



Wildwood Park

Newsletter May 2015

The Neighborhood Garage Sale Is This Month

This year Anne Duff, Megan Kraft and Karen Walter will help to put on the Wildwood Park Annual Garage Sale on Friday and Saturday, May 29 and 30. Participants can make a voluntary contribution of \$5 (this will cover costs to add balloons to the signs for the dates of the sale, and for additional advertising). The Neighborhood Association has agreed to pay \$80 towards the cost of advertising. Let Karen, Anne or Megan know if you're participating. In the past neighbors have occasionally gone in together to display the merchandise, so that there be an abundance of items for sale. Interested in participating or helping out? Contact Anne Duff at 459-0708; or Megan Kraft at mkhofrichter@hotmail.com or Karen Walter at 3710 North Washington Road.

Join Us for the Wildwood Park Clean-Up on May

It's time again for the Great American Clean-up. This year it will be Saturday, May 16th. We'll be meeting at the Point about 9:00 a.m. more or less. Bring your favorite implements. We'll supply bags and gloves. There are usually some complimentary doughnuts to be had, but you'll have to bring your own coffee. As usual this will be a pretty loosely organized event. We are going to be scouring the neighborhood for trash, possibly felling and cleaning up a large tree at Barbary Park, and the hedges at the Point are looking a little shaggy too.

So bring a rake or a wheel barrow or any other favorite implement; the city gives us the gloves and trash bags. The city will also be supplying a beautiful souvenir T-shirt for all who participate, and afterward there is indeed such a thing as a free lunch and it is at Headwaters Park.

Come on out meet some of your neighbors, work as hard as you care to, eat a doughnut and say hi. You can choose your own task from those mentioned, or if you know of an area in the neighborhood that needs some attention let us know and you could head up a crew of your very own. We always have fun and it only lasts a few hours. Don't forget to bring the kids! We have small gloves and T-shirts just their size.





May 5 is Primary Election Day

If you're new to Indiana, we need to tell you that Indiana holds "closed" primary elections. Only Democrats may vote for candidates in the Democrat primary election; only Republicans can vote for Republican candidates in the Republican primary election. There is no crossover voting. But how can the election workers know if you are a Republican or a Democrat? You tell them. If you declare yourself to be a Republican, then you get a little square of paper with an R on it, and you take that to the voting booth. Similarly, Democrats get a D. The poll workers record your declaration. That way everyone will know if you voted Republican or Democrat in the primary election. This may be important if you intend to run for election in the future – if you have voted Republican in the primaries, you may not be able to announce your candidacy as a Democrat in the next election.

This year we hold municipal elections. Municipal elections are held in an "off year," where there are no other offices to be filled. Wait till next year – the top office (President of the United States) is up for election next year.

Leading the ballot this year will be the office of Mayor of the City of Fort Wayne. The Republicans and the Democrats each have four candidates running in the primaries. Next will be the election for Fort Wayne City Clerk. The incumbent, Sandy Kennedy, is retiring after a zillion years in office. Republicans are running two candidates in this primary election; the Democrats have but one (who is therefore going to be the candidate in the fall election).

Next on the ballot is City Council Member At Large. Our City Council consists of nine members. Six are elected from well-defined districts (we are in the fifth district). But there are three members who are elected city-wide. These are called Members At Large. Republicans have seven candidates – the top three will appear on the fall ballot. The Democrats have nine candidates appearing on the ballot – once again, the top three will make it through to the fall ballot.

In the District elections, residents of Wildwood Park can vote only for the fifth district council member – not for districts one through four, or district six. Republicans have not named a candidate to run for fifth district council member. The Democrats have re-nominated Wildwood Park's own Geoff Paddock. As a result Geoff will automatically appear on the ballot this fall. The Republicans, acting through their party officers, have the right to appoint a candidate between now and this fall, since no one chose to run in the primary.

We're lucky to have meaningful, contested primaries. Look at the town of Woodburn, Indiana: no one from either party filed to be a candidate for the City Council At Large, or for any of the four council districts.

Wildwood Park's polling place is at the VFW Post on Leesburg Rd. at Main St. Go east on W. Jefferson Blvd., then turn left on Main St. You reach a fork in the road where Main St. goes right and Leesburg Rd. goes to left. Take Leesburg Rd. to the left. But look for a driveway maybe fifty yards down Leesburg Rd., on the left. That is the driveway to the VFW Post. There may be candidates' signs near the driveway; this will be a tip-off that you have reached the right place. Go up the hill and park near the building. There is a canopy over the sidewalk in front of the building; take the sidewalk to the very end. The door to our polling place is at the end, on the right.

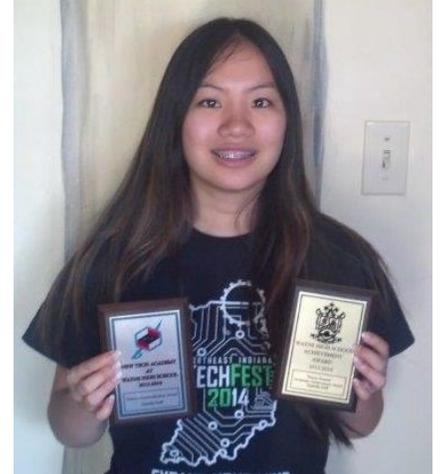
Bring with you a photo ID (Indiana driver's license, for example.)

The polls open at 6 a.m. and close at 6 p.m. Our precinct number is Precinct 578. The only political parties taking part in this primary election are the Democrats and the Republicans. If you declare yourself to be a Libertarian for example, there is no one to vote for.

So come to the polls on Election Day. You may see some friendly faces among the poll workers – people you know. (Thanks to the residents of Wildwood Park who volunteer for these poll positions.)

Danielle Duff to Attend Academy at Ball State

Lenny and Anne Duff, our neighbors on Mulberry Road, report that their daughter Danielle has gained admission to attend the Indiana Academy for Science, Mathematics, and Humanities. The Academy, located on the campus of Ball State University in Muncie, is a residential school for gifted and talented Juniors and Seniors. The admission process is highly competitive, based on SAT scores, high school transcript, several essays and work samples; letter of recommendation are also submitted. Danielle was one of 190 candidates selected out of 560 students who applied.



This summer, Danielle will be attending the National Student Leadership Conference at American University in Washington D.C., to study Psychology and Neuroscience. Completion of her studies at the Academy will be a great opportunity for Danielle to prepare her for her future pursuit of a professional career in Psychology or some relevant field of Neuroscience.

She is currently completing her Sophomore year at New Tech Academy at Wayne High School where she is fourth in her class. Lenny and Anne are excited and nervous for Danielle; but they know she will grow both socially and academically through this experience.

N. Washington Rd. onto Ardmore – a Dangerous Turn

For more than a year neighbors have been complaining about the lack of visibility as they exit N. Washington Rd. in an attempt to turn onto Ardmore (going north). Last year the City let the weeds grow too high, and it was impossible to really look back and see whether traffic was coming on Ardmore. And it does come. Sure, the speed limit is thirty. But traffic going north on Ardmore at that point can see the traffic lights at W. Jefferson, and the speed limit is what ever you can get away with.

When the City designed this intersection, it was already planning to have a long deceleration lane for traffic that wanted to turn right on W. Jefferson. So the North Washington Rd. exit onto Ardmore simply extended that deceleration lane a bit longer. What that means is that there is no true merging between N. Washington Rd. and Ardmore, and it is virtually impossible to look back and see what traffic is coming. Because of the crest of the hill at N. Washington Rd. and Ardmore, traffic seems to pop up unexpectedly.

When the Ardmore design was proposed to us, the then-City Engineer explained the concept of “platooning,” in which the flow of traffic going north on Ardmore would be controlled by the stop light at Taylor. Thus there would be a run of heavy traffic (the traffic light at Taylor was green) followed by no traffic (the traffic light at was red). This would allow people to exit from N. Washington Rd. onto Ardmore safely. But has that worked out?

In Europe, cities put up mirrors at intersections where the look back angle is difficult – you have to virtually turn around in your seat to look back at the on coming traffic. Let’s ask the City Engineer if there is some sort of solution that would allow us to exit onto Ardmore with confidence.

What's that \$5.00 Ditch Assessment?

You have received your tax duplicate now from the Allen County Treasurer, and perhaps you noticed that the spring payment is \$5.00 more than the fall payment. That is because the spring payment includes a \$5.00 "ditch assessment." Every year you pay \$5.00 into a maintenance fund that takes care of Allen County's regulated drains (at least those under the control of the Allen County Surveyor and the Allen County Drainage Board). You get to contribute to this, because the water (or at least a small part of it) that flows off your property goes into the Junk Ditch. The Junk Ditch is a regulated drain.

The euphoniously named Junk Ditch was part of the marsh drainage projects in southwest Allen County, from the 1870's and 1880's. The Junk Ditch is the drainage ditch (canal?) That you see at the intersection of Ardmore and Covington Road. It crosses Taylor next to Valbruna Stainless Steel and ultimately wends its way to the St. Marys River. Our Willowdale Creek empties into the Junk Ditch to the east of Catalpa. All land owners in the watershed of a regulated drain must contribute to its maintenance. So you get a \$5.00 charge every year.

The Junk Ditch does not seem to move much water, in part because its water level is virtually identical to the water level of the St. Marys River. The St. Marys River's water level is virtually identical to the water level of the Maumee. And the Maumee is blocked by the Hosey Dam, which has raised the water level significantly so that we have standing water in all of our rivers in the downtown area year round.

There's a longer explanation about the Hosey Dam (believe it or not, it's a hydroelectric dam). But for now let's say that in the 1880's when the Junk Ditch was completed there was no Hosey Dam and the ditch actually flowed.

The Junk Ditch from Ardmore to St. Marys River follows a natural creek bed. But from Ardmore to the west – to Eagle Marsh – the ditch was man made. The purpose was to drain the huge marsh that once existed all the way from Huntington to Fort Wayne (all the way to today's Lindley Elementary School).

News from the County Extension Office!

Ricky Kemery, the Purdue horticulture educator, reminds us that the Extension Office will be having a Plant Sale on Saturday, May 16, from noon till 2:30 p.m. Want more information? Call the Extension Office at 481-6826.

Also: the final 2015 "Weekend Gardener" program will be held on Saturday, May 2 from 10:30 a.m. till noon. Ricky Kemery will be speaking on "The Not-So-Simple Act Of Planting A Tree." Of course, we really like trees in Wildwood Park. So call 481-6826 for more information.

Please Keep a Watch on Your Neighbor's House

Get to know your neighbors – know whom you expect to see in their house or on their lot. Then if someone starts loitering around the house, peeking in windows, casing out the joint, you have a genuine "suspicious person" and should call 9-1-1. Even if it's that neighbor's long lost cousin who has never been to Fort Wayne before, but has recently come here after having examined the damage in Kathmandu, it is preferable to call 9-1-1 and let the police handle it.

We're neighbors. (We are not bosom buddies, but neighbors.) And we watch out for each other.