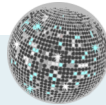


What is the NPNA?

The Normal Park Neighborhood Association (NPNA) of Ypsilanti, Michigan, formed in 1989, is the oldest neighborhood association in the City of Ypsilanti. The mission of the NPNA is to have a positive, lasting impact on the quality of life in the Normal Park neighborhood, and thus the City of Ypsilanti as a whole. Through active partnerships with other civic groups, businesses, schools, libraries, neighbors and government, the NPNA works to beautify the environment, protect property values, encourage compatible businesses, reduce crime, and foster pride in our community. NPNA covers the area bounded by Congress Street on the south, the south side of Washtenaw Avenue on the north, Mansfield Street on the west, and the west side of Summit Street on the east. All households within these boundaries are considered members of the neighborhood association automatically. Annual voluntary dues of \$10 per household per year are encouraged, and you can find a donation link on www.normalpark.org. Your dues, along with the proceeds from our annual yard sale registrations, make it possible for the NPNA to support neighborhood projects, events, meetings and more!

Thanks to Our Contributors!



Many thanks to this issue's contributors: Joyce Fraker, Sam Killian, Kate Jackman, Caren Putzu, Patrick McLean, and Dennis Longo!! Their work helps makes this a truly neighbor-driven publication. Consider joining them in a future issue with a submission.

Write us at newsletter@normalpark.org.

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NPNA Upcoming Events

NPNA Annual Yard Sale

Saturday, June 1 starting at 9:00 am

The NPNA Yard Sale draws people from near and far and is a great way to get rid of clutter, meet some neighbors, and make money. This event is the biggest fund raiser of the year for the NPNA, helping pay for neighborhood projects. If you're planning on participating, help support your neighborhood association by registering early!

The NPNA provides newspaper ads, posts signs at the boundaries of our neighborhood, and distributes the neighborhood maps. Use this opportunity to get rid of a lot of cool stuff you no longer need. There are always hundreds of eager customers.

To reduce mistakes in transcription, the NPNA is moving to an online registration system. This system will allow you to type in your information directly and then pay by credit card. You can find the registration form on www.normalpark.org or at:

<https://forms.gle/Weoe69uX9XvTPy4q9>

If you don't have access to the internet, we will still accept a paper registration. You can find a paper form to complete on the last page of this newsletter.

The \$10 online/\$12 paper registration fee will get your home included on a neighborhood map with descriptions of your items for sale. You keep all the money you make. Your registration fee pays for the advertising and the rest goes into the NPNA fund to help pay for neighborhood projects.

Submit the registration form no later than **Friday, May 24**. Submissions received after this date unfortunately cannot be included on the paper map.



What's going on at your library?

By Sam Killian

Don't miss the Summer Challenge!

This year's YDL Summer Challenge will kick off with county fair flair! On June 15 from 2-4pm at the Whittaker branch will have a petting zoo, live music, cake decorating contest, bounce house, STEM inspired carnival booths, prizes, and more.

Then stay with us all summer to earn badges for reading and other community challenges. Each digital badge earned is worth a chance at winning a grand prize, and kids and teens get to pick a prize out of a treasure box every time they earn 10 badges. There are also weekly prize drawings for kids and teens that earn a badge during the week. Adults can also earn their share of prizes.

Sign up at ypsilibrary.org/summer/

Updates on the downtown branch

Thanks for your patience while we've navigated the cleanup and construction at the downtown branch, and the end is in sight!

The Michigan Avenue library suffered significant water damage during the storms in early July, and has been closed since then for cleanup, remediation, and reconstruction. Thankfully, few materials were lost, and we're hoping to reopen in early August. Stay tuned for details on welcome back parties, and get the latest news at ypsilibrary.org.

Have you seen us in Normal Park?

Did you know the Bookmobile has several stops in or near Normal Park?

Mondays: Outside Chapelle School on Wallace Blvd from 5:35-6:10pm

Thursdays: On the corner of Sherman & Wallace from 7:20-7:55pm

For the full Bookmobile schedule, visit ypsilibrary.org/bookmobile.

Need more info?

Our locations

Whittaker Road – 5577 Whittaker Rd.

Michigan Avenue (temporarily closed) – 229 W. Michigan Ave.

Superior – 1900 Harris Rd.

Get, or renew, your library card at

ypsilibrary.org/library-cards, or call us at 734-482-4110.

Simple Steps to Help Migrating Birds

By Kate Jackman

It's a beautiful time of year in our neighborhood. We in Normal Park love our trees and flowers and love hearing the bird song in the morning. It's also the time of year birds are migrating from thousands of miles away in Central and South America. It's a dangerous journey and they face many perils in our cities and suburbs, but there are simple steps we can take to help.

1. Make Your Windows Safer. Did you know up a 1 billion birds are killed each year hitting windows in the US and Canada alone? The glass reflection looks like a habitat that birds can fly into. Here's how to help: on the outside of windows, install screens or use film, bird tape, or other bird saver stickers or decals (available at Wild Birds Unlimited, Amazon, etc) to break up reflections. I got mine at Wild Birds and they are a clear pine cone design that I don't notice, but the birds will.

2. Keep Cats Indoors. Estimates are that cats in the US and Canada kill more than 2.4 billion birds annually. This is the #1 cause of loss of birds that humans can control. We love our cats (so much!) but they are healthier indoors. One option is to provide a sort of "catio"—some sort of controlled outdoor space. You can also keep cats on a leash when outdoors—this is what I do with my cats.

3. Create a Welcoming Space in your Backyard. Native shrubs, grasses, and flowers are far more nutritious for birds than non native plants. They provide shelter, food, and insects birds need to survive. Google "native plants" for Michigan. They are beautiful, are more climate resistant, and low maintenance—win! It goes without saying...pesticides are bad for birds and insects (and us).

4. Turn off Uncovered Outdoor Lights at Night—most birds migrate at night and bright lights are disorienting. It's helpful if you just use lights that are covered (like your porch light) as opposed to uncovered lights which might shine upward.

You can have fun with kids and attract birds to your yard by providing a bird bath, feeders like a hummingbird or oriole feeder (clean them regularly), hang a bird house for House Wrens, Chickadees, or Woodpeckers, and add some bird attracting plants like phlox, sunflowers, or bee balm.

Have a beautiful, bird filled spring!



Report from City Council

By Patrick McLean

Hi Neighbors!

For those of you who might not know me, I'm Patrick McLean, and I serve as one of your two Ward 2 members of Ypsilanti City Council. I was appointed in January by the other members of Council when our former member stepped down. Ward 2 includes most of Normal Park as well as College Heights. I'm a 20 year resident of the neighborhood and a former member of the NPNA Board.

In each edition of the Normal Park Newsletter, I plan to share some of the major issues we are considering at City Council. As someone who grew up with daily newspapers, I find it a challenge to keep track of local government matters in this new era of very limited local coverage. I'll be working on ways to fill at least part of that gap using a website (patrickmcleanypsilanti.org) and newsletters like this one.

The most important matter before us right now is the city's annual budget. By the time you read this, the City Manager will have made his budget proposal to us on Council. We have to approve the budget – with changes if necessary – by June 7. The good news is that the city has a significant “fund balance,” meaning funds remaining after all of our expenditures for the current year. The not so good news is that our annual revenues are less than our planned expenditures, meaning that, to balance the budget, we must dip into that fund balance. If we do that year after year, eventually (in about three years) we'll no longer have a fund balance. That's when cities start talking about budget cuts, layoffs, program cuts and a host of bad things. My goal is to make the difficult decisions this year and next -- primarily to bring our revenues and expenditures into line -- so we don't have to face a crisis in two or three years.

Having a city with its fiscal house in order is rarely an exciting topic. For many, eyes glaze over when elected officials start talking about balanced budgets and deficits. But balancing the budget is the foundation on which a strong city can be built. Balancing the budget now, when we're not in fiscal crisis, will allow us to avoid the kind of situation that Ann Arbor Public Schools is facing with huge deficits that are causing broad program cuts, teacher layoffs and a parade of horrors. I am working now on a budget stabilization plan that I hope will build that strong foundation for us going forward.

In addition to the budget, we have been discussing recycling containers, our sidewalk repair ordinance, a moratorium and cap for marijuana dispensaries, an update to our historic district, and rebuilding our police department. I've also started talking with downtown businesses to be sure the city is providing the support our small businesses need in order to survive and thrive.

Beyond these issues, whatever is important to you is important to me. I serve as your representative to the city. When you have something you're concerned about, whether it's an issue particular to you or a matter that impacts many residents of the neighborhood or the entire city, please share this information with me. I typically share your concerns with the City Manager and/or the appropriate member of city staff. If necessary, Council might consider passing an ordinance or a resolution to address the issue.

I look forward to working with you in the months and years ahead. Please reach out if there is something I can do to help.

- Council Member Patrick McLean

pmclean@cityofypsilanti.com

Real Estate Update

The following homes have been **sold** since December 1, 2023:

1228 Elbridge	\$273,000
210 Elm	\$347,200
104 Oakwood	\$234,000
1033 Washtenaw	\$381,107

There are two homes **pending** (as of 4/15/24):

316 Hiawatha	\$360,000
226 Summit	\$274,900

These homes are currently **active** (as of 4/15/24):

103 Wallace	\$349,900
303 Wallace	\$329,900

Dennis Longo, a NPNA resident and area Realtor® for 40 years, compiled the above information. Please contact him at Premier Choice Realty (300 Nourth Huron, Ypsilanti 48197), 734-961-6182 cell, or dennis@premierchoicerealty.biz, with any real estate questions.

Who Loves to Garden?

By Caren Putzu

We need volunteers to help tend the endcap flower beds around the neighborhood. We used to coordinate the weeding and planting of flowers with Ypsilanti PRIDE Day/Ypsilanti Community Beautification Day, but unfortunately that event is no longer happening for at least the foreseeable future. BUT that doesn't mean our endcaps have to suffer!

If you are interested in adopting an endcap, please contact Caren Putzu (carenputzu@gmail.com or 843.568.6415).

Normal Park Feral Partners

By Joyce Fraker

Last year I was happy to report that our neighborhood rescued a six member feral cat family and in the process we became a team. Last year may have been the fourth year that our Momma Kitty had a litter in the 'hood. We were able to spay momma and two female kittens, which means we halted a process that could have multiplied times three! Two males were neutered and three of the kittens have been adopted.

I have neighbors on Cross St. and S. Congress who have worked on this effort, and continue to support the ferals that were not adopted. I encourage any neighbor who is involved or interested in rescuing, neutering, or harboring these misplaced domestic angels, to contact me through email: joyceypsi@yahoo.com and become a member of the team.

Last year we worked with Huron Valley Humane Society, but this year they have a shortage of veterinarians, so the Trap, Neuter, Release project has become more complicated. If anyone knows a vet who could work with feral cats, please let me know. Kitties who have gone through the TNR process sport a clipped ear, the indication that he or she has been "fixed," and likely vaccinated.

I understand that there are people who have negative opinions about "stray" cats. Some believe that they kill large numbers of birds, but the truth is they mostly hunt rodents; while we may feel bad for the rodents, those little critters create many kinds of problems.

One of my team members, Nancy, has researched issues related to feral cats, and we would be glad to forward information or answer questions (to the best of our ability!)

Remember, these beautiful creatures did not ask to be born into an environment that is not conducive to their well-being. Let's work together to manage feral "colonies" by limiting reproduction, and providing food, shelter, and humane care for our furry little neighbors.

Contact the NPNA Board

If you have questions about our neighborhood, items you would like discussed at the next board meeting, or information on opportunities to volunteer, please contact us:

By email: president@normalpark.org

On the web: www.normalpark.org

Current Board Members

President:	Dawn Keech
Vice President:	Claudia Pettit
Secretary:	OPEN
Treasurer:	Megan Brown
Greenscape:	Caren Putzu
New Neighbor:	Angie Moloney
Newsletter Editor:	Courtenay Tooles
Newsletter Distribution:	Caitlin Koska Stacey Aksman
Website:	Kerri Pepperman
At-large members:	Kira Berman Stephanie Hart Alex Pettit Jason Ringholz Scott Bethune Shannon Baer Katia Lev Alex Pietrantonio Nina Gilmore Jessica Howell Eric Nicholson

Open positions on the Board and for volunteer opportunities are available!!

We are looking for residents who are interested in planning activities in the neighborhood. Curious? Drop an email to president@normalpark.org. We welcome any level of commitment, big or small. (And again, board meetings have great snacks!)

About this Newsletter

Inclusion of submitted content, including advertisements, in the NPNA newsletter does not reflect an endorsement by the Normal Park Neighborhood Association or its Board.

NPNA Yard Sale

Saturday, June 1, 2024, from 9am to 4pm

To reduce mistakes in transcription and to be more environmentally friendly, the NPNA is moving to an **online registration system** on <https://forms.gle/Woe69uX9XvTPy4q9>. This system will allow you to type in your information directly and then pay by credit card. You can find the registration form on www.normalpark.org. Registrations submitted online will receive a \$2 discount.

If you don't have access to the internet, we will still accept paper registrations. Cut out this registration form and submit it no later than Friday, May 24 to NPNA Yard Sale, c/o Rachel Sprovtsoff at 1121 S Congress. Checks should be made payable to NPNA. Submissions received after this date unfortunately cannot be included on the paper map.

Please complete the following so we can contact you. Only your address and item descriptions are published.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email: _____

Please list items you would like to have included on the map (e.g., furniture, books, antiques, toys, etc.):

YES, please list me on the neighborhood map! (\$12 for paper registration)

YES, I am enclosing an additional \$10 for NPNA dues for my household! (\$10)

