



ORCHARD HILLS-MAPLEWOOD HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

www.ohmha.org

OHMHA NEWSLETTER

February 2017

Join Your Neighbors at Community Forum

Sunday, April 2, 2017

5:45 - 7:00 pm

Location: Zoup at Traver Village

Get the very latest news on:

- Orchard Hills - Maplewood, Bromley, Thurston & Clague Communities
- Thurston Nature Center
- Nixon Road Property Developments
- OHAC and Dolphin Pools
- Thurston Players



Community Forum at Zoup in 2016

The entire neighborhood is invited to join us for an informative Community Forum on Sunday, April 2 at 5:45 pm at Zoup at Traver Village.

"The success of our first three Community Forums has encouraged us to continue the event. Many of the initiatives and issues in our area need the involvement of more than just one group. This event facilitates greater interaction and coordination between groups," said Jack Cederquist, OHMHA Board Vice-President.

While OHMHA is coordinating the Forum, it is open to everyone who lives in the surrounding area. Consider bringing your neighbors and friends and also enjoying some soup as a way of thanking Zoup for hosting us. We look forward to seeing you on Sunday, April 2! ■

Neighborhood Garage Sale

Saturday, May 20
starting at 9 am



Neighborhood Fun at 2016 Fall Festival

by Greg Jagst

Our neighborhood has established a community tradition: we celebrated our 10th Annual Fall Festival on September 25, 2016. The weather worked in our favor as 200+ residents from the Orchard Hills and Maplewood subdivisions as well as our westerly neighbors and friends in the Bromley subdivision came together for a pleasant Sunday afternoon of music, food and socializing.

Francie Krawke of the Michigan Avian Experience enjoyed the festivities with her plus one, two and three: The now fully mature bald eagle who first made his debut as an all dark feathered immature bird at our festival 10 years ago, along with his avian friends a hawk and barn owl.



The Thurston 3rd, 4th, and 5th Grade Choirs came back to our stage by popular demand. We also thank Kelly Krohn, Alison Hendricks, and Kira Lesser (Audubon Russet) for playing at the festival. Making their Fall Festival debut, the Community High School Jazz Band graced our stage with an eclectic set. Tom Teller again graciously lent OHMHA the use of his audio equipment to enhance the Festival's sound capabilities.

Various community organizations attended our Festival again: Kiwanis-Morning Side again offered children fun games to play as well as balloons to carry. This year OHMHA helped Kiwanis's - Ann Arbor Morning Edition in sponsoring their second annual 5K Run/Walk and Family Fun Run. 100% of the money raised was provided to support 4 local neighborhood school programs at Clague and Thurston schools, which directly impact children, and families.

This was a debut event that we hope will return again next year with even more participants. Also, Praveena Ramaswami again offered face painting for the kids from her festive VW van.

Apples, cider, and donuts were again provided to all festival attendees by Wiard's Orchards courtesy of OHMHA through our annual dues collections. The Thurston Pantry, a non-profit helping students in need at Thurston Elementary, also sold pizza by the slice to support its worthy efforts.

Among the organizations and individuals who contributed to the success of our Festival: Bo Bunnell and volunteers from OHAC and the Thurston Nature Center-which also recognized Mike Conboy for all of his decades of devotion and care he has given the TNC. The living legacies of all Mike's work surrounds our Thurston Pond in the hundreds of trees Mike and various supportive volunteers have nurtured and grown to a spectacular property unique to our neighborhood.

AADL attended revealing further interesting products and services on display. The AAPD was represented by Sgt. Tom Hickey and Jamie Giordani, the new Neighborhood Watch liaison replacing Joselyn Haske. The Nixon Area Alliance, represented by Amy Seetoo, continues OHMHA's efforts to keep area residents up to date on activities and developments near our neighborhood-in this case offering neighbors info on the housing developments being built in the Nixon and Dhu Varren intersection areas.

Thank you to all neighbors and friends who attended the Festival! Planning will start in the spring for the 2017 Fall Festival scheduled for Sunday, Sept. 24. Volunteers to help with the Fall Festival area always welcome. ■

Thanks to our Fall Festival donors:

- Holiday Inn at Plymouth Road
- Plum Market

Please Keep Dogs on Leash in Public Areas

by Jack Cederquist

Dogs can be wonderful companions and friends and they can get us outside to enjoy the neighborhood.

However, residents recently have felt threatened and in some cases were attacked by dogs not on a leash. Our City Council Members, the City of Ann Arbor Police, and the Washtenaw County Animal Control, Health Department and Court have been informed of these incidents and, again in some cases, have taken action against the dogs' owners.

No one wants to be attacked by a dog and neither is it appropriate for unleashed dogs to be on the grounds of Thurston and Clague schools. Please be responsible and keep your dog on a leash. Our nearest dog play area is Olson Park on Dhu Varren Road at Pontiac Trail. ■

For reference, the City Code about dogs and leashes
Chapter 107; 9:47. - Violations

The owner of any dog or other animal shall be guilty of a violation of the chapter if:
The dog is at any time not under reasonable control defined as:

- (a) Secured by a leash held by the owner or the owner's agent;
- (b) Secured by a leash which is attached to a stationary object and attended by the owner or the owner's agent;
- (c) On the premises of the owner or confined in a vehicle; or
- (d) On the premises of a dog play area as designated by the Community Services Area Administrator or designee and upon approval by City Council.



Traffic Study News

Nixon - Green - Dhu Varren Roundabout and Nixon Corridor

by Jack Cederquist, OHMHA Board Vice President

A public meeting with presentations from City of Ann Arbor staff and study contractor, OHM, was held at Clague School November 29. OHM presented a nearly final design for the roundabout. OHM and the City will next prepare a detailed and formal Request for Proposal that the City will use to solicit bids from contractors to build the roundabout. The City will then choose a contractor and the process of constructing the roundabout will begin. Several scenarios for handling the traffic through the intersection during construction were presented with no decision made. Scenarios range from closing the intersection entirely to motorized traffic and minimizing construction time to allowing varying directions of traffic but at the cost of increasing construction time. A drawing of the design can be seen below. More information is found on the project website which you can find by googling "Nixon Green Dhu Varren Roundabout and Nixon Corridor Study." Then download the Roundabout Layout Exhibit for the July 13, 2016 public meeting. A less detailed drawing is at Nixon Roundabout and Bike Lane Buffer Design image, again on the project website.

OHM also presented the status of their Nixon Corridor Study. The presentation can be downloaded from the project website as a Power Point presentation for November 29 public meeting. The presentation puts pedestrians' and cyclists' needs and safety first and continues with motorist concerns, giving precedence to traffic entering and leaving from the many side streets on Nixon. The presentation concludes with a three-phase approach to improving Nixon Road, beginning with the simplest and least expensive before moving to more complete, but more expensive, improvements.

I expect the City will consider the final Corridor Study recommendations, followed by much discussion among City staff, City Council and the interested and affected public. If you are at all concerned with the Nixon roundabout or corridor, I strongly suggest you consult the project website documents. There was significant public input at the November 29 meeting (documented on the project website). I expect we will have additional opportunities to have input and, hopefully, influence further improvements to the Nixon corridor. ■



Planned roundabout at intersection at Green, Dhu Varren and Nixon.

State of the Neighborhood

by Greg Jagst, OHMHA Board President

As reported in this and previous Newsletters, your OHMHA Board continues to plan and execute events such as the Fall Festival, the Community Forum and the Neighborhood Garage Sale. Via our ohmha.org website, Facebook page and email list, OHMHA keeps the residents of Orchard Hills and Maplewood informed of important public meetings such as the many recent meetings on the Nixon Road property developments, the design of the Nixon - Green - Dhu Varren roundabout and the Nixon Corridor Traffic Study.

Why not join our email list to ensure you are aware of local events and these opportunities to hear from our City government? Instructions on how to join are on the last page of this newsletter.

Please also consider becoming an OHMHA member by paying your annual dues of \$20. You can join at ohmha.org and pay via PayPal or credit card.

And why not attend our next Board meeting - they are open to all - in the Clague Media Center at 7pm, Thursday, February 9. ■



Please join for an upcoming OHMHA Board meeting. The board appreciates it when neighbors attend and share ideas. Your involvement keeps the neighborhood vibrant. Check the OHMHA website for upcoming board meeting dates.

Welcome to the Neighborhood Initiative!

OHMHA has launched the "Welcome to the Neighborhood" initiative to make it easier for new families to find out more information about our neighborhood and to make them feel at home.

If you are aware of a new neighbor moving in, please contact OHMHA Board Member Nadine Wong (nadinewong@gmail.com) with a street address so that we can make sure that we include them in this initiative. ■

ORCHARD HILLS - MAPLEWOOD HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP DUES FOR June 1, 2016 - May 31, 2017

Name _____ Phone _____
Address _____ Amt Paid _____
Email _____ Please remove me from email list

Mail or deliver dues to: Martin Torch-Ishii, OHMHA Treasurer, 3366 Bluett, 48105
or Pay OHMHA dues online via Paypal, see www.ohmha.org

"Thurstonites Have Reason To Be Proud"

Thurston Nature Center - 50 Years

by Frank Commiskey

February 8th will mark the 50th anniversary of the Ann Arbor School Board's decision to preserve for conservation education the area we now call the Thurston Nature Center (TNC).

Described by many at the time as either a wet prairie, swamp, or less kindly a "waste area," it was a part of 25 acres purchased by Ann Arbor Public Schools for the construction of Thurston Elementary School (1963-1964). While the school was built on the southern portion of the property, the intent was to later drain and fill the northern marshy area to accommodate the future construction of a Junior High School (now referred to as Claque Middle School). But to the parents at Thurston, residents of the area, and to the conservation consultant staff of the schools, the swamp offered a different sort of opportunity. It offered a perfect spot to develop a nature center.

With the support of Thurston's Principal Josephine Brokaw and PTO President John Levens, a PTO Committee (Thurston Nature Center Committee) was established with members participating from both the school and local neighborhoods (Bromley and Orchard Hills). With the help of Dr. William Stapp (professor emeritus at the University of Michigan School of Natural



Early days of the Thurston Nature Center

Resources and Environment) and a \$100 budget, the area was surveyed, mapped, plotted, and designed. A plan was developed and a strategy established to launch a grassroots advocacy campaign with the consensus from all interested parties to save this piece of land.

One of the more memorable events occurred in April of 1966 when the residents of the area mounted a huge clean-up day on the site. Recruited by Mike and Madelaine Conboy and Mel Larsen to promote the cause to preserve this piece of land, Doug Fulton a writer at the time for the Ann Arbor News described in several articles. "With the assistance of the developer, they removed 15 truckloads of assorted debris from the site which the builder had been using as a dumping ground for scrap building material. The neighbors turned out in droves, bending their backs to get the junk cleared out and laying wood chip paths all around the pond. The Scouts planted pine seedlings, willow trees and wild rice to attract the birds. Following the clean-up, a presentation of the nature center idea was made to area residents. Those opposing the plan (chiefly because of safety reasons) also spoke at the meeting. Then a vote was taken, and an

overwhelming majority gave support to the nature center.”

“The idea was brought to the School Board for approval the following February. Several points were made in this presentation— it would be expensive to drain and fill the swamp sufficiently for building— the site was really not large enough for both an elementary and a junior high — and, most important of all, here was an imaginative and worthwhile educational opportunity. The board agreed.”

Mr. Fulton summarized the wonderful and amazing efforts as an example that “pointed out what can happen in just a short time (between 1965-1967) when there is concerted neighborhood and community action to a specific and worthwhile goal.”

The sheer spirit and momentum of the community, at the time of its founding, and which has endured for 49 years is worthy of many memories, stories, written articles, and even a film which was presented in 1967.

The picture, "We're On Our Way," (found on You Tube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bG-Ht9p5kXw>) showed the planting of more than 4,000 trees, shrubs, and plants on the site, the building of bridges and walkways, and the erection of bird houses and outdoor display cases and signs. It had its premiere in Washington, D.C., on September 15, 1967. At the showing, special guests of the First Lady (Mrs. Lyndon B. Johnson), represented our community: eleven-year-old Thurston Elementary School student Julie Ann Weinhold (Burdick), the Ann Arbor School Acting Superintendent Scott Westerman, and University of Michigan professor and conservationist Dr. Bill Stapp.

At the 25th anniversary, Fulton reminded us once again of the 60's passion “If all these schools had PTO's as imaginative and hardworking as Thurston's, Ann Arbor could have the finest set of nature centers in the country.” Thanks to the many wonderful volunteers the stewardship of the TNC and its use as an educational site for future generations continues not only at Thurston and Clague but throughout Ann Arbor! ■



Mike Conboy leading a Thurston Nature Center tree tour a few years back.

OHMHA BOARD MEMBERS

Greg Jagst	2080 Yorktown	846-6332	President
Jack Cederquist	2145 Ardenne	665-2282	Vice President
Martin Torch-Ishii	3366 Bluett	474-1249	Treasurer
Peter Mooney	3352 Yellowstone	213-0440	Secretary
Emily Eisbruch	2561 Bunker Hill	665-0533	Newsletter (eisbruchs@gmail.com)
Anne Karabakal	2405 Bunker Hill	669-2084	Webmaster
Jerry Schulte	3334 Yellowstone	668-2590	
Amy Seetoo	3111 Cedarbrook	332-0390	
Nadine Wong	3092 Lexington	222-1716	
Jennifer Oldham	3337 Yellowstone	834 0775	
Frank Commiskey	2647 Antietam Ct	369-0992	
Wendy Carman	2340 Georgetown	761-8693	

ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES

Christopher Taylor (Mayor)	794-6165	CTaylor@a2gov.org
Kirk Westphal (Council Member, Ward 2)	660-9955	KWestphal@a2gov.org
Jane Lumm (Council Member, Ward 2)	677-4010	JLumm@a2gov.org

How do I get on the neighborhood email list? go to www.ohmha.org/contact

How do I get on the neighborhood watch list? email gjagst@gmail.com

How to "like" the OHMHA Facebook page? <https://www.facebook.com/ohmhaneighborhood/>

OHMHA
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