourth Thursday of the month, 7pm
Redeemer Lutheran Church

www.facebook.com/witherbeena

www.WitherbeeNA.org

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Lincoln, NE 68505
402-413-0156

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Co-President's Message



Trevor Phillips and Rod Lane

As we look ahead to the spring months, we're reminded of what makes Witherbee such a special place to call home. Our neighborhood thrives because of the people who live here, who care about one another, who take pride in their homes and streets, and who show up to make our community stronger.

Recent Neighborhood Highlights

Over the past quarter, we've seen momentum across several areas:

Community engagement – DIY Home Gardening was our topic at the March meeting. Our guests of the Hawley Hamlet Neighborhood Garden, started by Tim Rinne and Kay Walter in 2009. (Tim gave a presentation at the Witherbee NA meeting in April 2025, and Kay provided tours of Hawley Hamlet for Witherbee and Woods Park Neighborhoods). Julie shared updates on the coalition of city and nonprofit organizations now supporting this effort, an overview of the newly launched Transplant Brigade, and ideas about how residents of Witherbee and other neighborhood associations can help the initiative increase home gardening and food security across Lincoln. Free DIY Home Gardening yard signs will be shared with gardeners who wish to display them in their yards.

Beautification efforts – Mike Kriekmeire is seeking volunteers and gearing up for our annual neighborhood clean-up on Saturday, May 2nd. And this year, our neighbors to the west in Woods Park, are joining us to clean up their neighborhood.

Partnerships with the City – We continue to work closely and participate with the Mayor's Round Table, and with Lincoln City Departments to address traffic, safety, park, and infrastructure needs within our boundaries.

Looking Ahead

There's a lot to look forward to in the months ahead: Read more about the Neighborhood Cleanup, Garage Sales and how WNA can support your block party in this issue. These annual traditions are great opportunities to meet neighbors and refresh our shared spaces. We hope you will consider being a part of your neighborhood.

Ongoing advocacy: Your neighbors will continue representing Witherbee's interests in city discussions, especially around zoning, development, and neighborhood safety.

How You Can Get Involved

Our neighborhood is strongest when more voices are at the table. Whether you have an hour to volunteer, want to join a committee, or simply want to stay informed, we welcome your participation. Even small contributions – attending a meeting, sharing an idea, helping at an event – make a meaningful difference.

Rod Lane & Trevor Phillips

Thank you to the following individuals & businesses who support the activities of the WNA with their donations:

FM Lawn Care	Janet Ackerman	Carolyn Barber
Karen Dress	John Dzerk	Benne Shobe
Bert & Karalene Smith	Dana Stubbs	Fred Freytag

May Meeting – Restoring Lincoln’s Tree Canopy

by Pete Smith and Mary Schwab

Our speaker for the May meeting of the association will be Pete Smith, a retired arborist and urban forester living and volunteering in Lincoln, NE. Before retiring, Pete was the “resident arborist” at the Arbor Day Foundation here in Lincoln, where he supported such programs as Tree City USA and provided expertise across the foundation.

Prior to moving to Lincoln in 2014, he served for 26 years with the Texas A&M Forest Service, most recently as the State Urban Forestry Coordinator, responsible for a staff of 10 and for delivering a comprehensive array of financial and technical assistance to cities and towns across that vast state. In Lincoln, Pete re-



cently served a three-year term on the Community Forestry Advisory Board, which provides citizen input on the program of tree planting in care on public property.

Pete is passionate about trees in our cities and his talk on May 28 will focus on the current tree canopy crisis in Lincoln, while offering examples and ideas for individuals and neighborhoods to address our loss of shade and to become part of the solution.

When Pete is not helping to plant or tend trees in Lincoln, he and his partner Annette can be found exploring the country and the world—by bike or by foot—one national park at a time!

Planting With A Purpose

by Mary Schwab and Pete Smith

You can probably tell just by driving down your street or walking through the neighborhood: Lincoln is losing its tree canopy, tree by tree, season by season. The reasons are many: Emerald Ash Borer attacking the ash trees; Dutch Elm Disease taking our remaining American elms; and drought weakening our large pin oaks. And frequent, violent storms take out even more.

According to the new tree canopy tool, TreesAtWork.org, developed by the Forest Service, the Arbor Day Foundation, and Planit GEO, Lincoln had approximately 17.5% of its land area shaded by trees in 2022, down from 19% in 2016. In Witherbee, the numbers are just as striking; a 20% loss of tree canopy over that same six-year period. This equates to a loss of more than 40 acres of tree shade in Witherbee – in just six years! This trend can’t continue if we want livable, loveable neighborhoods.

To slow the tree loss trend, WNA and a group of devoted tree huggers planted 10 FREE TREES in the neighborhood in September 2025, using a small grant provided by Plant Nebraska.

WNA will submit a grant application for another 10 FREE TREES with a planting event to be scheduled in September 2026. The ten trees will be planted in the city right-of-way with the help of WNA volunteers, under the watchful eye of a certified arborist. Further information regarding watering and pruning will be provided to tree owners in the months following the planting. The trees will be awarded on a first-come-first served basis, with the only requirements being: membership in WNA, and a willingness to protect and water the tree for the first three years.

Please contact (trees@Witherbeena.org) if you would like ONE of these ten FREE TREES in the right-of-way in front of your property.



Pete Smith & Annette at Witherbee Tree Planting Fall of 2025



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Have a Block Party on your Street this Summer!

Wetherbee Neighborhood Association is promoting block parties this summer with a \$150 Block Party Grant. The grant money can be used to pay the \$45 street closure fee and purchase food, non-alcoholic drinks, games, etc.

If you have never taken part in a block party this is the summer to do it. Block parties are a great way to gather with your neighbors for fun, food and freedom. Host a block party to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence (US Semiquincentennial) this summer. Of course you can have a block party just to get together and have fun.

WNA has allocated up to \$450 funding up to three block party grants. If you would like to host a block party the WNA Block Party Promotion Committee can help! The committee members can assist with applying for the street closure permit, notifying your neighbors, and block party tips! The block party funding is available May through September, 2026.



The block party committee members are Rod Lane, Trevor Phillips, Suzanne Oehm & Mike Kreikemeier.

Get the process started by sending an email to president@witherbeena.org

WNA Calendar of Events

- Apr. 23 Witherbee Monthly Meeting, 7:00 pm, Redeemer Lutheran Church
- April 26 Spring Flower Celebration at Witherbee Park, 5:00 pm
- May 2 Neighborhood Clean-up, 8:00 am – 12:00 pm, 48th & M Streets
- May 21 James Michael Bowers NE Citizens Meeting, 5:30 pm at Anderson Library
- May 28 Witherbee Monthly Meeting, 7:00 pm, Redeemer Lutheran Church; Pete Smith – Successful Planting of Trees
- June 18 James Michael Bowers NE Citizens Meeting, 5:30 pm at Anderson Library
- June 25 Witherbee Monthly Meeting, 7:00 pm, Redeemer Lutheran Church.
- July 16 James Michael Bowers NE Citizens Meeting, 5:30 pm at Anderson Library
- July 23 Witherbee Monthly Meeting, 7:00 pm, Redeemer Lutheran Church
- August 2 Annual Pool Party at Woods Pool, 6:30 – 8:00 pm



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St. Teresa School Celebrates with a Uniting Cultures Party

by Mike Kreikemeier

The St. Teresa Elementary School celebrated Latino culture with a “Santa Teresa - Uniendo Cultura” (St. Teresa - Uniting Cultures) event on the evening of March 24th. The party was held in the school Gymnasium in conjunction with the Junior High science fair.

The idea for the celebration came from Amparo Fernandez and Carmen Castillo, mothers of students attending St. Teresa School. From the initial meeting with Sr. Mary Michael, principal of the school, the event grew to include 19 Latino families preparing their favorite dish for sampling. Ice Cream was served by La Carreta De Nataly ice cream shop, located at 810 S 27th St, Suite B (27th & Randolph). Colorful entertainment was added by 17 Mexican Folk dancers organized by Angelra Robles.

All of the school families were invited to the party as well as a few lucky science fair judges like me. The food was delicious and plentiful. The families serving the food were eager to share recipes and tips for making each dish. The gym was filled with families enjoying food, chatting with friends and even learning while looking at the many science fair projects. The culmination of the event was a demonstration of a Latino folk dance performed by colorful dancers. It was a delightfully fun evening that brought people together to learn about science and each other.



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Mulching Witherbee Park

by Fred Freytag

We want to say THANK YOU to “DUDLEY’S DEW-RIGHT TREE & MULCH” for donating nice natural colored mulch the last two years. Like every year the landscape beds at Witherbee Park at 46th and O Street need a layer of fresh mulch. Over a years’ time some of the mulch decomposes and a fresh layer helps keep the moisture in the ground for healthier plants. In past years, Witherbee NA has organized a mulching event and volunteers helped install the mulch. This year due to the warm weather bulbs started coming in early and there was a need to get the mulch installed quickly. FM Lawn Care provided FREE labor to get it done.



The City Parks Department will be doing some overseeding in parts of the park and since there is a water source volunteers are stepping forward to do some watering on those seeded areas. If you want to help, please contact us. FM Lawn Care will continue to provide lawn care, mowing and weed control as needed for free throughout the season as they have in past years.

We are looking to add some plants like Hostas, Daylilies, Coneflowers etc. If you have some plants to share, email us at parcs@witherbeeana.org or call 402-413-0156.

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Yard of the Month

Once again WNA will be highlighting a *Yard of the Month* in May, June, July and August. We depend on your nominations for this award. Bruce and Roberta Sandhorst are the chairs and will consider all nominations. Please send your nomination to yardofthemonth@witherbeena.org or call the WNA phone number, 402-413-0156, leave a message and we will get back to you!

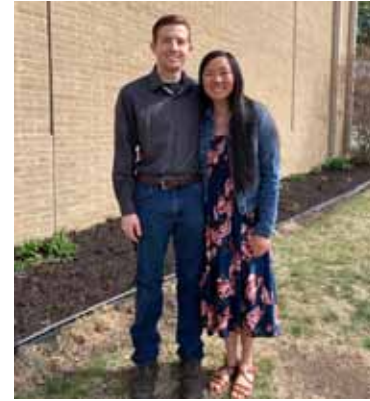
FitLot Classes Resume at Woods Park

**Tuesday, Wednesday and Fridays
9 to 10 am**

Jessie Krikac leads the informative, easy-to-follow **FREE** classes, courtesy of Lincoln Parks and Recreation, at the AARP Fitlot in Woods Park.

For more info, or finding out if a class is happening due to weather, email Jessie at: janielsen00@hotmail.com

Meet WNA Neighbors...



Ben and Mary

They have been residents of the Witherbee neighborhood for nearly 3 years. They like living in the Witherbee neighborhood because it is a safe area, has a great community feel, friendly neighbors and is close to many resources, including restaurants, shops, and the hospital.

Ben is a maintenance technician and likes to tinker with engines in his spare time. Mary is a teacher. She is excellent at baking sourdough bread and likes to run. They both enjoy DIY projects and walking their dog Sky.

This will be a new feature in the Witherbee Buzz.



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And we can all be happy about that.

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Joy doesn't have an age limit.



What is Cryptocurrency?

Talk by LPD Technical Investigator M. Wambold, written by Julie Flodman

Cryptocurrency is a digital or virtual global currency system, unlike traditional currency systems such as the US dollar. It is secured by cryptography, making it nearly impossible to counterfeit. This system is 100% Free Public Information which can be shared. This currency system operates on decentralized networks, based on blockchain technology and a distributed ledger enforced by a network of computers.

It exists independently of central banks or governments.

Popular examples include: Bitcoin, Ethereum, Solara, XRP.

Key Aspects of Cryptocurrency and Definitions:

- **Decentralization:** Unlike traditional (fiat) currencies like the dollar, cryptocurrencies are not backed by any government or central authority.
- **Blockchain Technology:** Transactions are recorded on a public, immutable ledger, ensuring security and transparency.
- **Cryptography:** Advanced coding protects financial transactions and controls the creation of additional units.
- **Digital Wallets:** Users store their assets in digital wallets, which require private keys to access and transfer funds,

Uses and Risks:

Uses: Cryptocurrencies are used for peer-to-peer payments, as an investment, or to buy goods and services.

Risks: The market is known for high volatility (drastic price swings) and lacks the insurance protections typical of traditional bank accounts.

Cryptocurrency Fraud

Scams, especially financial and cryptocurrency fraud, can drain life savings in seconds, damage credit for years and leave victims feeling betrayed and isolated. These crimes are sophisticated, fast-moving and often difficult to undo once money is sent, especially when transferred via cryptocurrency or gift cards.

By staying alert, verifying before you trust and reporting suspicious activity immediately, we can all play a role in stopping scammers and protecting our community.

Lincolmites lost \$4.4 million in 2025 alone. No government agency, bank or legitimate business will ask for payment in cryptocurrency or gift cards.



Reminder: The Witherbee Neighborhood Crime Watch Team is ALWAYS looking for volunteers to support the safety of our GREAT Neighborhood. Email Julie, Crime Watch Team Coordinator, at crimewatch@witherbeena.org or call the WNA phone, 402-413-0156, and leave a message.



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2026 Annual Witherbee Neighborhood Garage Sales

Thursday, June 11 through Saturday, June 13

TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL GARAGE SALE

Advertise: Sign up for WNA Garage Sales and we will take care of that for you! WNA will advertise one week prior to sale dates in the Lincoln Journal Star, on our WNA FACEBOOK page, and posters will be placed in local businesses. You will receive a garage sale sign for your yard and signs will be placed around the neighborhood at key intersections. Be sure to tell your family, friends, and neighbors.

- **Gather & Clean Items:** Offer quality items, including clothes, books furniture and toys. Clean items and wash clothes beforehand.
- **Make it a Group Effort:** Multiple families mean more items, which attracts more shoppers.
- **Visibility is Key:** People will stop if sale items are visible and close to the street
- **Organize by Category:** Group items (e.g., housewares, toys, clothes) to create a shop-like experience.
- **Use Tables:** Avoid placing items on the ground; keep items at waist height for easy browsing.
- **Price Everything:** Use stickers for clear pricing. (Keep prices low; most items should be \$5 or less. Use whole numbers (\$1, \$3, \$5). 50 cents and a quarter are OK too!) If unsure how to price, check resell sites and eBay to help ensure you're not overpricing or undervaluing your items.
- **Safety & Money:** Keep money on your person (like a fanny pack) rather than a cash box.
- **Be ready for Early Birds:** Enthusiastic shoppers will arrive before the official start time.
- **Be Flexible:** Be prepared to negotiate, but hold your line on high-value items.
- **Bundle Sales:** Offer deals like "fill a bag for \$5" to move volume.
- **Plan for Leftovers:** WNA will provide a list of local organizations and phone numbers that are happy to accept your donations, some will pick up.



Sign up now to participate!



FREE to WNA members, \$15 for Non-members

The \$15 fee covers WNA membership, online and Lincoln Journal Star advertising, garage sale signs posted in the neighborhood and delivered to your address, WNA Facebook mapping and item listings.

There will be a map posted on the Witherbee Neighborhood Association Facebook page.

questions? Email garagesales@witherbeena.com OR call 402-413-0156 and leave a message.

2026 Garage Sale (June 11-13) Registration Form (receive by May 31)

Name: (First and Last) _____ (Please Print)

Address: _____ Phone No: _____

Email Address: _____

Thursday, June 11 (List Open - Close Times) _____ a.m./p.m. TO _____ a.m./p.m.

Friday, June 12 (List Open - Close Times) _____ a.m./p.m. TO _____ a.m./p.m.

Saturday, June 13 (List Open - Close Times) _____ a.m./p.m. TO _____ a.m./p.m.

Note: Each Individual Participant/Address determines their own dates and times for their sale.

List Sale Items: (25 Words Or Less)