

# WILDWOOD PARK

Newsletter October 2015

## There'll be a Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight October 24

It's the Wildwood Park Campfire! From 5:00 p.m. until ??? we will meet at the Park at the Point, intersection of North Washington Road and South Washington Road, to sit around a campfire, roast weenies, drink some beverages, and have a good time. This is Wildwood Park's extremely informal event - we sit on logs (please wear grubbies). If you bring kids, make sure they are supervised (the fire is hot!).

Some people bring their own coolers for special beverage. We will try to have everything you need for roasting/grilling over a campfire. Usually around 9:00 the kids are sent home. The adults stay on till whenever.

We will send out a flyer to remind you of this event. There really no agenda, no list of events. We just show up, talk, consume, and have fun.

*Why a campfire? It started years ago, when an oak tree died near the location of our current campfire. Once we cut up all the wood, we realized there was a substantial stump to get rid of. So we figured that we would burn up the stump. That was the first Wildwood Park Campfire! That is when we found that even by burning the stump constantly for 10 hours, we maybe burned through 3 inches of oak. So every year we had a campfire and every year we burned off another 3 inches or so. Finally the stump and roots were so dry, that they actually really caught fire and burned for the next few days. And that was the end of the stump. But we still hold the campfire each year to burn off the left-over wood and brush. We are currently working on the June 2012 derecho that passed through Fort Wayne. Boy did we get a lot of limbs, trees and brush!*

Rain date: October 25, 2015. If it is only threatening to rain, we will go forward on October 24.



## Is there Crime in our Neighborhood?

We've reiterated how important it is to keep your car or truck locked, if it is parked outside, and especially to remove anything from view within the vehicle, where a thief might find it valuable. (Sometimes this is simply not possible.) So how does our neighborhood stack up against other neighborhoods? Thefts from vehicles are a common problem in almost any neighborhood in town. To get some idea about what is happening in all neighborhoods (including ours), take a look at the Journal Gazette in the Sunday paper (Metro section). There they have crime reports summarized, dividing the City into Sectors. Wildwood Park is in a rather large Sector – Sector 34 (the Journal Gazette publishes a map showing where all the Sectors are located.) The crime reports are broken down by Sectors, and then explain the type of crime and the location. The location is limited to the block in which the crime occurred, and not the specific street address.

It is amazing how many of these crimes are thefts from vehicles or burglaries. Many of these thefts are grab-and-snatch thefts, including breaking out a window, grabbing what is in sight, and then fleeing.

Please report all crimes to the police. Use 9-1-1 if you need to. Looking at the Crime Reports in the Journal Gazette will at least give you some sense of how widespread this theft problem is.

If you would like to see the crime reports you may do so by going to [www.jgdata.net/fwcrime](http://www.jgdata.net/fwcrime).



### Reminders from FWPD, FWFD



The Fort Wayne Police Department says that crime is down 13% this year in the southwest quadrant (that includes Wildwood Park). Let's keep the good work going on reducing thefts from vehicles and from your homes – keep all doors locked and remove anything from plain view in your car that might be of interest to a robber.

Fort Wayne Fire Department announces that free smoke detectors will be available – there's no test for qualifying income: anyone can request the free smoke detectors. Call 427-1479. The Fort Wayne Fire Department will install the smoke detectors in your house.

They also remind us that with fall coming, there is no open burning allowed, with certain narrow exceptions. You can have a campfire (maximum 3 foot diameter) that burns only dry wood, no leaves, no trash. It is ok to have a wood burning fire pit or Chiminea. Only dry wood should be burned in the Chiminea. A fire pit should be at least 25 feet from a structure; a Chiminea should be at least 15 feet away from a structure.

If someone is open burning call 9-1-1. The fire department will go out and look. Even a fire pit that complies with the set-back requirements can create a smoke nuisance. The fire department will respond to a smoke nuisance (they will not try to put out the fire if it is merely someone complaining about the smell of smoke, if it is not one of these smokey nuisances). If it is illegal open burning or a smoke nuisance they can (and probably will) extinguish the fire using lots of water or foam. The remaining mess is yours to clean up. They can also fine you \$100 for improper open burning.

So let's be cautious about campfires, fire pits and Chimineas. (By the way, when your Association sponsors the Fall Campfire, we get a special open-burning permit. Our "Campfire" is more than 3 feet in diameter so it is really a bonfire. But we always have the fire at least 25 feet away from any structure, and we always have a hose available to take care of any fire hazards.)

## What's happening with grass, weeds, and City regulations?

Neighborhood Code anticipates that they will stop posting weed ordinance violations on about October 16, and intend to start working on the leaf pick-up program on October 19. Please remember that leaves should not be burned. If you must dispose of them, rake them to the street (the City wants to see them on the grass next to the street, and for the first leaf pick up that is probably the best idea). Wildwood Park is in the central part of the City (the City is divided into 3 sections: North, Central, and South). Our first leaf pick up begins October 19, 2015. The problem is there may not be very many leaves on the ground by then. So many of Wildwood Park's leaves will accumulate until the second pick up (the collection schedule ends December 4, so we are looking at sometime in mid-November for the second leaf pick-up).



The best solution is to compost your leaves. A nice compost pile with alternating layers of leaves and grass clippings, sweetened with some wood ash, and sprinkled with soil to hasten the little beasties' munching on the grass/leaves, will give you a nice odor-free mound of compost. This is the "slow" compost recipe. A similar "fast" recipe requires that the mound be chopped and turned – and perhaps watered slightly to promote fast composting.

If you decide to put your leaves in biodegradable bags please call 3-1-1 for a special pick-up. They will come within 2 days after you call.

Another question about leaves, grass, and weeds is the concept of "community gardens." Fort Wayne has some lands that are designated as "community gardens," but it has become increasingly difficult for the City to know whether they should come in to mow down the weeds which violate the weed ordinance. The Zoning and Planning people will be looking into a new City ordinance concerning community gardens to address these problems. (Wildwood Park Community Association has thought about establishing a community garden in Barberry Park, but so far we cannot figure out how to get water to that site to allow gardeners to keep their plants alive and healthy.)



*(Only YOU can prevent dog poop)*

## Get Ready for the November Election



Municipal elections take place in off-years – and 2015 is such an “off year”. That means that there are no federal, state or county offices up for election. Just city offices. A Republican and a Democrat are vying for Fort Wayne Mayor. Tom Henry is the incumbent and seeks reelection (he is a Democrat). Mitch Harper is the challenger; he is a Republican. The position of Fort Wayne City Clerk is likewise being

contested – there is no incumbent, so both candidates are new to this position.

The legislative branch of City government is the Fort Wayne Common Council (generally referred to as City Council). City Council consists of nine members, three of whom are elected at-large. That means that everyone across the city gets to vote for the at-large members. This year there are seven candidates for the three positions; three Republicans, three Democrats and a Libertarian. Surprisingly there is only one incumbent seeking reelection (John Crawford – Republican).

The other six members of City Council are chosen from districts of approximately equal size (population). Wildwood Park is in the fifth district. Residents may vote only for the candidates within their District, in the election for this position. The incumbent for the fifth councilmanic district is Geoff Paddock (our neighbor on South Washington Road). He faces no opposition in the forth coming election, so it looks like we will see Geoff back at Council table after January 1.

This year there are no referenda or voter questions to be answered on the ballot. So for residents of Wildwood Park, choose your candidate for mayor, three candidates for council at-large, and your candidate for City Clerk. (Also, go ahead and vote for Geoff Paddock if you like. It doesn't hurt to let him know that we appreciate his commitment to represent us at the Council table.)

Our polling place is at the VFW Post at 2202 West Main Street. Of course, the entrance isn't on Main Street; it's on Leesburg Road. So you go towards town on West Jefferson, turn left on Main Street, then go to the fork in the road and hang a left onto Leesburg Road. The driveway to the VFW Post is maybe 100 yards from the intersection. Drive to the top of the hill; there is a building with a canopy in front. Park as close to the canopy as you care to, then walk to the far end of the building. The election (polling) place is at the very end of the building under the canopy. Bring your driver's license to prove who you are.

The polls open at 6:00 a.m. and close at 6:00 p.m. In this election you do not declare whether you are a Republican, Democrat or Libertarian.

If you need time to review your choices before you head for the voting booth, there will be sample ballots taped to the walls. This election is not that complicated, so it should not take much time to get in and get out. See you there!

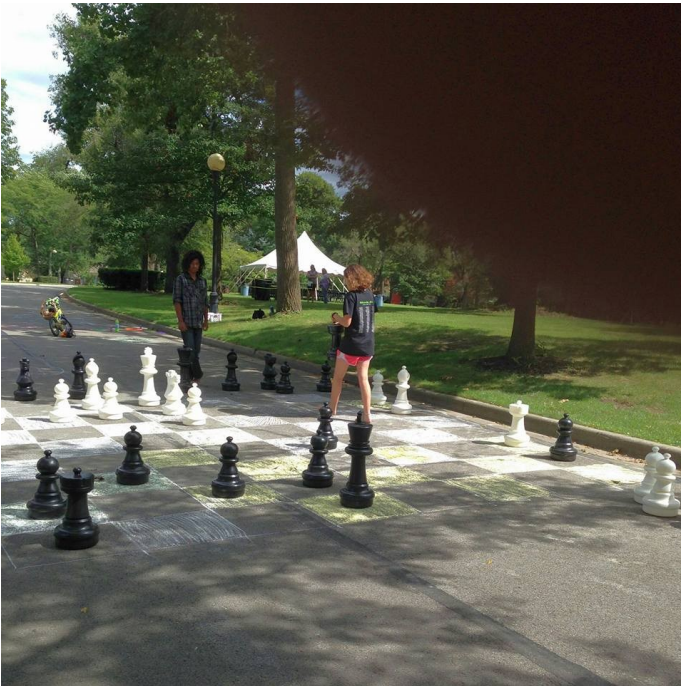
## Fabulous Picnic for 2015

If you were there, we don't have to tell you: it was a fantastic picnic. The always-clairvoyant Board of Directors knew that the weather on Saturday, September 12 would be great for a picnic. And so it was! Up went the street barricades by 2:00 p.m., and the activities began. Emily LaRue was chair of the Events Committee (events for kids and teenagers). There is no way that this picnic would have been a success without the many volunteers and donations that helped make it a reality. Chris Walda arranged for the bouncy house, tent and chairs (and permits for the adult beverages). Melissa Walda had the task of clean up, the most glamorous job of the afternoon. Linda Harmon (idea guru for the dog parade, giant chess pieces, and the pictures of the "wearable houses" which people put on their my-name-is tags); Sarah Kent (generous donation of kids' toys and activities); Isaac LaRue (fearless flyer delivery boy); Todd and Brigitte Martin (helped with the set up and tear down of the tent, table and chairs); Jordan and Leslie Corral (supervised the bouncy house); Michaela Weir (was our face painter extraordinaire). Thanks to Emily LaRue for setting up (and then judging) the highly competitive bike decoration competition.

But there were adult activities as well: thanks to Aaron Arnold (the beer guy); and Lou Henry (the ice guy), we had plenty of cold beverages. Grant Shipley helped with the customary Wildwood Park secret marinade grilled chicken, and other goodies. Yvonne Stam prepared the Eastern North Carolina pulled pork, cole slaw, and vinegar sauce. She seems to have an affinity for that part of the country.

The sun was going down, the tables were being stacked and still folks were hanging out at the Park at the Point, talking, sharing stories, enjoying our neighborhood. That's why we have the picnic.

It's never too late to volunteer to be part of the 2016 Wildwood Park Picnic. The sooner we can



assemble a Picnic Committee the sooner we can make decisions concerning planning (when do you want the picnic? Where should it be? Should we try to have an annual meeting of members at the same time as the picnic?); arranging for activities and events (in the past we have had horse-drawn carriages, Mark's Ark mini-zoo of petting animals; cherry picker rides for those who want to see what Wildwood Park looks like from way up there; wiffle ball, etc.). We know that some of the helpers and volunteers from this year would be excellent on the steering committee for next year. But even if you did not volunteer this year, please let us know if you want to be active on next year's committee. Contact any officer or director. Or just leave an e-mail with [grant.shipley@gmail.com](mailto:grant.shipley@gmail.com); he will see to it that your statement of interest is shared with next year's Board of Directors.

[And a special thanks from the Board of Directors to everyone who made this picnic a reality. There was a lot of work that went into this. A newsletter article; two flyers; then all the set up and planning. The chess-board-in-the-street took a while to create; it was huge and a lot of fun!]

## Council Candidates forum is coming October 2

A candidate forum featuring all of the seven at-large candidates for Fort Wayne City Council will take place Friday October 2 at the Holiday Inn on Coliseum across from the Memorial Coliseum on Paul Shaffer Drive.

This forum will concentrate on quality of life issues in Fort Wayne, including discussion on public transportation, River Front Development, Healthy Communities and Complete Streets.

Each candidate will be given an opportunity to share 2 minutes their ideology and a moderator will facilitate the remainder of the event.

Sponsoring groups include The League of Women Voters, The Fifth Freedom Network, AARP, and The League (formerly The League for the Blind and Disabled).

The Northeast Indiana Disability Advocacy Coalition, which includes 17 disability groups, has endorsed the event.

Doors will open at 5:30 p.m. and the forum will begin promptly at 6 p.m. with prearranged questions agreed upon by all sponsoring groups.

The event will also offer voter registration information, voting rights information and absentee ballot information at the registration table.

An ASL Interpreter for the Deaf and CART (real time captioning) for people with Hearing Loss will be on hand and programs will have large print versions to assist those with vision impairments.

For more information contact:

Sheri Caveda at Fifth Freedom, (260) 426-8789  
Nancy McCammon-Hansen, League of Women Voters,  
(260) 494-8209.



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### *October's Trivia Corner*

*October was the 8th month of the  
Roman Calendar (Octo = eighth).  
But then the Romans added  
January and February, so now it is  
the 10th month.*