



Browncroft Crier

NEWSLETTER OF THE BROWNCROFT NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

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P.O. Box 10127, Rochester, New York 14610
<http://browncroftna.org>

Fall 2026

BNA Executive Committee

Officers:

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Cassy Petsos

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Croydon

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BNA Email:

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Crier Editor -

Cassy Petsos

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Special Presentation of the Browncroft History Slide Show

"A Beautiful Section of A Beautiful City"

November 10, 2026

7:00 P.M.

St. John's Church

533 Humboldt St

Presented by Sharon Bloemendaal, BNA History Committee Chairperson

What did this area look like more than 100 years ago? The Brown Brothers Nursery shipped plants all over the U.S. Later, Charles Brown started the Browncroft Realty Company in 1914.

Sharon will present a fast-paced program with many then-and-now slides (the old-fashioned kind) from two projectors, so you can compare the changes. You will see the Brown nursery buildings, park, the East Avenue Brighton Town Center before it was annexed to the City, neighborhood businesses, schools, churches, and early transportation.

To learn more about BNA history, read the booklet online at <https://mcnygenealogy.com/book/browncroft-history.pdf>

Sharon and her late husband Jack purchased their Quentin Rd. home in 1970. She started the BNA garage sale in 1981. She was on the 1984 Rochester Sesquicentennial committee that wrote the 32-page Browncroft booklet, along with Cassy and Holly Petsos, Bob Genthner, and others. Since then, Sharon has been chairman of the BNA history committee and has found early photographs from many different sources.

2026-27 MEMBERSHIP DRIVE TIME

There are over 50 neighborhood associations in the City of Rochester. Browncroft is one of the larger and long-standing of these. In short, neighborhood organizing has become an important -- albeit necessary -- feature of city-living.

Your membership is important to the Browncroft Neighborhood Association. It provides fiscal support to carry-out the activities of the organization, which build community among neighbors and communication with the City so that we can more effectively address concerns and continue to ensure the quality of life in our area.

Annual dues are \$10 per household and go directly to supporting the ongoing activities of the BNA. The BNA organizes and runs five anticipated events; the Winter Gathering, Ice Cream Social, biennial Garden Walk, the Family Picnic and The Biennial Ultimate Garage Sale; as well as publishing this Crier newsletter, purchasing garden materials for the Browncroft Rose Garden and sponsoring lecturers for general meetings. Through your membership in the Browncroft Neighborhood Association you help continue the efforts of your neighbors to build a cohesive, concerned and safer community.

Whether you are a newer resident, or have lived here for many years, please take the time to be a supporting member of BNA by enclosing your \$10 annual dues and mailing them to BNA in the pre-printed envelope that has space for your name, address, phone, email, and demographic information. This information is kept confidential.

If you prefer to save postage, drop it off to the BNA Treasurer,

Bruce Rumbold at 283 Beresford Road, or use VENMO (See article at right.). If you lose the envelope, just inscribe the above information on a piece of paper, and mail it to the Browncroft Neighborhood Association, P.O. Box 10127, Rochester, NY 14610.

Also, we recommend that you subscribe to the BNA-Announce list to receive notification of important neighborhood information, event reminders or late breaking news. Your email address will not be shared with any outside entity, social media or other neighbors, but it is a great way to stay connected with BNA between newsletters and meetings; as well as to receive important notifications about City of Rochester events or meetings, too.

Thank you for your membership!!

Volunteering is Also Much Needed

There are many opportunities to work with the BNA, such as volunteering with the various committees, and becoming a street representative. Street Reps deliver the BNA Newsletter to their neighbors, welcome new families to the neighborhood, and act as a focal point to bring issues to the BNA monthly meetings. If you are interested in more information about becoming a Street Rep, note on the membership envelope, or contact BNA through Browncroftna.org.

See the BrowncroftNA.org website to find out about BNA Committees, Street Rep duties and activities in which to participate.

A Note from the Treasurer

VENMO is here!! You can now pay your dues using Venmo at [BNAPayments \(BNAPayments@browncroftna.org\)](mailto:BNAPayments@browncroftna.org).

We hope that this will inspire more people to pay dues in support of the Association.

When using VENMO, please provide last name and address as well as your email address if you wish to receive BNA Announcements.

The Association is charged fees for the payments but the amount is nominal and we believe it is worth it if we have a higher percentage of households paying dues via this convenience.

You can reach out to me if you have any questions.

Last year we were in the black thanks to a significant donation from the Argusts of Gaslight Lane. One way that we are using the money is by bringing back the "Dinner for 8" program, with a twist. While encouraging neighbors to get together for a meal (thinking pizza and wings or some such) and the BNA will fund the first \$50 of the gathering. Get in touch with your street rep or any board member for details.

Lastly, a shout out to Ann Kanthor for her work raising money for New Books for #46 school. She raised over \$600 for this project that also donated extra books for the library. This year she has collected over \$700 for this project. Awesome!

Thanks and have a great fall and Holiday season. Hope to see folks for the Winter Gathering in 2027!

Bruce Rumbold

CITY MARK (LOGO) CELEBRATING ITS 60 YEAR ANNIVERSARY. BNA CELEBRATED IT, TOO, IN 1984

In 1984 the City of Rochester celebrated its Sesquicentennial, and Browncroft participated in the



celebration by 1. Contributing our neighborhood history book, "A Beautiful Section of a Beautiful City" to the volume with 17 other neighborhoods, and 2. By recreating the City logo in flowers in the Browncroft Rose Garden circular bed near the Browncroft and Merchants intersection. The Beautification Committee pulled it off in white and purple alyssum, bordered by pink petunias.

Fall Clean Up in the Browncroft Rose Garden

**Saturday,
November 7th,
10:00 a.m.**

**(rain date set for
November 14)**

Many volunteers are needed to quick prune the rose bushes, weed, and rake out the beds.

Bring thick work gloves, pruners and/or loppers, and wear water repellent shoes.

**Please Help Keep Your
Park Looking Good!**

CYNTHIA HOWK, HISTORIC PRESERVATIONIST, DIES

On July 18th, 2026 Cynthia Howk passed away. This was a great loss to the Rochester historic preservation community, as Cynthia's knowledge of regional history and architecture was so extant that she assisted many neighborhoods – including Browncroft – in their preservation goals, as well as building owners, architects and municipalities. She had been with the Landmark Society for 45 years before she retired as the Architectural Research Coordinator.

Cynthia inspired Browncroft in the early 2000s to get listed on the State and National Register of Historic Places by speaking to us at a general meeting and bringing the State's Historic Preservation Office's regional representative



with her. Although she was disappointed when the State limited the boundaries of the proposed Browncroft Historic District to south of Merchants Rd, she was happy when the designation was granted covering the original Browncroft subdivision plus the Rose Garden, parts of Merchants Road and Winton Road in 2004.

Cynthia had given excellent history lectures for Browncroft -- the last one was at our 2024 Annual Meeting --- and walking tours sponsored by the Landmark Society and the Winton Branch Library.

NEW BOOKS FOR NEW STUDENTS

This fall BNA is continuing the tradition of presenting a gift of two new books to the kindergarten students at Austin Steward #46 School. The books are gift wrapped with a note indicating that they are a welcome gift from their Browncroft Neighbors. This is our 10th year and the students are always delighted with the books which are presented to them in late September. Financial donations (checks made out to BNA) for this project can be mailed or dropped off c/o Ann Kanthor 175 Dorchester Rd. Thank you for your support which brings much joy to the students and their families.



A Little Bit of History....Area Farmhouses

Before there were the Browncroft, or Elmcroft, or DePotter, or Kingsbury Subdivisions there were farms and farmhouses, as shown on the 1872 cutout of the Monroe County Atlas'



669 Winton Rd. c1840s - S. Hoyt

1872 Atlas at right - Winton Rd. is the diagonal vertical line. Brown-croft Blvd. is a dotted line. Farmhouses are the dots with the owners' names.



425 Winton Rd - c1840s



540 Winton Rd., corner of Corwin Rd.
Steven Corwin house built c1850s. Purchased by Brown Brothers in 1894. Turned into a nursing home in 1950s. Now apartments



Charlton Nursery residence c1916
116 Browncroft Blvd.



Moses Smith c1830. 67 Merchants Rd. Shown below in an early 1900s photo taken from the attic window of 116 Brown-croft. The Browncroft Rose Garden is now to the right in photo.



Blossom Rd. at Croydon.
DePotter farm. Very altered in the 1970s.



Sheil Farmhouse at Berwick & Merchants Rd. Sheil family farm was subdivided into the Elmcroft Subdivision of today.

BROWNCROFT DINNERS FOR 8

Meet some great BNA neighbors for an evening dining adventure in a Browncroft home on Thursday, Oct. 22 at 6 p.m.

Please sign up before October 15 to be a hostess (providing the table, a main dish or pizza, bread and beverage) or a guest (bring part of the meal assigned to you: salad, dessert, vegetable, or wine)

If we have a limited number of hosts, we will accept only the first guests who sign up. Email this form to jbloem@rochester.rr.com, or call 585-288-6359, or mail to 82 Quentin Rd., Rochester 14609

The committee will contact the hosts, who will then contact their assigned guests. The BNA board has voted to approve a stipend of \$50 to defray expenses for each host. Please submit your bill to Sharon Bloemendaal at the address above.

_____ I would be willing to host a dinner for 8 at my home at the following address: _____
Would you be willing to have a meal for 9 or 10 if we need to accommodate more people? _____

_____ As a host, I prefer to order a pizza and will ask my guests to bring an appetizer, raw veggies, or dessert.

_____ I would like to be a guest at the dinner _____ I prefer the pizza alternative as a guest.

_____ I would like to join the meal if the group can accommodate my dietary preferences or allergies:
_____ dairy-free _____ gluten-free _____ vegan _____ vegetarian _____ other _____
or allergies _____

If we can find common interests we will make an effort to match new friends: My interests are (check all that apply) _____ antiques _____ automobiles _____ bicycles _____ books _____ cooking _____ gardening _____ genealogy _____ geology _____ history _____ medicine _____ music _____ photography _____ running _____ sports _____ travel _____ walking in the neighborhood, _____ other: _____

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ email _____

Questions? Contact the Dinner Committee members:
Sharon Bloemendaal 585-288-6359, jbloem@rochester.rr.com
or Sarah DeGoey, Sarah.degoey@gmail.com

Welcome Our Newest Browncroft Trees

Keeping the Historic Browncroft Landscape alive.

Thank you to our Browncroft preservation-minded residents who have replanted the line of trees 6 feet from the public sidewalk inside the private property.



Planted by BNA in Memory of David Kaiser, President and District Rep. Dana Fuellhart and 46 Grounds Keeper, Bryant Laza.



75 Win-demere Road to replace large tree lost this year.

2026 BNA GARDEN WALK

"The rain said to the wind, you push and I'll pelt" Robert Frost

What a conundrum! We gardeners love the rain but not on June 14th, 2026, the day of the Browncroft Garden Walk. The forecast, more than the actual weather conditions, kept visitors away. We had a modest 40 visitors, a disappointment to our company-ready gardeners. Fortunately, the silver linings outweighed the dampened turnout.

Our fourteen household gardeners were composed of both veterans and new participants, many of whom were recommended by neighboring gardeners impressed by their landscapes. For serious gardeners, our favorite component of the event is the Gardeners' Walk on the following Monday evening. The evening was dry, and pleasantly warm and sunny as we toured each others' gardens, asking questions, getting tips, and learning about landscape design. I learned something new from every garden we visited.

Many thanks to all of our gardeners for the gift of their gardens and for the time and attention they gave to The Browncroft Garden Walk. Thank you to our founder, Sharon Bloemendal, for your guiding vision and oversight. Thank you to stalwart Jim Nicholson for your ongoing organizational work to promote and facilitate the event. Thank you to Marilyn Schutte for your enthusiastic support as you redoubled your efforts recruiting new gardeners to ensure our future success. Finally, a big thank you to young Sam K. who served the best homemade lemonade from his Beresford Road Lemonade Stand!

Joyce Nagle, Organizer/Gardener



Yarmouth Rd. Japanese inspired



Rain Garden - Beresford



Beresford Road



Ramsey Park



Elmcroft Rd.

BNA Summertime Fun in Browncroft

The Ice Cream Social

BNA hosted its Annual Ice Cream Social on Thursday, June 25th. It was a major success with over 135 Browncroft neighbors attending. Many thanks to Cathy Smith of Berwick Road for her generous hospitality and to Netsins for providing generous portions of ice cream! Fortunately the weather cooperated and it was wonderful opportunity for neighbors to meet and greet each other.



BNA FALL FAMILY PICNIC

Over 80 neighbors attended the BNA Fall Family Picnic held at the Hazelwood Lodge at Ellison Park on a beautiful fall night. There was a mix of old and new neighbors who enjoyed grilled hot dogs and a wide variety of dishes to pass; no one went home hungry.

Special thanks to Sharon Bloemendal who provided the hoola hoops which were enjoyed by young and old. Andy Spadoni, BNA President and Bill Boyle managed the grilling and Allen Hopkins, our talented Newcastle Road neighbor provided a musical background of old favorites.

Many thanks to the Event Committee for coordinating this popular event Kathy Boyle, Cathy Smith, Sara Castro and Ann Kanthor. Wegmans generously donated a \$100.00 gift card which was used for the hot dogs and other supplies.

Mark your calendar for Friday, January 22, 2027 for the BNA Winter Gathering held at Glendoveers. The price will stay the same, there will be a large variety of Raffle items, and spending time with friends and neighbors is always a treat!



BNA President and Grill Master, Andy Spadoni & Family



Youth in Motion



President with Picnic Committee

