



# Browncroft Crier

NEWSLETTER OF THE BROWNCROFT NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

SINCE 1973 - Volume #176

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

July 2013

## BNA Executive Committee

### Officers:

#### President

Aaron Thompson

#### Vice-President

Linda Siple

#### Secretary

Mary Connors

#### Treasurer

Robert McLoughlin

## District Reps

### Elm

James Nicholson

### Corwin

Holly Petsos

### Croydon

Mary Jane Tasciotti

## BNA Voicemail:

270-0890

## Inside This Issue

### Street Name Signs

### New Officers and Annual Meeting Report

### Beautification

### Trees of Browncroft

### New Homeowners Spotlight

### Garage Sale

## Come to the BROWNCROFT PICNIC

Wednesday July 17

starting, at 5:30 PM

Sycamore Shelter in Ellison Park.

(Entrance is on the south side of Blossom Road, go over the bridge, take 1st right, keep left.)

BNA will provide charcoal fires for grilling, hot dogs, rolls condiments, cold lemonade drinks and marshmallows for toasting.

Bring a dish to pass and your own plates and silverware of your preference for your family,



Parking

Creek

Please RSVP by phone at 270-0890  
(leave a message)  
or email to [info@browncroftna.org](mailto:info@browncroftna.org)  
(Include your name, phone number, and  
number attending by July 12th  
to help us plan!)

**It's fun. It's free. All ages are welcome.**

Door prizes for the kids

Meet your neighbors at the park on July 17th!



← East

Blossom Rd

West →

## BNA Annual Meeting and Election of Officers

On May 16th BNA celebrated its 40th year anniversary at the annual meeting. The slate of officers for 2013-2014 was accepted by acclamation and are:

**President – Aaron Thompson**

**Vice President – Linda Siple**

**Treasurer – Robert McLoughlin**

**Secretary – Mary Connors**

The nominating committee (Holly Petsos, Jim Nicholson, Mary Connors) wish to thank Aaron, Linda and Robert for agreeing to serve for another year in their positions. And also thank retiring secretary, Kathy Flynn for her excellent job done over the past few years.

Many thanks to the guest speakers, Ted Liddell and Mark Johns, landscape architects from Bergmann Associates, who gave



an informative and entertaining presentation on considerations we as homeowners can make to preserve the historic features of the neighborhood that have made it the great place to live we all enjoy. (See separate article in this issue for summary.)

The meeting included a treasurer's report to membership and committee announcements and information; and concluded with the cutting of a BNA Happy 40th Birthday cake, compliments of Tops Markets, and neighbors social.

## Street Sign Project

The BNA Board has approved to pay for the new street signs which will be white lettering on a brown background with the four-tree BNA logo. The payment covers the additional fee for the special silk-screening. We are not paying for the basic signs and labor since all street signs are being replaced to comply with the new New York signage regulations. The street sign project includes all 18 streets which make up the Browncroft neighborhood area. The project is on schedule and should be completed by the fall.

Linda Siple

improvement" enthusiast might perpetrate.

He concluded with a list of suggestions for BNA that was well received by neighbors in attendance:

Identify and retain character-defining features.

Repair rather than replace whenever possible.

Consider historically appropriate alternatives when replacing building and landscape features.

Replace features with ones that match the original.

Use historically appropriate materials.

Use contractors experienced in historic restoration.

And he threw out the suggestion of developing a "Browncroft Historic Neighborhood Design Guideline" as a reference booklet that could include plant lists and availability resources for residents.

Ted and Mark took many questions from the audience and provided a PDF file of the presentation which we will explore putting up on the BNA web site, or otherwise make available to anyone that would like to review it.

Cassy Petsos

## Bergmann Associates Landscape Architects Give Historic Presentation

Browncroft was fortunate to have as guest presenters at the annual meeting on May 16th the expertise of Edward (Ted) Liddell and Mark Johns, accredited landscape architects at Bergmann Associates, with 40 years of experience between them.

Ted began with an historic overview showing Brown Brothers photographs, catalogues and plant lists, and 1902 plat maps; and continued with picturesque photographs of the neighborhood today, including the magnolias in full bloom. They included bad examples (from other neighborhoods) of remodeling projects and, using a photo of an attractive stucco Browncroft home and Ted's computer skills, composed a



frame by frame virtual make-over consisting of all the NOT recommended things to do to an early 20th century Browncroft property. Although the audience found the more extreme examples amusing, they were not outside the realm of possibility of what an overzealous "home



## Spot Light on New Neighbors -- *Introducing Drew and Marie Nye*

"We obviously love the neighborhood and were born into it!" say Drew and Marie Nye of 82 Merchants Road. Drew Nye was born at 154 Merchants Road to Kathleen and Alan Nye, and Marie Verlinde was born at 30 Quentin Road to Ruth Verlinde and Bruce Peterson. Drew's family still resides at 154 Merchants Road.

Both attended Charles Carrol #46 elementary school on Newcastle Road, and both are graduates of RIT (Marie Bachelors 2003 & Masters 2005, Drew Bachelors 2004).

In 2005, Marie and Drew bought their first home at 270 Humboldt St, which they still own and rent out, since moving to 82 Merchants in December of 2011.

Drew and Marie are co-owners of Roam Cafe located at 262 Park Avenue, a full service restaurant featuring casual American fare, liquor, wine, beer, and patio seating. "We renovated Roam Cafe in July of 2011."

They also have individual occupations. Drew owns, operates and tends bar at DubLand Underground, a bar and live music venue at 315 Alexander Street. And Marie is a professional ceramic artist/potter with a studio in the Hungerford Building on Main Street.

"We have many family friends in the neighborhood and love the convenience and comfort of living in the city. We enjoy walking to local businesses (bars, restaurants, ESL bank, etc...) or even walking to Ellison Park! Our neighborhood offers unique streets, families of all ages, the Rose Park, and "charm" everywhere you look. We especially love the architectural history of the homes in the Browncroft neighborhood (hardwood floors, stained glass details, old trees, etc.). We are dedicated to city-life and are proud to own homes and businesses that contribute to that stability. It is obviously a challenge to be small business owners in the age of corporate chaos, but we strongly believe in our community and encourage people to support local."

"We feel that in 82 Merchants we have found the home we can grow old in. We hope to have children and look forward to sharing with them the special aspects of this wonderful neighborhood.... May the memories continue for years to come."

-Marie & Drew Nye  
Interviewed by Mary Connors.

## Beautification at Work



Johann Wolf, Rosemarie Wolf, Mark Garwood, Robert McLoughlin, Andrea Zawieski.

May 18th saw a great crew of Browncroft neighborhood volunteers in the Rose Garden at Browncroft Boulevard and Merchants Road. They were weeding and spreading wood chip mulch that was provided by the City of Rochester. Six rose beds and the circular evergreen and annual bed were prepared for the summer season.

Tom Gibbons picked up annuals from the city's "Rochester Blossoms" program at Dewey Avenue earlier that morning, and the volunteers planted those, as well.

We should all appreciate the time and hard work of these volunteers whose efforts ensure that this highly visible neighborhood park presents an attractive appearance for our community. They are:

Sharon and Jack Bloemendaal (Quentin Rd.) Johann and Rosemarie Wolf, Linda Siple and Tom Gibbons (Ramsey Pk.), Andrea Zawieski and Robert McLoughlin (Beresford Rd.), Sarah Heiermann (Merchants Rd.), Joe Nunn, (Windemere Rd.), Cassy Petsos (Browncroft Blvd.) John Edelman (Newcastle Rd.) and Mark Garwood (Dorchester Rd.).

Thanks, also, to the City of Rochester for planting two ornamentals in the park -- a magnolia and an ornamental pear. They will look beautiful next spring with the flowering crabs.

## Baby Oak Tree Planted By BNA



Another shade tree for the preservation of the Browncroft landscape has been planted at 400 Newcastle Road, the Catholic Charities halfway house. It was donated by BNA and planted by volunteers Sean and Mason Adams of Browncroft Boulevard (shown at left). Thanks guys!

Another empty space in the tree line has been filled!

Kudos, also to the Sissons on Windemere Road for adding a tree in line.

# Our Treasured Urban Forest: The Catalpa Tree

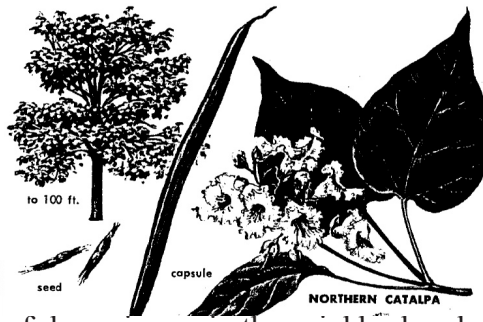
Our home in the 19th Ward and then the Browncroft neighborhood had two things in common; both had orange shag carpeting (which was quickly removed) and a catalpa tree at the end of the drive way. For this reason, my husband Tom, is not a fan. At least 3 times a year you could hear him grouching, "That damn tree is always dropping something!"

This member of the Bignoniaceae Family has large heart-shaped leaves, large clusters of white blooms and dangling "string-bean" seed pods that turn brown and account for its nicknames Indian bean tree or cigar tree.

Well after our beautiful magnolia and cherry trees have dropped their petals, the catalpa tree readies for Act II. Around June the flowers appear in a cone-like cluster called panicles. Arthur Plotnick, author of *The Urban Tree Book*, beautifully describes these blooms; "Making up each panicle are trumpet-shaped blossoms up to 2 1/2 inches wide at the ruffled, scalloped mouths. Within the white petals, lavender and gold speckles attract pollinators. A ripe (some say cloying) aroma draws the nectar crowd."

Native Americans used the large leaves as a poultice and its leaves and bark as a purgative. In the early 1900 the catalpa became commercially significant. Many railroads created catalpa plantations along their right-of-ways hoping to use the timber for ties, telegraph poles and fence posts. And they were frequently used as wind breaks by farmers. Alas, fungus, root rot, and the catalpa sphinx moth caterpillars put an end to these projects.

The catalpa tree at the end of our driveway also succumbed to disease - which made Tom very happy - but there are many beauti-



ful specimens in the neighborhood; two just down the street at 22 and 30 Ramsey Park. I invite the neighborhood pedestrians to more closely inspect the fruits of this showy ornamental. If one pauses underneath the tree, you most certainly will see or hear many birds who take shelter from the sun, wind or rain under the large dark leaves.

Linda Siple, 76 Ramsey Park

*Source: Plotnik, A. (2000). The Urban Tree Book. New York: Three Rivers Press.*

## Historic District Homeowners - Don't forget about NYS tax credits.

Exterior improvements to homes within National Register historic districts that are in eligible census tracts, such as Browncroft, can qualify for New York State income tax credits, if the improvements are consistent with maintaining the architectural integrity of the property. Yes, that means "tax credit", not deduction.

Because census tracts' eligibility can potentially change based on demographics, it is a good idea to apply for credits while the census tract is still eligible, even if the work is done later.

For more information go to [www.nysparks.com/shpo/tax-credit](http://www.nysparks.com/shpo/tax-credit) and focus on the homeowner category PDF. It has further links to help you through the process.

## Browncroft Garage Sale Saw Sunny Skies



View looking east on Windemere Road

"Everyone seemed to have a good time and were polite and patient," said Bob Guenther, garage sale organizer with Sharon Bloemendaal (publicity), and helpers, David Kaiser, Robert McLoughlin, Kathy Flynn, Mary Connors, and Joe Nunn, .

There were approximately 160 households registered as having a garage sale. Their fee of \$5.00 per household was applied to help defray the total cost of the event.

However, the costs to BNA exceeded the amount taken in by registration fees. Expenses to BNA included newspaper adds, porta-pottys at #46 School and the Browncroft Rose Garden, and insurance required for the porta-pottys, as required by the City of Rochester.