



Newsletter – March 26th, 2003

WSGSPC Bi-Annual Organizational Meeting April 9th

Please be sure to come to the biannual re-organizational meeting of our coalition will take place Wednesday April 9th at 7:30 PM at the Naperville Township Building, 139 Water St. on Naperville's beautiful Riverwalk.

This April edition of the newsletter is coming to you a bit earlier than it often does so that members have plenty of time to prepare for this important meeting. When we created the structure of our board in August 2001 we decided to elect members to two-year terms expiring April 30, 2003. This coincides with our calendar year when membership dues are collected. It is also the start of a new growing season at the garden plots. There are openings for new board members, and all current board members must also remain in good standing by paying membership dues, attending the meeting, or talking with another board member about continuing to serve. During the meeting we will be electing a President, Vice-President, Treasurer, and Secretary as well as talking about possible strategy changes regarding our mission. Any member may nominate any member for any of these positions. Please do not worry, we expect changes to be minimal and **guarantee** that we will continue as an ongoing force dedicated to protecting the West St. properties.

Time to Renew your Membership!

Our membership period runs from May 1st until April 30th. So it's time to renew! Your membership is important to our mission in many many ways. Dues are \$10 (or a different amount of your choosing, less or more). Please bring them to the meeting, give them to any board member, or mail them to WSGSPC, P.O. Box 876, Naperville, IL 60566-0876.

A special invitation to previous members

This newsletter is going to current and previous members. So if you received this one, but haven't been receiving previous ones, we don't currently have you aboard. You are invited to rejoin. Simple send us your dues (see previous paragraph) and update us on any contact information that you wish us to have.

WSCSC Election Note By Fred Turek

I plan to step down from my current president position, run for vice president, and nominate George Bennett for president. (any member can nominate any member)

Starting about our second year, my idea was to be a less prominent version of a president, and exert a steadying hand in few areas, while George provided a lot of leadership to get things done. And the "steadying hand" being keeping the meetings moving, frugal spending habits, and making sure that our goals (for events, meetings etc.) are realistic so that we can recognize success when we see it.

George has been the largest driving force for the things that we get done. I decided that it would be correct for me to step down, and but intend to still continue to do everything that I've been doing (including the above) from the peanut gallery or wherever.

4th Annual Earth Day Event- April 26th

Mark your calendars for Saturday April 26th. From 9AM-Noon the Coalition will hold the 4th Annual spring Earth Day event at the Naperville Community Garden Plots. The event will take place one week later than it has in the past to avoid conflict with Easter. The very first organized activity ever conducted by the West St. Preservation Coalition was in honor of Earth Day 2000 when we exhibited at Naperville City Hall in order to bring attention to the value of protecting the West St. properties. Since that time we have moved our event to the garden plots and expanded it to include our springtime Adopt-a-Highway cleanup of the garden plots and the West St. parkway area. Refreshments, as always, will be served and the community will be invited. There is always good conversation to be had, and almost always, excellent weather. We anticipate that there will be a large number of gardeners out on the 26th and this is certainly an advantage. Stop by and enjoy a pleasant spring morning with friends and neighbors.

Vote April 1st!

From the standpoint of our mission, Warren Gill, Darlene Senger, and Mary Ellingson deserve your vote April 1st

based on their proven record of protecting the garden plots and their likely willingness to do it again. It cannot be said enough that the West St. properties remain undeveloped because of a razor thin 5-4 City Council vote. At the time Mary Ellingson voted to protect the garden plots, making her the ONLY incumbent running for re-election who voted on our side. Darlene Senger was not serving on the council at that time, but since emerging from the Homeowners Confederation as a powerful force opposing unwise development, she has repeatedly demonstrated her support of the WSGSPC. Warren Gill, running for the Park Board, is a Board Member of our Coalition. The importance of electing him cannot be overemphasized. Warren is running against 6 other candidates for two open seats, and because none of those individuals is well enough known to the WSGSPC to garner an endorsement we encourage a vote only for Warren Gill. Under voting, also known as bullet voting, does not spoil your ballot. It should be remembered that incumbent Mary Wright voted in July of 1999 to begin to develop the garden plots, therefore making it impossible to endorse her for re-election.

Please vote April 1st or by absentee ballot beforehand if you will be out of town. You can vote in person absentee ballots during business hours at either the Naperville or Lisle Township offices until Friday March 28th, as well as at Naperville's City Hall. Recent global events have understandably focused attention elsewhere, and turnout in this election may be at record low levels, so each individual vote will be of great importance in deciding the outcome. Call a friend and ask them to vote as well.

Donations needed for renovation of booth

One of our most important summertime projects is our sponsorship of the "Plant a Row for the Hungry" booth at the garden plots. The collection of food has taken place with the help of the Naperville Community Gardeners (formally known as the Naperville Gardeners Club). The booth was originally built in July of 2000 by Dan and Teddy Bennett, George Bennett, and Nan Kroll. It has been a success, but unfortunately a combination of weather and vandalism has begun to take its toll. New signs, donated in the past by Chris Wilkinson and Thomas O'Hale, are again needed. A second level should be added to prevent donated produce from rotting during in the intense summer heat. Membership dues given the size of our coalition may not be sufficient to cover expensive projects such as booth renovation. Donations made for this purpose will be used for this purpose. All generosity is appreciated and will be acknowledged.

WSGSPC rents garden plots

Once again the Coalition will not only sponsor the Plant a Row for the Hungry program, but will also donate fresh vegetables to the cause. We have two plots for 2003 that are located just south and west of the booth. George Bennett is once again our designated green thumb, but there is plenty of room in the plots if you have seeds to plant. Also there is plenty to be done especially in June

and July. This means that anyone who would like to help with this gardening on a limited basis should call George at 357-0289. Gardening is hard work, but being outside, under the sun, and accomplishing something worthwhile is very rewarding and great exercise as well!

Garden Plots for Rent

The Park District is still in the process of renting garden plots. Reasonable locations for this summer are still available for the cost of \$22. Renting is easy, simply go to the District's administrative building at 320 West Jackson and they will take care of the rest.

More Park District news

Last year we reported in this newsletter on the comprehensive attitude and interest survey conducted by the park district. We are pleased that the Executive Director Ken Brissa seems to be using the survey in a positive way that will enhance recreational options while not threatening the garden plots or Sportsman's Park. There are still a large number of "wish list" projects the district is considering such as the construction of a third golf course near Royce Rd. These projects generally are dependent upon successful bond issues and the approval of public opinion. One of the more controversial proposals would be a skate park facility at Centennial Beach. This would be opposed by the Riverwalk Commission and by Park Board candidate Warren Gill. A successful skate park will open for its third year on 95th St. at Frontier Park this spring.

One of the largest projects which has been approved is \$1.5 million in golf course improvements at Springbrook and Naperbrook. The work includes installation of a computer controlled irrigation system at Springbrook requiring the relocation of two bridges and a pond. At Naperbrook plans are to upgrade the computer controls for the pump house and irrigation system.

Near the main Burlington train station the park district is spending \$85,000 to build a concrete plaza with masonry walls and benches with new lighting to showcase the World War I memorial statue "Spirit of the Doughboy". A ceremony to honor the completion of this work and the return of the Doughboy statue is scheduled for Memorial Day. The statue has been restored thanks to the donations of hundreds of Napervilleans.

Extensive work also continues in the development of the 111th St. Park and Frontier Park. These two parks will serve the newest residents of Naperville as homes spring up on the last undeveloped areas of the city. Frontier Park, already extensively used, will gain parking. 111th St. Park will be developed with space for in-line hockey and skating, horseshoe pits and shuffleboard courts, and storage buildings for the District. A new park in the Country Lakes area is also becoming a reality.

The WSGSPC will continue to monitor the park district closely and will keep members informed when

breaking news affects our mission. Our park district grows with the city, and serving the needs of the fourth largest community in Illinois is not a trivial undertaking.

Brown is Beautiful-By Wendy Mouche

(Board member and naturalist Wendy Mouche wrote the following originally for the March 2001 newsletter. Spring is coming, but in the meantime we should all enjoy the beauty of the late winter wetlands, especially those adjacent to the garden plots).

I spy with my little eye something colored brown. Play the "I spy brown" game in the wetland because it is a sure bet that you'll win. Last years vegetation has faded gloriously into more shades of brown than paint colors at Sears. There are great hummocks of dried, dusty goldenrod. Last September they had brilliant seven-foot tall yellow tops on green stalks. Now the stalks, toppled by winter winds, snow, and sleet point in all compass directions. Brilliant stars in the fall the 2-foot tall heath asters are now a desiccated light brown. Woods frame the wetland's edges. Like the grasses and flowers the trees remain brown with darkly etched trunks and branches. There are shaggy, rusty river birches; deeply furrowed bark of the wise, old swamp white oak; and shiny, scaly black cherry. This place, the woodlands, wetlands, and prairie initially looks abandoned, like a garden in need of pruning. Nature forgoes pruning here, and reuses all material to rebuild instead.

This morning I looked forward to hearing a spring concert from all the migrating birds returning to their northern homes. But the band leader must have been on vacation because there was only chaos and cacophony. No two species of birds sing the same verse. Some of these songsters consider this spot their Motel 6, like the cranes and the egrets who visit only briefly. Others definitely set up house like the Redwing blackbird. From as far away as South America, migrants travel the bird flyways, generally following rivers and wetlands to their summer houses. The acrobatic Redwing is slightly less than the size of a robin, and the males are jet black with neon red wing patches (epaulets). The females blend perfectly with the prairie wetland browns. As the morning warms, the males go to work and compete for territory, rocketing up, down, and sideways through the tall brown grasses. Redwings emit the most pleasant of screams. They are like tiny sirens. In contrast, robins are stick-legged stalkers of worms, so many Inspector generals crisscrossing suburban lawns. Robins signify spring to us. Redwing blackbirds are harbingers of spring too---only in wetlands. This fine carpet of woven browns, this habitat about to green into spring, is now their beautiful Naperville home. Brown is beautiful.

Statements by Warren Gill and Darlene Senger

(The following statements were published in the February newsletter, but with the election looming we think it is important to take one more detailed look at two of our three strongly recommended candidates.)

Warren Gill

The Jan 15th issue of the "Naperville Sun" wrote of "Warren Gill, who lives near Knoch Park, just south of downtown, frequently addresses the Park Board and the City Council during the public comment portion of their meetings. He has urged the board to keep the West St. garden plots as open land, and suggested the city combine a hotel-convention center project with an Olympic-style Aquatic facility." Warren is a strong supporter of biking and walking trails similar to the one that will be built at Springbrook Prairie. He believes the Riverwalk is a Naperville "jewel" and should be protected and supported. Warren vigorously opposed the 1999 failed Park District Referendum as part of Jack Sauntry's "Citizens Against Naperville Increasing Taxes". More than 80% of voters sided with Warren.

After a career in retail management and inventory control auditing, Warren's commitment to serve continues as a substitute teacher in District 204. He always tries to make education an "enjoyable experience", and as such he supports groups which aid disadvantaged children so they too can enjoy quality school. Although Warren takes great pride in his participation at Park District and City meetings, he is running so his voice will make a greater difference. As a candidate dedicated to his family and the recreational needs of Naperville families, Warren believes the mission of the park district is to provide the highest quality recreation in an efficient manner.

Darlene Senger

(Darlene has been called by WSGSPC members Wayne and Mary Lou Cowlshaw, "Intelligent, enthusiastic, frugal, a winning combination for Naperville." The following is Darlene Senger's position regarding the West St. properties.

"Quite simply, as we head into build out, open space will be our most valuable asset. We have to recognize the value of this asset both in today's terms and tomorrow. My daughter uses Van Oven. I am happy to have such a facility near by. I want to see daughters in the next generation have this opportunity. The garden plots, the soccer field, and the Sportsman's Club also fall into this category. The next generation of Napervillians should have the same opportunities as this generation."

"If we do not identify and plan for our future needs today, we will feel pressure to give up our open space. This does not need to happen. We need leaders today that are not exclusively developer and market driven. We need leaders that can recognize the future value of open spaces and will work to protect them. I hope you chose me (April 1st). I am dedicated to protecting what we have.

Greenspace Coalition Information

Mission Statement *The West Street Green Space Preservation Coalition resolves to defend the existing green space west of and adjoining West Street against incompatible development and encourage and promote programs and amenities that foster conservation, honor historical tradition and preserve the area for passive use.*

More on Our Mission Our focus is to not lose any greenspace ground on the 4 properties on west side of West Street. (Garden Plots, Sportsman's Park, Von-Oven Scout Camp, Soccer Fields/Forest on Oswego. Support current uses that keep it green, and no more construction, lights, pavement or new high intensity uses. No reduction in trees, and additional uses should utilize the green or natural values of the properties.

Contact Information

See info in letterhead
Our web site is: www.greenspace.koolhost.com

Board of Directors

Dan Bennett	George Bennett 357-0289
Jim Cavanaugh	Elaine Fisher
Nan Kroll	Chris Wilkinson
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Newsletter Content: George Bennett, Fred Turek, Wendy Mouche & Others

Newsletter Editor: Fred Turek

Public Relations: Dan Bennett

Special Consultant: Teresa Ryan

Webmaster: Elaine Fisher

Membership

Membership is open to all individuals, families and organizations who would like to support our mission (see mission statement). Dues are \$10 or your choice of a different amount (lower or higher) A membership application is available to facilitate joining. *The WSGSC is always careful to note that its viewpoints on individual topics do not necessarily reflect those of individual members and member organizations.*