

Browncroft Crier

NEWSLETTER OF THE BROWNCROFT NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

SINCE 1973 - Volume #208

P.O. Box 10127, Rochester, New York 14610
<http://browncroftna.org>

Winter/Spring 2023

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Cassy Petsos

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Photo of Windemere Rd Courtesy of Hank Shaw

Winter/Spring General Membership Meeting

**Tuesday,
March 21st,
7:00 p.m.**

at the

**Ark of Jesus Church
1000 N. Winton Road**

With Guest Speaker Dr. Shaun Nelms, Director of the Center for Urban Education Success of the University of Rochester's Warner School of Education, and the Superintendent of the University of Rochester-East Educational Partnership.

Whether the snow is flying or spring has sprung, please come out and **join your neighbors** for an interesting talk on urban education leadership, and an evening of social gathering with refreshments.

Additionally, BNA will conduct a New Socks Drive that evening to donate to a local homeless shelter. Please take this opportunity to bring a donation of socks. Thank You.

BNA ULTIMATE GARAGE SALE RETURNS MAY 6TH AND 7TH

BNA's Ultimate Garage Sale (our 22nd) returns on Saturday and Sunday, May 6th and 7th, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Advertisements will appear on-line and in the Democrat & Chronicle the week before the sale and on Craigs list

two weeks before the sale. Signs will be set up at major intersections bordering the sale area. We request that each household planning to participate in the Garage Sale observe the following guidelines. In this way,

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Garage Sale

continued from page 1

we can assure another successful sale, and maintain the legendary quality that keeps buyers coming back.

REGISTRATION FEE IS STILL ONLY \$5.00 per household, due by April 29. This fee covers publicity, insurance, ads, balloons, map, port-a-johns, and website listing of individual sales. Registration forms are available at <http://browncroftna.org/Garage%2BSale>. Please complete the application form and send it to BNA Garage Sale Registration, PO Box 10127, Rochester, NY 14610, marking the attached map with your street address and an "X" at the approximate location. The map will aid buyers looking for streets to visit.

Registered participants wishing to have their items for sale published on the BNA website should e-mail their list of 40 words or less to the address noted on the registration form (preferred), or submit a written description on the back of the registration form. BNA Webmaster, Bob Genthner, will post the types of items participating residents are selling at their garage sale. Our neighborhood sale was the first to be on the Internet! For those who want to also be open on Friday, this will not be posted on the internet, in print media or our website address, which will list only May 6 and 7.

If you have questions, or if you would like to volunteer, please call BNA President, Frank Fields. Volunteers are needed to put up and take down the "BNA Garage Sale" signs at the intersections, interface with School #46 and pos-

From the President.....

Well, we're most of the way through a very mild winter and spring will be here before you know it. I hope everyone is staying happy and healthy.

The BNA dues-paying membership is up to 177 households and our finances are in great shape thanks in large part to the efforts of our Treasurer John McQueen. If you haven't yet renewed your membership, please let John know.

This year our Browncroft Neighborhood Garage Sale will be returning in May for the first time since the Covid pandemic and a great turnout is expected. This has always been a marvelous opportunity to showcase our beautiful neighborhood and to empty out our garages, basements, and attics! We need volunteers to help coordinate the Garage Sale and all who are interested can contact me directly and we'll get you involved. Many thanks to Sharon Bloemendaal, Bob

sibly the City of Rochester Parks Department to place a Porta-John on their property, as well as set up the contract with the Porta-John Company, Sara Castro will be compiling the lists of sale items for the website. Bob Genthner will be posting on social media. Sharon Bloemendaal, who began the first BNA garage sale in 1981, is again handling publicity. Sharon notes "The sale is as busy as the Corn Hill Arts Festival, only we have pre-owned treasures! Where else can you find more than 200 garage sales within a square mile? People plan trips from hundreds of miles away to coincide with this event."

Frank Fields

Genthner, and Dave Kaiser for all the years they helped to spearhead the sale.

There will be a General Meeting of the BNA in March and we hope to have a special speaker from the Center for Urban Education Success at the University of Rochester who has worked closely with the team implementing the program at East High School. More details are in this newsletter.

Welcome to Sam Walters Sayre and Jane Way who recently volunteered to represent Ramsey Park and Elm Drive on the BNA Board as street representatives.

Finally, there is also an article from Pat Fields that is part of the BNA Aging in Place initiative, which focuses on Disaster Preparedness for Seniors.

See you in the neighborhood!

Frank

Don't forget - Return the application insert by April 29 if you want your sale to be included on the list and in the map.

HOUSES PARTICIPATING IN THE SALE: In keeping with tradition, we request that each participating home display 3-4 colored balloons that should be inflated and tied to a stick in front of the house. This will identify the residence as an official BNA Garage Sale participant. Volunteers will hand out balloons and a map to each registered participant by May 6th. A list of

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Garage Sale

continued from page 2

participants and items for sale can be printed from the BNA website: www.browncroftna.org.

PARKING: There will be MANY cars in the area on Saturday and Sunday, and we must follow City parking regulations so that we don't hinder any potential emergency vehicles in the area. Vehicles must be parked on the correct side of the street as indicated on the signs on the lamp poles and on the corner poles at intersections. Parking on front lawns is a parking violation, as well as being an eyesore. If you anticipate needing to get out of your driveway we suggest you place several orange cones at the end of your driveway.

HOURS: The Garage Sale will be from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. each day. PLEASE DO NOT start selling items prior to the Official Start Time, as early sales encourage the public to descend upon the neighborhood and other garage sale participants before all is ready. Additionally, this would be an imposition on the neighborhood quiet for neighbors not having garage sales.

Dealers in particular will start pushing you to let them start buying things, often as early as 7:00 a.m. Please resist and ask them to return at 8:45 or 9:00 a.m., as the sale is advertised in the newspapers and on-line as starting at 9:00 a.m.

RAIN/WEATHER: Sale dates will be in effect rain or shine. Due to the number of arrangements that need to be in place, there will be NO rain date. It is up to each par-

WHEN DO YOU NEED A PERMIT FROM THE CITY?

Many people do not know that the city of Rochester, like other municipalities, requires that a property owner obtains a permit before making major repairs or changes to their house or building.

Many contractors do not advise the homeowner of this upfront. Given that failure to obtain a permit can lead to unnecessary fines, costs and delays in a project, and given that we have many newer neighbors, the BNA Board felt the Crier should reprint and update this article.

The following is a partial list covering the most common permits:

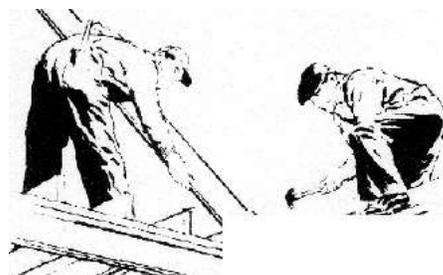
Additions and alterations, antennas, fences, plumbing replacement, tents and canopies, awnings, pools, siding, windows and doors (increasing and decreasing size or adding and removing), decks, ramps, demolitions, new electrical work outside and inside, roofs, garages and carports, sheds, vehicle storage, water and sewer lines, new installation of heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems not in like-kind replacement and porch alterations involving structural elements.

For a complete list of work needing a permit, work not need-

ing a permit and charts detailing the cost of the permits, which can be dependent on specific work and the total cost of the project, go to cityofrochester.gov/permit/.

participant to decide whether to hold his/her sale in the event of adverse weather.

BE CONSIDERATE of your neighbors who are not having garage sales and encourage visitors to do the same.



ing a permit and charts detailing the cost of the permits, which can be dependent on specific work and the total cost of the project, go to cityofrochester.gov/permit/.

Note: There is a paragraph at the bottom of the permit page setting forth that a property which is located in a Preservation District or that is a designated building of historic value, may require a Certificate of Appropriateness. Properties in the Browncroft Historic District are in that category.

The permit office is located in Room 121B, City Hall, 30 Church Street.

The office can be reached by phone at 428-6526.

Also, remember to check the page on the site labeled "work not requiring a permit". There is overlapping with the lists so you need to read the details, which in some cases recite percentages of what is being repaired or replaced.

Holly Petsos

**Garage Sale
Registration Fee
of \$5.00 and list
of items are due
by April 29th to
be posted.**

MY DOOR RESTORATION PROJECT

by Cara Paul

Before moving to Rochester in late 2017, I came to visit and drove by a house for sale on Elm Drive. It was October and the orange and yellow tree-lined street within walking distance of restaurants seemed idyllic.

I went back to New Mexico, where we were waiting for our house to sell, and announced to my husband that I wanted to live on either Elm or Elmcroft. I was told that I can't limit our search to two streets but when the Spring 2018 market started and a house came up on Elmcroft, I called our realtor immediately. The adorable house had everything on our wish list, plus some, and we were incredibly lucky that the sellers accepted our offer.

Right off the bat, we knew that we would need to save the front door – it's a beautiful Craftsman-style wood door, but was badly weathered and the slats had separated, letting in cold air. Other priorities kept pushing it down the list of projects but it was nagging at me that if we waited much longer, we might not be able to save it.

A search of local woodworkers brought up Guy DiMatteo, a local artisan who had pictures of beautiful doors and furniture from around town – both business and residential. I contacted him via email with pictures of our door and requested a quote. He got back to me quickly, with a quote and an explanation of his process which all seemed reasonable so we decided to move forward.

Guy works with a contractor who came to our house to



remove the door, secure the open doorway and deliver the door to his workshop. There was some back and forth via email as Guy worked through the refinishing process where he sent us pictures of the door as it was stripped and repaired. He asked if we wanted to fix some sagging while being very up front about cost and not adding pressure to do any more work than our budget allowed. He also requested pictures of our house so he could find a good color match for the stain. The door took about a week to complete, at which point the contractor brought it back and re-installed it.

During this process, we learned that the door is solid mahogany which would have cost us a lot more to replace; and that's assuming we would even be able to find something from the same time period. We feel so fortunate that we were able to save the original door to our 1928 home and maintain the character that brought us to this neighborhood in the first place.

If you'd like to see Guy's work, please visit his Website at <http://artisanfinishing.com/> or he can be found on Facebook at "Artisan Finishing Services".

BNA BOARD APPOINTS TWO NEW STREET REPS

Sam Walters, who resides at 50 Ramsey Park, has accepted the Street Representative position for Ramsey Park. Sam is replacing Jim Davis, whose house she and her husband purchased from Jim when he moved to Oregon last year. Sam has dived right in to her duties as a member of the Board, arranging for our guest speaker, Dr. Nelms, for the March meeting.

Jane Way, who resides at 136 Elm Drive, has lived in the neighborhood for 43 years with her husband Paul. She feels strongly about preserving the neighborhood's character.

BNA Street Representatives are members of the Board of Directors. There is one for every street, and in some cases, an alternate to attend in their place to vote on matters before the Board if they are not able to attend. Currently, a Street Rep is needed for Croydon Road.

Congratulations and thank you, Sam and Jane!

Spring Clean-up

**Browncroft Rose Garden
Saturday, April 29th
10:00 a.m.**

(Rain date - May 13th)

Many Volunteers Needed

Please come and bring your tools: pruners, loppers. Also handy are weeders and rake. No experience needed, just you!



EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS FOR SENIORS

Our neighborhood has made the effort to help people to age in place. A key premise of promoting aging in place is that neighbors can enhance or protect the health and safety of older adults living nearby. If you are an elder in Browncroft, do you have neighbors with whom you have a relationship and feel comfortable calling upon in an emergency? Is there a neighbor who has a house key and could access your home to provide you with assistance? Have you had a conversation with your family and discussed options for care during an emergency/disaster?

Emergencies and disasters can strike quickly and without warning and can force evacuation from your neighborhood or require confinement in your home. What would you do if your basic services—water, gas, electricity, or communications—were cut off? What if your family was unable to reach you to help?

As an elder living independently it is important to understand and assess your personal risk profile and to prepare for an emergency. Are you physically impaired? Are you visually or hearing impaired? Are you without family in town? Are you dependent on others to provide you with food or medications? What would happen if you could not go to an evacuation center? Are you prepared to make it through another ice storm or blizzard?

When an emergency happens, you may have to decide what to do very quickly. By planning ahead and understanding the potential risks involved, it will be easier to make the right decisions when the

worst happens.

Hopefully it will never be needed, but an emergency preparedness kit is something that is easily assembled and can provide much of what is necessary to survive in an emergency. This kit should be checked at least every six months or whenever an emergency is most likely to occur. In our area, that is winter. Your kit can be stored in a travel bag if evacuation is needed, or items can be placed in large plastic bins to keep in the house for use during an emergency. The following checklist is provided to give you an idea of where to begin.

Emergency Kit Checklist

Non-perishable food (3-day supply for evacuation, 2-week supply for staying at home)

Bottled water, one gallon per person per day (3-day supply for evacuation, 2-week supply for staying at home)

Medications (minimum 7 days supply, but a 30 day supply would be safer) and a printed list of all your medications, along with the name/number of your doctor.

Medical ID bracelet

Cell phone and charger

Spare eyeglasses/ contact lenses

Hearing aids and batteries or charger

Cash (ATMs may not be available)

Flashlight with extra batteries and bulbs

Candles, waterproof matches or

lighter

Spare keys to house and car

Swiss army knife and a can opener or Leatherman tool

Battery powered radio, batteries

First aid kit

Sanitation needs: Toiletries, incontinence supplies, toilet paper, small garbage bags

Spare clothing

Blankets (and pillow if evacuating)

Pet food, leash, or carrier. Pet medications. Copy of pet vaccinations.

Family and friend's emergency contact list (names, addresses and phone numbers)

Copies of personal documents (driver's license, insurance information, deed or lease to home, birth certificates, etc.) stored on a cell phone or flash drive.

A whistle to attract attention of emergency personnel if you are unable to get to the door.

Playing cards, books or magazines to help pass the time.

Patricia A. Federico-Fields,
Nurse Practitioner, URM



RG&E SMART METER ROLL-OUT

Representative, Stephanie Rankin, from RG&E met with neighborhood leaders in a Zoom meeting in December to provide some insight into the wireless “smart” meter installation that will begin in Monroe County April 2023 and continue through December 2025, according to their deployment map. There is no more detailed information as to when the installations will begin in the Browncroft area but soon customers will be able to type in their address on RG&E’s web site to find out the expected date of installation in their neighborhood.

Smart meters will enable RG&E to read the meters without entering a house or building, or standing in front of the meter to record its readings. They assure that this method will decrease the number of on site visits and estimated meter readings; and along with them comes increased accuracy and access for customers to their RG&E account online, with usage information and outage notices. RG&E will also be able to know when there is an outage at a site.

How will this smart system work? Instead of a human reader there will be mesh network modulators spaced around an area on RG&E poles that the meters will connect to wirelessly. These will be at eye level to be accessible to RG&E maintenance workers for servicing without bringing ladders or bucket lifts onto a property. The following is information provided by RG&E tech staff:

“Smart meters communicate via a “mesh network” architecture. This means that individual meters communicate with and through

other nearby meters before the data reaches a collector unit, which aggregates the incoming data from hundreds of meters and forwards that data to the utility.

This mesh architecture enables the network to be self-healing, so that when something changes in the network conditions, individual meters can automatically find alternative routes in the mesh network to route consumption data, or a power outage alert message, back to the collector and ensure reliability of the network. The meter transmissions are very low power (roughly 1 watt or less) and occur for very short durations – fractions of a second. The mesh network is designed so that the meters in a network cell communicate at different times when they’re receiving or sending data.”

Notice by a post card mailing of the installation will be given a few weeks before the work. Installation only takes a few minutes and the homeowner does not need to be present, unless the meter is located inside the house. A door hanger will be left on the door to let the homeowner know the smart meter has been successfully installed. If at the time they are changing the meters and the meter is not outside and the homeowner is not at home to give access to the meter, contact information will be left to schedule a time that an RG&E crew member can come in and upgrade the meter. Upon receiving the post card the customer can also contact RG&E and schedule the inside visit for the upgrade, too. For those who do not want the smart meter installed, there will be an opt out monthly fee of \$11.56.

BEFORE YOU DO THE WORK CHECK INTO ...

NYS Income Tax Credits for Historic District Homeowners

Newer residents living in the Browncroft Historic District, which is situated from Merchants Rd., southerly to Blossom Road, who are planning to have work done on their home this season, may not know that they may be eligible for the Historic Homeownership Rehabilitation Credit. This is a tax credit through the Division of Historic Preservation (SHPO) of the NY State Department of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation.

The Division staff can be reached at 1-518-237-8643 to answer questions about the eligibility of your property and the type of work to be done. Ask to speak to the staff person who handles Monroe County as the state is divided into zones. The staff is very helpful at facilitating the process and getting you signed up.

Income tax credits are money back in your pocket for the amount that qualifies.

Facts to know that will help you get started.

1. The applicant must own and

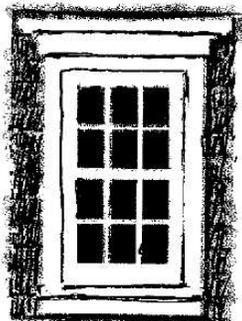
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RG&E will be giving informational meetings to neighborhoods to answer questions and show the meters that will be installed. Browncroft and North Winton Village have been contacted to schedule a joint meeting.

For more information go to <https://www.rge.com/smartenergy/innovation/smartmeters>.

KEEP THOSE ORIGINAL WINDOWS

Windows contribute the most to a house's façade. They define the architectural style and are the elements that create the character and charm on an older home that modern window replacements cannot compete with—no matter how sensitively designed to mimic historic windows.



6 over 6 panes sash double hung

The "Old House Journal" magazine says it well in their online article "3 Ways to Make Your Windows Last Another Hundred Years" -- "*When the windows of a historic home are altered or removed, the entire story of the house is rewritten. Despite what the window replacement industry says, the*



triple window

home value decreases as well. Historic windows are irreplaceable, but they can still have the same performance of modern windows.

Most historic windows come with hand-made, old-growth wood frames. Old growth wood is more pest- and decay-resistant than modern wood.

Old-growth wood has ten times the rings per inch new-growth wood does. Because of this density, it expands and contracts less



wheel window

in varying weather conditions so causes less paint cracks, joint loosening, and gaps.

Your historic windows can last another hundred years with proper care."

Why send valuable historic windows to fill up the dump and be replaced with cheaper quality ones that use more natural resources and fossil fuels to fabricate and transport?

If you are looking for energy efficiency, don't be conned into thinking only modern windows will be able to provide that. Storm

windows provide that second layer of glass, trapping air between the inner and outer

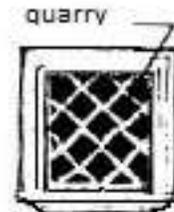
windows. Wood has a better R-factor than vinyl or aluminum, and that goes for replacement windows and storm windows.

Another way that allows homeowners to have beautiful historic windows and more insulation

is a somewhat new product called Indow (indowwindows.com), which is a storm window placed on the inside of the window and made to fit the frame so seamlessly without hardware that it disappears. A set of these is far cheaper



cameo window



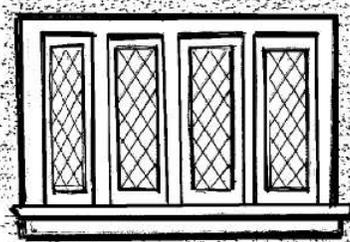
Lattice (lozenge) window

than window replacements, and enables an historic house to keep its character.

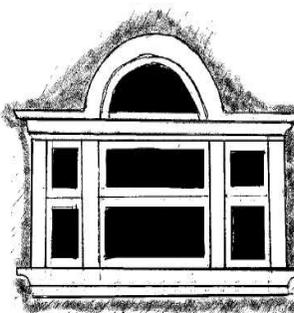
The article quotes Rochester's window expert, Steve Jordan, "*...people still persist in believing the myth that a historic window cannot be energy efficient when it has been proven over and over again that a historic window properly repaired with a storm window can meet the same level of efficiency.*"

Often new homeowners are frustrated when they cannot get their windows to open due to built-up paint cementing them shut. This is a fault of previous painters, not the windows. There are methods and tools homeowners can use to free them up again. Check out the how-to articles in the OHJ and on YouTube. There are tools available for DIY work, or hire a handyman to help. Again, this option is a far cheaper, more environmentally sustainable, and an architecturally superior route to take than disposing of all those good

eye brow dormer



ribbon/band casement



Palladian window

Fanlight



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BROWNCROFT REQUESTS MEETING TO PRESERVE SHADE TREE COVER

BNA has requested a meeting with the City of Rochester's Forestry Division Director with the purpose of expressing the importance with which we hold our neighborhood's urban forest, and the need to work together to preserve our beautiful street-scapes throughout the area.

Because our BNA boundary is made up of different landscapes – a traditional one where shade trees are planted in the public right-of-way on the tree lawns between the curb and the sidewalk, and the Browncroft one designed



Corwin Rd - private/public planting combination

by Brown Brothers nursery where the shade trees were planted on private property inside the sidewalk and smaller ornamental trees and bushes on the tree lawn – maintenance of these two distinct landscapes requires coordination between the City of Rochester and the Browncroft neighborhood going forward in order to preserve the shaded street-scapes of both.

There has been some concern brought to the BNA Board that the line of shade trees of the streets in the northern part of the neighborhood will be compromised if the City does not continue to use shade trees on the tree lawns when they replant when a shade tree has come down. The City has gotten the idea that Browncroft wants small ornamental trees on the tree lawns, which is not the case. The most important value with regard to our neighborhood trees is that they continue to be shade trees overarching the walkways to pro-

vide relief for pedestrians as they enjoy walk-



Elm Dr - tree lawn planting

ing in the neighborhood in the warmest spring, summer and fall months, provide oxygen to mitigate the urban pollution and generally cool the neighborhood, and provide habitat for the birds that enrich our neighborhood with song.

Tax Credits

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live in the house.

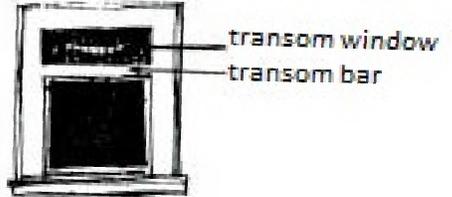
2. The house must be in a Browncroft Historic District which is listed in the New York State and National Register of Historic Places and is in a qualified census tract.

3. The rehabilitation expenses must be \$5,000 or more with a minimum of 5% of that spent on exterior work. The program can offer a 20% credit on your qualifying repair cost up to a maximum of \$50,000 per year.

4. All projects must be approved before work is begun in order to assess compliance. Any work

Windows

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windows.

Wondering what the 3 ways are? 1. Practice regular maintenance, 2. Evaluate the structure of the window, and 3. Modernize and preserve historic windows. You will have to go to Oldhouseonline.com, search for window maintenance and scroll down to get the details for 1, 2, and 3, as well as other good resources.

All "Old House Journal" quotes used with permission from Managing Editor, Lori Viator.

that is inconsistent or deleterious to the historic architecture of the house would not be included under the tax credit.

Typical projects can include wall repairs, masonry, chimneys, stairs, interior and exterior, roofs, central air and heating systems, plumbing, electrical and lighting, interior and exterior finishes but excluding artificial siding. The work can include doors and windows, excluding vinyl windows. You must check with the SHPO OFFICE to see what would be acceptable and then submit your paperwork.

Landscaping, fencing, additions and work on what is not part of the original structure would not be acceptable as eligible for a tax credit.

For more information, instructions and an application form go to <https://parks.ny.gov/shpo/tax-credit-programs/>