



Browncroft Crier

NEWSLETTER OF THE BROWNCROFT NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

SINCE 1973-VOLUME #151

P.O. Box 10127 Rochester New York 14610

March 2008

<http://browncroftna.org>

BNA Executive Committee

Officers:

President

Bob Genthner

Vice-President

Cassy Petsos

Secretary

Rick Alvarado

Treasurer

Rob Phelps

District Reps:

Elm

Chris Gaudieri

Corwin

Holly Petsos

Croydon

Ann Chew

BNA Voicemail:

234-0160

Inside This Issue

President's Message

Lead Paint

East Main Public Safety
Center

Browncroft's Place in
Flower City
History

Father Crosby to Speak
Nominations for Officers

Think Spring.
Think Green.

at

BNA's

March General Membership Meeting
Wednesday, March 12th
7:30 p.m.

Winton Branch Library
Guest Speaker is Landscape designer,
Marcella Klein

The topic Ms. Klein will explore is:

Best Easy-Care Plants for Your Shady Yard

Marcella Klein will recommend her top plants for shady city gardens, focusing on shrubs and perennials that are tough and trouble-free, long-blooming, and have colorful foliage. Some of her choices add color to the garden all year long; while others are delightfully fragrant, or thrive under the most difficult conditions. She will provide handouts with photos and information about all these great plants.

Marcella Klein is a landscape designer, specializing in residential design. She also teaches courses and workshops at the Rochester Civic Garden Center, and is the author of several gardening books, including Pocket Guide to Rochester's Favorite Perennials, and Pocket Guide to Rochester's Favorite Annuals and Bulbs. She grew up in the Browncroft area, and tends her own city garden in the 19th Ward.

From the BNA President

Bob Genthner

Great Winter Gathering! Thanks to the 93 neighbors who attended this very enjoyable evening of conversation, food, and drink. I have only heard good words on the party, our 30th. And we have already booked next year's 31st Winter Gathering for Friday, January 16th, 2009!!

The annual membership drive has successfully come to a completion. The response to my last newsletter appeal has brought us above the previous year's total; a positive sign to our strength in numbers. Thanks to all! And welcome to all our new neighbors who have moved in recently. You have joined a neighborhood of over 680 households.

I encourage you, if you have not already done so, to visit our web site at <http://browncroftna.org> for the latest news and information about your new neighborhood. Check back often as enhancements and new features are appearing all the time. And comments and suggestions are always accepted

BNA-Announce Wants YOU!

Join NOW! There are 150 neighbors who have already subscribed to our "BNA announce" mailing list. Through this service BNA is able to distribute up to the minute news, information and alerts related to our neighborhood. Your email address is not disseminated in the process and SPAM is not a problem. To subscribe please either visit our website under "contact" or email Bob Genthner directly at bob14610@aol.com with your request to subscribe and he will personally subscribe you without any fuss or confusion. Join now don't delay! (You can unsubscribe at any time.)

via the site. **Welcome to our two newest Street Representatives** who have joined our BNA Board of Directors: Jim Nicholson from Berwick, and Jim Bishop from Gramercy. This leaves us with openings for 5 Streets: Elm, Lanark, Merchants, Ramsey, and Gaslight. Are you interested? Please visit our website for further information.

Our Board and I were asked by the Mayor to join other neighborhoods across the City on February 5th in discussing the upcoming 2008-09 City Budget. The city is determined to provide the best possible services to city neighborhoods at the most affordable price. To get ideas to balance the budget, the Mayor asked which services are the most vital and for which we would be willing to pay more, and which services we would be willing to see reduced. A wide array of suggestions were gathered and communicated to the Mayor. Follow up open public meetings will be held in March with summaries of themes presented for public comment.

Finally, School 46 is one of our BNA neighborhood focuses. We have been working to have an improved

continued on page 4

Lead Paint Warning

There are a large number of older homes in the Browncroft area which may have been painted at one time with paint containing lead. We may all learn from a recent neighborhood improvement project that required the sand blasting of the outside of a house to remove paint.

As the project got underway the dust from the project filled the air and started to settle and cover neighboring properties.

continued on pg3

E. Main Public Safety Center

On January 16th at the SW corner of Illinois and East Main Street, a neighborhood Public Safety Center was officially opened through the sponsorship of the North Winton Village Association. A \$7,000 initial grant secured through New York State Senator Jim Alesi (R-Perinton) will be applied for first year start up costs of rent and support.

Area businesses are pledging to contribute to future operational costs to maintain this facility. This center is to be used by the Rochester Police Department, New York State Police, Monroe County Sheriff, Federal Law Enforcement, Probation, Parole, PACTAC, Border Patrol, and the neighbors of North Winton Village Association (including Browncroft).

It is a place for Officers to take a break, work on reports, check in via a computer on site, meet other officers, and meet the neighbors. For the neighborhood, it is expected that office volunteers will be available each day to take walk-in or phone information regarding the needs of the neighborhood. The information will be forwarded to our Sector 8 NET Office and Crime Prevention Officer (CPO) for their attention and action.

Weekly public neighborhood meetings for follow up are held each Thursday at 11:30 A.M. with a NET Conservation Officer (Code Enforcement), CPO and other invited guests, who are each instrumental in working problems to their resolution. BNA, through Bob Genthner, is an active participant and supporter. The neighbors of Browncroft are encouraged to also take advantage of this unique local neighborhood effort at public safety.

Bob Genthner

Father Michael Crosby To Speak At St. John's

April 20, 21 at St. John The Peace of Christ Parish at St. John the Evangelist Church on Humboldt Street, is bringing noted author and dynamic speaker Father Michael Crosby, a Capuchin Franciscan Priest from Milwaukee to present a two-day experience "Repairing Relationships: The Path to Peace" on April 20th and 21st. Rooted in the compassionate spirituality of St. Francis, Fr. Mike lives in community with those who serve the poor in downtown Milwaukee. He has written sixteen books and numerous articles, on significant issues in church and society. Fr. Mike will be speaking on one of his passions: becoming Peace-makers. What does this mean? What stands in the way? How do we become peace-makers, bringing healing to our relationships and our world? All are invited to attend the three 2-hour sessions being held on Sunday (7 PM) and Monday (12 and 7 PM). There is a suggested Donation of \$5.00 per person. Please call Pat Lawlor at 288-1620 for more information.

Bob Gentner

Lead Paint

continued from page 2

One neighbor, due to their concern, contacted Monroe County. The County reacted immediately and their quick response and testing identified that the dust did indeed contain lead. The project was halted at once and instructions were given that it is necessary to contain the dust while sand blasting. Plan ahead. Further information is available on the City of Rochester and the County of Monroe websites regarding appropriate lead paint removal and handling.

Bob Gentner

Browncroft's Place in the History of our Flower City.

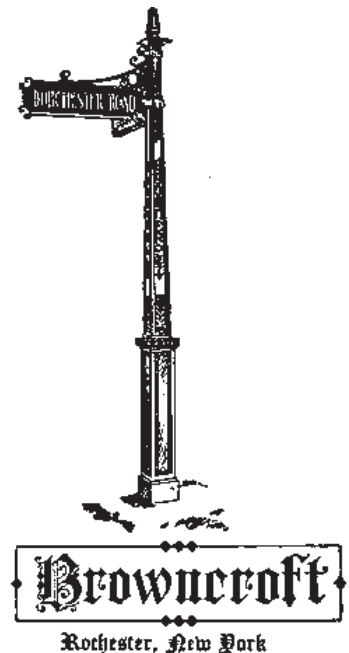
Bob Marcotte, the history page writer for the Democrat and Chronicle, mentions Browncroft in a lengthy side bar in his article of February 11th, which covered the nursery industries in Rochester of yesteryear, and the many beautiful subdivisions and parks which grew out of them.

Newer residents to the Browncroft Subdivision* may not be aware that they have purchased a home in a uniquely planned subdivision situated in an architecturally landscaped setting. It is the legacy of one man's vision to provide a totally idyllic residential environment for families buying home lots from the Brown Brothers Continental Nursery.

Charles Brown must have had a great love of nature and horticulture, trees and flowers, gardens and architecture—a love which manifested in his planning and landscaping of 11 streets in a new subdivision. He wanted a unified landscape design, intended to create "a park-like setting" in which to construct architecturally juried homes for 300 acres of individually owned residential lots. His nursery establishment had a residential landscape design department. Noted landscape architect, Francis Hastings Gott, was on staff, and it is believed that Alling De Forrest (known for Nunda Park, the George Eastman house and Warner Castle grounds) also was employed by Brown Brothers.

Other streets in Rochester had landscaped public rights-of-way, such as Seneca Parkway, Lakeview Park, Arnold Park, Oxford Street, and Nunda Boulevard. But an entire subdivision of 11 streets uniformly planted with large shade trees, evergreen trees, flowering ornamental

continued on page 4



NOMINATIONS NOW BEING ACCEPTED FOR OFFICER POSITIONS OF THE B.N.A.

Are you interested in a leadership role in The Browncroft Neighborhood Association? This is your chance!

The Nominating committee is now accepting nominations for the following positions: President, Vice-President, Treasurer, and Secretary

(All terms are 1 year. This is the 2008-2009 term)

Duties and responsibilities of each position may be viewed on the website, www.Browncroftna.org, by clicking on the link to "Constitution and By-Laws".

If interested in running for any position please contact the Nominating Committee Chairperson:

David Gaylord 92 Croydon Road
Rochester NY 14610

585-756-7413 Phone, 585-288-1981 Fax, or DGAYL@aol.com E-Mail.

from the President Browncroft Landscape

continued from page 2

connection between our neighbors and our neighborhood school. We have sadly been moving apart in recent years. This school today brings into our Browncroft area, many visitors and guests, who either visit the school building or use the school grounds. Be it soccer, tennis, or basketball - practice or games. It is not just a "school in our neighborhood" but also our "neighborhood school" (even with our neighborhood children in the minority of those attending). Mr. Brown of Brown Brothers donated the land and included it in his Browncroft tract plans.

BNA was a major contributor to the playground. The building is an architectural wonder and we wish to preserve it and its use as a School. It is part of our history and character. Recently, Dede Ranger, our School 46 Committee Chair, and I have attended the PTA's Town Meeting, spoken to the past Superintendent, and the Principal to demonstrate our desire to improve each other's outreach. We have added a **School 46 page on our website** for school information. It contains PTA news, school ratings from NY State; it has issues of the School newspaper the "Galaxy" and the 4th Grade "Write Track" Magazine. Take a peek. And also please support their school events that are always open to the public. You can even schedule a visit or volunteer to help. You are always welcome.

New Expanded Forum Feature on BNA Website

Have you ever contributed your ideas and comments to a message board? It's an easy method to state and discuss with others your opinions on many topics of concern. Here at BNA we also have that ability through our Forum section on our website <http://browncroftna.org>. You can read all messages at any time; and once you have registered on the forum page, you are able to send and reply to topics posted or create your own. It's new and exciting. Take a look.

continued from page 3

trees, flowering shrubs, and bulbs was unprecedented in 1914, and remains so today.

The overall plan was a straight line of large shade trees to the inside of the sidewalk spaced thirty feet apart, leaving the tree lawns between the sidewalk and street for flowering trees and shrubs, such as magnolia, lilac, spirea, forsythia, viburnum, arborvitae, keria, and others. Street light poles were wrapped in wysteria.

Much of the original landscape plan can still be discerned and enjoyed today, particularly on Dorchester, Windemere, Corwin and Newcastle. And there is still the Browncroft Rose Garden planted by Brown Brothers on land donated by another nursery to the north that was owned by the Charlton Family. However, much has been lost from natural attrition and, unfortunately, individual homeowner removal.

Brown Brothers continued to do the mowing and gardening for the tree lawns from 1914 to the 1930's. After the depression the City of Rochester took care of these public strips, until the 1950's when it became the responsibility of the individual property owners to maintain the tree lawns and sidewalks in front of their house. The fifties and sixties were eras of streamlining and modernizing, when old street lights were updated, woodwork was painted, and clusters of lilacs, viburnum, and spirea bushes were hacked down.

The significance of the Browncroft landscape was a determining factor in the designation of our neighborhood to the National Register of Historic Places, and it is hoped that Browncroft residents today, whether new or old, who happen to have a vestige of our historic landscape in front of their house, will appreciate that it is part of our neighborhood's historic significance and charm, and further, that they will become stewards of this legacy for future generations.

**The original Browncroft Subdivision is bounded by Browncroft Boulevard on the north, Winton Road on the west, the expressway on the east, and Blossom Road (not included) on the south.*

Cassy Petsos

THE BROWNCROFT ROSE GARDEN NEEDS WORK

BNA volunteerism in the Rose Garden park at Browncroft and Merchants has been waning in recent years, and the park is looking tired. It's time to regroup and do some planning.

Anyone interested in participating in a strategy planning meeting is invited to attend March 19th at 7:30 at 175 Browncroft Boulevard. Please call the BNA voicemail line at 234-0160 and leave your name and number beforehand.

Many thanks to the volunteers who worked fall clean up in October: Bob Kern, Bob Genthner, Rosemarie Hattman, Jeannie Loysen, Rich Culbert, Sharon Bloemendaal, Cassy Petsos. A dogwood tree was donated by Sharon Bloemendaal and planted by Rich Culbert.

